Between Past and Future

Civil-Military Relations in the Post-Communist Balkans

Biljana Vankovska
& Håken Wiberg

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Abbreviations

ACP	Albanian Communist Party
AKSh	Albanian National Army (Macedonia)
APL	Albanian Party of Labour
ARM	Army of the Republic of Macedonia
ASNOM	Anti-Fascist Assembly for the National Liberation of Macedonia
AVNOJ	Anti-Fascist Assembly for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia
BGL	Bulgarian Lev
BSP	Bulgarian Socialist Party
CADA	Group for Democratisation of the Army
CCNS	Consultative Council on National Security
CFE	Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty
DEM	Deutschemark
EU	European Union
FRY	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
HD	Croatian Homeguard
HDZ	Croatian Democratic Union
HOS	Croatian Armed Forces
HV	Croatian Army
HVO	Croatian Army of Defence
IMF	International Monetary Fond
IMRO/VMRO	Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KLA/UÇK	Kosovo Liberation Army
KVM	Kosovo Verification Mission
LCY	League of Communists of Yugoslavia
MAAK	Movement for All-Macedonian Action

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NDH	Independent State of Croatia (1941-5)
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NLA	National Liberation Army
NSC	National Security Committee
NSF	National Salvation Front
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PDPA	Party of Democratic Prosperity of the Albanians
PfP	Partnership for Peace
RCP	Romanian Communist Party
RIS	Romanian Information Service
SA	Slovenian Army
SDSM	Social-Democratic Union of Macedonia
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SHIK	Albanian Intelligence Service
SPA	Socialist Party of Albania
SPS	Socialist Party of Serbia
TD	Territorial Defence
UDF	Union of Democratic Forces
UNPREDEP	United Nations Preventive Deployment
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UV	Ustaša Militia
WEU	Western European Union
WTO	Warsaw Treaty Organisation (Warsaw Pact)
YA	Yugoslav Army
YPA	Yugoslav People's Army
ZNG	Assembly of the National Guard

Preface

The present book started with seven case studies of civil-military relations in southeastern Europe, carried out by Vankovska on a grant from the Research and Support Programme of the Open Society Institute in Prague. Our cooperation in 1999 started with making a theoretical framework to compare them; we then updated the case studies and repeatedly redrafted them. This was made possible by Vankovska repeatedly serving as guest scholar at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI) in 1999-2000 and Wiberg visiting the Institute for Defence Studies at the University of St. Cyril and St. Methodius in Skopje in 2000-01. Wiberg made the first draft of the chapter "From Corfu to Brioni"; the successive redrafting of the introductory and concluding chapters was a joint enterprise. All chapters were through the computers of both authors, who are jointly responsible for the entire book. Blendi Dibra, Miroslav Hadžić, Ljubiša Jelušić, Stephan Nikolov, Siniša Tatalović and Vatroslav Vekarić were kind enough to read drafts of some chapters and make valuable suggestions. Martin Noble in Oxford language edited the first drafts of most chapters. We are also grateful to Ms. Anita Elleby and Ms. Mette Lykke Knudsen at COPRI for their patient and admirable work with successive drafts as well as producing the Camera Ready Copy for the publisher.

Skopje and Copenhagen

Biljana Vankovska / Håkan Wiberg

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Western part of the world moved into the new millennium facing what it sees as new challenges on its way; the former communist countries on the Balkan peninsula (and elsewhere) still seem fairly preoccupied with what Mearsheimer (1990) called going "back to the future". This book is about a *concept* of democratic civil-military relations and the *process*, induced by converging interests of researchers and practitioners there and in the wider region, of implementing that concept in this very complex region.

High political priority has been given to establishing and sustaining democratic practices in the domain of (variously conceived) security, especially the democratic control of the military. The present book focuses on the civil-military component of the democratization process in the Balkans. This introduction is to perform three tasks: 1) to discuss the conceptual and theoretical framework used to analyze the central issue; 2) to review and critically assess the predominant theoretical concepts of civil-military relations in the literature; 3) to present in outline the methodology employed in the concrete analyses.

1.1. The Conceptual Framework of Civil-Military Relations

For actors as well as analysts, civil-military relations has always been a problem in both senses of that word: something difficult to handle and something difficult to comprehend and explain. It has two main aspects: the relationship between politics and the military is a critical component of the political life and process in every state that has a military, i.e. almost everywhere; and civil-military relations are a significant aspect of (the military dimension of) national security policy. The political and security aspects of civil-military relations are deeply interrelated, but historically security concerns have tended to achieve priority over the political ones.

Scholars and intellectuals have a long-standing interest in civil-military relations, comprehended as a dynamic system of multiple relationships and tensions between civilian elites, the military and the citizens. This interest is now becoming revitalized, new solutions

being sought by reconsidering and redefining the complex of civil-military relations. The post-Cold War security agenda calls for an extension of the concept of civil-military relations that goes beyond the traditional notion of subordination of the military to elected and accountable politicians. For instance, civil-military relations have to be brought into the development discourse, both in theoretical and practical terms.

The traditional discourse on civil-military relations is now strongly challenged by many new developments and transformations at national and international levels. Until recently, civil-military relations and especially the crucial civilian control of the military were conceived of within a national setting. Yet recent dramatical global changes have affected a whole set of factors calling for a re-conceptualisation of civil-military relations to include a broader supranational level. Civilian control of the military primarily used to be an internal political and security issue of a state; today, the emphasis is moved towards the democratic control of military alliances (such as NATO) and similar supranational structures. The world moving away from the old Westphalian model of the state system towards some kind of a post-modern one, we need a new model of civil-military relations where the paradigm is remolded into one for society-military relations.

The discourse on civil-military relations has focused almost exclusively on *the military in democracies*, to the extent that this is often taken for granted when using the very term "civil-military relations". We therefore need to re-examine the notions of "democracy" and "the military". The concept of democracy, whether more narrowly comprehended as a form of government or more widely to characterise a nation, was always what philosophers call an "essentially contested concept", and even more so during the most recent decade. The collapse of communism in Central/Eastern Europe and decline of authoritarian (military) regimes in Latin America were heralded by many spectators as the definite triumph of liberal democracy in the world and "end of the history"; yet recent political practices in some Western countries have shown that "democracy is an uncertain state" (Parry & Moran 1994: 15), as has the debate on "the democratic deficit" in the process of the European Union emerging as a kind of a post-modern state.

At a first glance, there seems to be no major dispute over the constituent elements of the notion of democracy. A deeper theoretical analysis, however, reveals that there are still some open questions; and

at the practical political level new challenges have been posed by the continuous dynamic (internal and external) environments of modern states. The paradigm of democracy is never finished and finalised, *inter alia* because it always tended to harbour some utopian and (at least allegedly) unrealistic expectations. Democracy has been defined in many different ways in different epochs and from ideological standpoints. Even today, theoretical approaches vary in their points of departure. Some predominantly see democracy as a system of societal values, where individualism and human rights and freedoms have central positions. Others, like Norberto Bobbio (1984), define it more narrowly as a system of norms and procedures in the decision-making process that is based on a wide social representation and the rule of law. Others again, like Giovanni Sartori (1987) define it as the substantially best form of government and then connote the form of political system as well as the distribution and use of power. The actual discourse on—abstractly conceived—democracy includes all these aspects, which may or may not be seen as competing with each other. When we speak of *a democracy*, however, we are speaking about a concrete country in a specific period—and in that sense democracy is always a unique experience, determined by a concrete combination of these different elements within a certain historical and national context.

In the discourse on civil-military relations, there seems to be a virtual consensus about the following things as being the essential merits of democracy, at least from this specific perspective: 1) democracy, when functioning, provides for a peaceful change of power-holders who respect "the rules of the game"; 2) even if the people cannot exercise power themselves, they can at least attain some public control over the power-holders, including those in the military and security realms; 3) the principle of the rule of law sets legal limits for legitimate political power (*government under law*) and the extent of political maneuvres that can be justified by reference to national security concerns; 4) constitutionally defined human rights and fundamental freedoms define a yardstick for evaluating the performance of a government while limiting the exercise of political power, especially during a state of war or emergency. Peace is sometimes also claimed to be a positive spinoff of democracy, but this is a more complex issue.

Whereas Max Weber made it a central criterion for a modern state that it has a monopoly on the (legitimate) use of force, the discourse on civil-military relations adds two things in order for the state to

qualify as a democracy. The monopoly must also be effective, at least for any level of force beyond the level of ordinary crime; and the way in which the state uses force for internal or external coercion is subject to public democratic scrutiny and control. Democratic control of the police and the armed forces is thus considered a main characteristic of a democratic system. Western democratic countries are often implicitly assumed to have fully implemented this principle in their realms of sovereignty. Yet the theory of democracy has mostly neglected this aspect, not because of seeing it as inessential but rather due to a certain Western disdain and over-confidence concerning this issue (Schmitter 1996: ix). The absence of a theoretically explicit concern with the topic has been compensated for by developing a set of norms and mechanisms for dealing with military power, with civilian control of the military and parliamentary accountability as corner-stones.

Its important achievements should not make us forget that the Western democratic model of civil-military relations also manifested also some deficiencies during the Cold War period, especially in regard to public control over defence and military affairs. Foreign and defence policies were mostly non-transparent to the wider public, at the same time as citizens tended to exhibit little interest in these issues and more in areas of politics more directly related to their private lives and welfare; and when public anti-war protests emerged, the repressive apparatus of the state was repeatedly used to suppress them, even by use of force. The public protests in the USA against the Vietnam war is the example best remembered, but the phenomenon was neither limited to that war, nor to the USA. In the political sphere, the deficiencies or tensions sometimes occurred in the relations among the three branches of power. In the industrialised countries the military tended to be a powerful interest group, claiming huge resources and having economic and political leverage to influence defence and foreign policies. Some scholars see the successful military involvement in the political decision-making process on foreign policy and national security policy as due to its information monopoly, its role being accepted albeit not publicly proclaimed. As Abrahamson emphasises,

> the fears voiced are not primarily that the military deliberately upset constitutional rules, but rather that they *within the framework of those rules* have acquired considerable political and economic power (Abrahamson 1972: 82).

Democratic control of the military is one of the major values hailed in Western democracies; it is also one where they tend to have idealised self-images. Self-praise and eulogy can bring democracy to atrophy and death, while (self-)criticism fosters its development (Mirić 1996: 45). Another author makes the good point that

> democracy was always able to learn more from the criticisms of its adversaries than from the paeans of its sycophants (Čavoški 1981: 48).

The recent war over the Kosovo province in Yugoslavia, where the majority of the nineteen Western democracies that are NATO members were directly engaged in a major military operation, showed that there are still many open questions regarding the actual implementation of the democratic model of civil-military relations. In several cases the political establishment, the public and the military itself did not pass the test of democratic behaviour during the "state of war". In some cases, parliamentary debates and approval of the military action were conspicuously absent, constitutions were violated, the principle of rule of law was circumvented, mass media behaved more like war propaganda machineries than vehicles for reliable information and public opinion was disregarded where it could not be marshalled into providing legitimisation for the continuation of a military campaign that was at least manifestly unsuccessful in achieving its shifting publicly proclaimed goals.

Let us briefly recapitulate the state of the art concerning the relation between democracy and peace, which is an area where much theorizing has been made. If, however, we limit ourselves to what is by now an impressive body of empirical investigations, there are two propositions on inter-state relations[1] about which there is near consensus: 1) democracies are—on average—neither more, nor less likely than other states to engage in external warfare[2]; 2) democracies do not fight each other. Proposition 1) sums up several different and independent studies covering different time periods and regions; few scholars dispute its being an adequate summary of the mass of data collected[3]. Proposition 2) has been hailed as being as close as we come to a natural law in social sciences, supported by several studies differing as to time period, region and operational definitions of "democracy" and "war"; counterexamples are either completely absent or very few as well as marginal. There is, however, a lively and still far from empirically resolved debate as to why democracies do

not fight each other. Is it because they are more peaceful *per se* (for which there is no empirical evidence)? Or because democracies have a particular kind of relations *with each other* that preclude the use or threat of military force, such as common membership of institutions with their norms, much communication and interaction leading to mutual transparency (for which there is some evidence)? Or is it because the *internal dynamics* of democracies function in such a way that domestic political gains can be had by picking a quarrel including military threats, or even a war, with a non-democracy, but never with another democracy (for which there is also some evidence)[4]? Or is the "democratic peace" an accident, for instance due to the great majority of democracies being so far wealthy "haves" states sticking together against an actual or perceived common enemy, and likely to disappear as an increasing number of new "have-nots" democracies end this era of common interests (for which there can be no evidence yet—see Galtung 1996)?

What further light, if any, does NATO's war throw over the issues on the relationship between democracy and peace and war? It is in line with proposition 1), which contradicts the notion that democracies are more peaceful than others—if anything, it would challenge the proposition from the other direction: even if we limit ourselves to the ten NATO members that took direct part in military attacks on Yugoslavia, democracies have now become clearly overrepresented among the participants in international wars during the most recent decade. It furthermore goes against the claim that democracies predominantly fight *defensive* wars[5]—no single NATO member even claimed to have been attacked or even remotely threatened with an attack. It is of course consistent with proposition 2)—even if there were some open disagreements about the war among NATO members, and apparently some stronger disagreements that were not publicly aired, no military manifestation of these disagreements was ever imaginable.

This is not the place for any multidimensional balance sheet over the effects at various levels of NATO's war (which was not a war at all according to its official position). There are, however, some important points to make on that war seen in relation to the paradigm of civil-military relations in democracies. To start with, the war itself or the way in which it was entered violated a number of charters and constitutions. It violated the UN charter, both by disregarding its prohibition against the unprovoked use or threat of force by and against UN members and by disregarding the sole competence of the

Security Council to decide when a threat to peace exists and can justify any military action. It violated the NATO charter, both directly by disregarding its provision that NATO would never attack any non-member and indirectly by not being based on any provision in the NATO charter, the formal justification thrown in several weeks after the attack started (see below). The President of the USA violated the War Powers Act, by which a war engagement must either be approved by Congress within sixty days or else immediately discontinued—or at least circumvented it by pretending that the USA was not at war. The German government undertook measures whose compatibility with the German constitution was at least a matter of dispute, no attempt being made to have the constitutional court rule on their legality. No single parliament in NATO was given the opportunity to vote about participation of its country in the military attack on Yugoslavia, whatever their constitutions said about this. Where these violations were not just denied, they were publicly justified by reference to moral values and a humanitarian emergency making a military intervention necessary. The important point from our perspective is that governments and states arrogated for themselves the right to decide whether these justifications were sufficient rather than leaving those decisions to the organs (parliaments, the Security Council) that constitutionally possessed them; some critics saw this as making the war endanger some basic values of Western civilisation.

Even where charters and constitutions were not violated, or apart from their being violated, other aspects of the war seem problematic from the paradigm for civil-military relations. There was no transparency in decision-making regarding peace/war in Kosovo. Regular procedures and fora were replaced by far less transparent bodies, such the Contact Group and G-8. The Western public and citizens were never truly informed about the real content of the documents from Rambouillet used to justify the war. In fact, they contained some provisions that can hardly have had any other intention than getting rejected so as to justify a war, in striking parallel with the Austrian demands on Serbia in July 1914. One crucial provision in this respect was the demand (dropped in June 1999 in order to get an end to the war) that NATO was to become a de facto occupant power in Yugoslavia by having free use of any roads, railways, airports, harbours, etc. there, its staff enjoying extraterritoriality while being empowered to arrest anybody. The official position of NATO and member governments was that the Rambouillet demands were "secret", even though anybody interested

could find them on Internet from the very beginning; it was only on 11 June that NATO finally published them, before which the only official NATO document available was a short summary of this bulky document, which furthermore omitted a couple of the most controversial provisions.

Traditionally, civil-military relations have addressed the relationship of the military to the nation-state. The very concept of nation-state and, consequently, of civil-military relations may, however, be deeply affected by the ongoing process of integration in Western Europe, and especially by the process of NATO enlargement. A new paradigm of society-military relations now appears to emerge, where society is globalized, and the military does not have a nationally limited role, but is more focused on the international arena. In other words, the Western security community calls for a process of internationalization of the military forces. At the Washington Summit in April, 1999, this intention was manifested by the new Strategic Concept of NATO for the next millennium, providing an *ex post facto* justification the attack on Yugoslavia. Whereas NATO is, of course, sovereign to define, change and interpret its own charter, the remarkable and revolutionary aspect of the new concept is that it so to speak codified NATO's previous violation of international law and the UN Charter by undertaking an unauthorized military action against Yugoslavia. It did so by making it a general principle that where NATO cannot get the authorization it wants from the Security Council, it will just disregard it and appoint itself as the ultimate judge and conflict manager, above the law and the UN. During the military campaign, NATO held all cards to an overwhelming extent, including enormous military power, a temporarily unlimited military budget and access to, or even control over, global media. National governments and parliaments, let alone the public opinion, had little opportunity to influence the robust military alliance. While theoretically all NATO members are equal, all decisions being made by consensus, the real civil influence and control over the Alliance rests with very few members—or only one—who are "more equal than the others" (Smith 1989). Among the issues raised by the Kosovo war and its aftermath we therefore have the very issue of democratic control over NATO military power. The internationalisation of military force has not been followed by any increased level of international democracy, for which reason the forms of civilian control of such an alliance are very much in doubt.

The end of the Cold War and especially the Gulf War experience have imposed a different way of thinking about "the military in new times" (Burke 1994), where some questions may achieve particular importance. First, what is likely to be the new institutional identity of the military in the future? Second, how will the so-called post-modern military re-design its professional self-image, given the absence of a focal "enemy"? Third, what will be the new military missions in our new century?

The profound social changes at the global level combined with a radical shift in the pattern of international relations affect the military in Western countries, and thereby civil-military (and/or society-military) relations, at the domestic as well as the international level. The military is traditionally seen as representing the nation and a symbol of state sovereignty, but many Western military establishments no longer play the same important national military role they used to and their traditional basis for legitimacy is therefore gradually eroded to the extent that many military analysts talk about a crisis of legitimacy. At the same time, public attitudes towards authorities and institutions of power grow increasingly sceptical, the military not being spared, which makes issues of defence spending more difficult to handle. Military sociologists even see a relative decline of the popularity of the military profession in the developed democratic societies. The present deep changes in modern notions of citizenship also tend to alter the relationship among society (citizens), the state and the military. The close linkage between citizenship and universal military conscription that used to characterise most of these societies has begun to break up (Janowitz 1976), mass armies therefore becoming prohibitively expensive and gradually reduced.

Karl Deutsch (1957) was the first to popularise the term "security community" to denote a group of states that have developed such relations among themselves that war among them has become unthinkable or at least so improbable as not to be taken in consideration. He did not get much following, however, partly because his conception was considered "idealist" at a time when Realism was increasingly dominating the Western academic scene. There are recent attempts to create such a research programme by critically reviewing Deutsch's work (Adler & Barnett 1998), and even before that some authors saw it as covering, e.g. the relationships between the states of the European Union and of NATO (Ruggie 1997). Deutsch sees *communication* as a crucial factor in the creation of a security community, but also sees a perceived common threat as a

conducive factor. In the latter perspective, the end of the Cold War could be seen as a threat to the cohesion of both and even the very *raison d'être* of NATO, which accounts for some two thirds of global military expenditures (and the total alliance system of the USA for five sixths). The "self-defence strategy" of NATO seems to have two main components, both reinforced after 11 September, 2001: a stronger emphasis than was possible when dictatorships were members on its character as a value community of democratic and in other respects "good" states; and a search for new military missions to justify NATO's existence and sense of purpose as a military organisation whose military expenditures are again increasing since 1998 after the reduction in the first half of the 1990s (SIPRI 2001: 268). This can be seen as the answer to the problem the tradition on civil-military relations implies that Western political leaderships would have: how to keep the military busy and happy in the absence of a threatening enemy on the horizon? The solution sought at a wider international level, the core issue is still related to the new missions and the new institutional identity of the military.

These profound changes engendered a discussion on the crisis and transition of civil-military relations in the Western countries. The crucial ingredients of what is considered healthy and democratic civil-military relations were defined long ago, but their basis has undergone some historical changes (Segell 1998) creating a need for some theoretical reconsideration. Some scholars even see the concept of civil-military relations defined in the 1950s as having petrified into a kind of dogma due to the lack of the critical revision needed to develop a broader and more flexible conceptual framework for examining today's civil-military relations. Such a reconsideration should take into account the great variation in civil-military relations due to varying contexts as well as the accelerating complexity of modern armed forces, where the high-tech transformation of weaponry in combination with the "skill revolution" tends to call for less conscripts and more professional soldiers (Rosenau 1994).

The basic principles of the classical concept of civil-military relations are still highly relevant for their analysis in the post-communist Balkan context. While democratic thinking on civil-military relations has developed for centuries, the understanding of these relations in a concrete country calls for seeing them as affected by universal values as well as factors that are products of certain historical era or reflect a given regional context. And the postcommunist Balkan countries are now at a stage of beginning to learn the "alphabet of democracy", while trying to adjust themselves to the new developments in the political and security realm. Democratic civil-military relations should therefore not be seen as an already given universally outlined pattern that is just to be automatically accepted and implemented. Each model of democratic civil-military relations is by its nature original, but has to respect and take into account democratic experiences elsewhere.

The phenomenon of war goes as far back as recorded history (even though peace is the statistically normal state of affairs between neighbouring states andin several regions also within them), but something crucial happened a few centuries ago: the creation and growth of central state power was related to internal pacification, sometimes by means of war, and external belligerence (Tilly 1975). Military security concerns thus became predominant and linked the very existence of modern states to the military institution which was indispensable for them, at the same time as an amount of tension between political power and the military has been a central feature of this continuous process, one key issue being how to organize a military force that could meet these security needs without becoming predominant in domestic politics.

The military remains one of the most controversial institutions in every modern state. It is virtually everywhere at constitutionally legitimate disposal for governments as an instrument of last resort to protect national interests in the international arena; what constitutionally legitimate role it can play in combating what are seen as domestic threats varies even among democratic states. When the military is used to protect or implement national interests, this may be in a predominantly defensive or a predominantly offensive manner. Even when the military is not mobilised, it may protect—as a force in being—such basic values as independence, actually the very existence of the state, territorial integrity and internal political order.

Governments tend to have two reasons for feeling a certain uneasiness in their relationship with the military establishment. First, it tends to be an expensive institution, inter alia due to its increasingly using tailor-made rather than mass produced high technology (Kaldor 1983): at the end of the twentieth century it claimed a decidedly higher proportion than at its beginning of the global production of goods and services. Second, there tends to be a non-negligible risk that the military system transforms itself into an inherent threat to the very societal values it is supposed to protect; the existence and functioning of the state depending on the (ab)use of the basic military

missions, the position and the role of the military may determine the character of the political system.

There appears to be widespread consensus among politicians and theoreticians alike, at least in democratic states, on the ideal solution being to establish an efficient military force capable of safeguarding the survival of the state while keeping the military at a safe distance from civilian (political) institutions, especially the sphere of human rights and freedoms. When we focus on the actual behaviour of states rather than the rhetorical level, however, this appearance turns out to be partly misleading. Since national security doctrines, threats and the way of handling them differ between different states with respect to how much is included in "state survival" or "national security", the military may be given external missions that are defensive only or include clearly offensive ones.

The traditional core of thinking on civil-military relations was given the following formulation, drawing on historical argumentation, by Samuel Huntington, known as the founding father of the modern theory of civil-military relations:

> The military institutions of any society are shaped by two forces: a functional imperative stemming from the threats to the society's security and a societal imperative arising from the social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society. Military institutions which reflect only social values may be incapable of performing effectively their military function. On the other hand, it may be impossible to contain within society military institutions shaped purely by functional imperatives. The interaction of these two forces is the nub of the problem of civil-military relations (Huntington 1957: 2).

According to Huntington, historical experience proves that there was always a latent conflict between these two imperatives. A military that is completely subservient to the societal values and ways of behaviour easily loses its own military ethos; this eliminates it as a threat to society itself, but also makes it incapable of performing its military mission. The basic premise in his analysis is that internal relations of the military institution have some special characteristics, radically different from other social institutions and society as a whole, that are historically proven indispensable for the success of the mission of the military. A society concerned with its (military) security should thus

accept the existence of the military and its particular features and find a proper mode of coexistence.

Before reviewing Huntington's recipe to resolve the functional contradiction, let us consider the nature and characteristics of the military. The problem of the role and position of the military within the political system became manifest in the wake of the liberal-democratic revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries. A new problematique of ideological as well as practical political significance surfaced to the political arena, calling for new ways of thinking about the relationship between political and military power: making the military a permanent institution, led by professionals from the new military academies rather than by people who got these positions by birthright or bribery. From the very outset, the military was stereotyped as a non-democratic institution in contradiction with the democratic ethos of the new political system.

The conceptions advocated by the leaders of the American and French were supplemented by the brilliant analysis of Alexis de Tocqueville in the final chapters of Part Three of *La démocratie en Amérique* (1961). He pointed out the contrasting role of military establishments in democratic and aristocratic societies, but also noticed the paradoxical situation that even a democratic society has to accept the existence of this non-democratic institution. He did not expect the new democratic system to radically change the non-democratic nature of the military. Society, rather than the military itself, would therefore be the main battle field for democracy and the elimination of the deficiencies of the military:

> It is not within the army that one is likely to find the remedy against the vices of that army, but within the country as a whole (de Tocqueville 1961: 277, our translation).

He saw military coups, a danger unknown to previous regimes, as a particular risk for democracies, being the first regimes in history to face the problem of a personal and institutional gap between political and military functions. The professionalisation of the military brought about by the era of mass armies and emerging democracy also meant that matters military were no longer a leisure activity of the aristocracy, but the essence of life for a new separate group of military professionals. Opportunities for promotion in the military hierarchy being more scarce in peacetime, de Toqueville concluded, the military would retain its militaristic spirit in spite of the expected peace-loving

nature of democratic nations, which would engender a threat to democracy from the military men guided by their own corporate interests.

History and scholarly analyses have proved Tocqueville's concerns well-founded. The military organisation has developed much since his time, getting democratised to a certain extent while keeping some of its autocratic traits. The contemporary military resembles many other social institutions in several respects, having undergone a transition from institutionalism to occupationalism (Moskos & Wood 1988). The seminal article by Jacques van Doorn (1975: 35ff.) on the future of the military organisation pointed at civilianization and remilitarization as possible scenarios. The first term refers to an integration of military and civilian tasks, activities and methods, and an erosion of the strict division between civilian organisations and armed forces; the opposite development, remilitarization, tends to isolate the military from society and to create new divisions. Civilianization and democratization do not necessarily run in parallel; for instance, the degree to which the military was converted into a social institution among others differs between Great Britain and the north-west European countries (Shaw 1991).

The profound transformation of the military has not made it less central in the social structure, nor abolished the contradiction between the nature of the military organisation and the democratic ethos it is supposed to defend. Military organisations are traditionally highly authoritarian, lower ranks facing the risk of arbitrary treatment by, or at least sanctioned by, those in positions of authority over them (Shaw 1991: 152). In spite of the obvious progress made, internal military relations still exhibit a certain amount of informal brutality and violence, the official justification for tolerating them being that public discussions of such matters would undermine the authority of the chain of command and strike at the root of the military organisation. Eric Nordlinger's analysis still rings true:

> The military is structured hierarchically: authority flows downward and responsibility upward. But the military differs from all but a few civilian bureaucracies, such as Communist parties and the Catholic church, in the forcefulness, extensiveness, and explicitness of its hierarchical structure... In most bureaucracies hierarchy is partly premised upon future rewards; in the armed forces hierarchy is also punitive, based upon the threat of the harshest disciplinary measures, and a normative belief in unquestioning obedience inculcated from the very outset of military training. (The forcefulness of the hierarchical imperative is ultimately justified by the raison d'être of the military—victory in armed combat. Victory requires a centralised command capable of directing the separate units, along with field-grade officers who can instantaneously order their men into battle even in the face of vastly superior forces.) In addition, the military's hierarchical structure is more highly articulated and clearly exhibited than that of any civilian organisation. Positions of superiority are constantly symbolised, formalised, and recognised by salutes, uniforms, insignia, spatial positioning, and differential personal prerequisites (Nordlinger 1977: 44-45).

The relationship between Huntington's two basic functional imperatives is not as straightforward as it used to be. The military and its functional imperative are not defined in a societal vacuum, but always determined by the prevailing threat images and perceived security needs—which are ultimately defined by the ruling political elite. In spite of jealously protecting its corporative autonomy and advocating its institutional interests, the military is still the institution most closely affiliated to the state, determined by and dependent on the character of society and the state it serves; a military without a state loses its *raison d'être* and tends to transform into a group of desperados. That there are nevertheless differences in threat perceptions between the military establishment and its client, society, becomes evident in controversies over the military budget and definitions of national security priorities.

A military that is totally insulated from societal influences and exclusively devoted to its functional imperatives cannot even hypothetically be imagined. The military being a part of the social fabric, its system of values is strongly related to the wider social system. Yet the military leadership is sometimes reluctant to accept democracy-related societal values, such as individualism, freedom of speech or freedom of movement, fearing that they might undermine the hierarchical imperative of the military organisation. It may rhetorically support some more general societal values, such as social welfare, at least as long as they do not entail constraints on the military budget that are feared to undermine its combat ability and the social status of the officer corps. And some developments in the field of foreign and security policy may be seen as opposite to the primary

or exclusive focus on *military* security argued by the military establishment.

At the outset of the twenty-first century, neither democracy nor the military have the same form and nature as several decades ago. The pace and profundity of changes differ, giving rise to new controversies on the development of democracy and the military, and transformations of civil-military relations at a national and at the international level cannot be expected to be entirely synchronous. There is an urgent need for a new concept and theory of civil-military relations, especially in countries that do not fit Western theory and existing models.

> This new demand has sent scholars and others scurrying for their copies of Samuel Huntington's 1957 classic work, *The Soldier and the State*, but it, and other studies, do not address fully the problem of civil-military relations in Central and Eastern Europe because Western theory has not kept pace with the demands of changing circumstances in Europe (Bland 1995: 107).

The problem is in fact even deeper, since Western theory does not even keep pace with the demands due to changing circumstances in the West.

1.2. Revising the Theory of Civil-Military Relations

In general terms, the relationship between the military and politics has been discussed since antiquity by many philosophers, military strategists and statesmen. It is, however, only since the liberal revolutions that (parts of) this discussion has also had a greater component of practical implications. As reviewed above, the concrete threat of military interventions in politics was added to more ideological discourses on the contradictions between democratic and military ethos. This inspired the search for arrangements and principles dealing with the military institution within the political system, so as to institutionalize the principle of civilian supremacy over the military.

Anti-militarism has two main currents. The first generations of socialists were overwhelmingly *anti-military*, wishing to abolish altogether armed forces they saw as instruments of oppression for the ruling classes. Liberals from the 18th century and onwards have rather tended to be *anti-militaristic*, seeing armed forces as necessary for external defence. For them, "militarism" denoted levels of military

preparations—or ideological calls for such levels—going clearly beyond those a rational analysis would find necessary for that purpose (finding a convincing method to establish that turned out to be more difficult however). The main liberal exception is as early as the American Revolution, when liberals led by Tomas Jefferson advocated the conception of a "state without military", adopted by Congress in 1784. It was quickly abandoned, however, and later generations of liberals have accepted a military, provided that it be under strict control by civilian authorities, eventually defining the crucial issue as "how much is enough?"

Comprehensive and systematic research on civil-military relations with their political, security and social dimensions only began after the World War II, when "civil-military relations" soon achieved the status of a distinct academic specialty within the social sciences. We already mentioned the political scientist Samuel P. Huntington as one of the founding fathers of the theory of civil-military relations; another is the sociologist Morris Janowitz. Both of them agree descriptively that recognized civilian control over the military is a central value of the American society and normatively that the concept should be embraced by all democratic societies. In other respects their theoretical approaches to the issue differ significantly; they therefore suggest different treatments of the military in a political system, in particular different models and methods of civilian control over the military. Despite their differences, they have created a theoretical framework for a scholar analysis of how to reconcile the military with democracy, and it soon (and until quite recently) became virtually impossible to undertake any serious study of civil-military relations without reference to them. The consolidation of civil-military relations as a social science discipline was followed by several case studies mapping the experiences of different countries and regions, which eventually engendered new theoretical viewpoints and even criticism of the so-called classical theory of civil-military relations.

Huntington and Janowitz identify civilian control of the military as a core value concerning civil-military relations. The real "battlefield" for a full implementation of this principle was located in the military, rather than in the political (civilian) realm. To understand either concept, we must consider the concept of professionalisation used by Huntington.

The term "professionalisation" has four different senses that are related to each other. First, it may refer to the historical process of differentiation of the military officers from the warriors-aristocrats of

previous historical periods, as the creation of mass armies brought with it that officers became a separate professional body. Second, it may refer to the process whereby new recruits are socialised into the role Lasswell refers to as "managers of violence", learning the body of knowledge and skills the profession contains as well as the values, norms and attitudes that are predominant in it, such as holding in esteem autonomy, exclusiveness, and expertise. Third, it may characterise the armed forces of a country and refer to a process whereby the lower ranks in them are increasingly recruited from long term volunteers rather than conscripts. Fourth, it may characterise the military in a country as having an autonomous status in its own field of responsibility, which presupposes a clear distinction between the civilian and the military realm and a suitable distribution of political power between the civilian and military groups. In Huntington's theory, "professionalisation" is used in all these senses, but his main notion of objective civilian control over the military primarily involves the last two senses: the merits of the officer profession serve as a basis for the special status of the military institution, and *vice versa*.

Huntington advocates so-called objective civilian control as the way to resolve the contradiction between the two imperatives that shape the military institution as well as the tensions between civilian politicians and the military. This predominantly formal approach calls for an unambiguous legal framework and a crystal-clear formal chain of command to define the role and status of the military and make it responsible to civilian power and society as a whole. It then becomes crucial to create an inward-looking military institution, insulated from any civilian influence outside the formal chain of command. The military is supposed to be entirely focused on its major missions: defending the country against external aggression and being a supportive element for its foreign policy, the latter being particularly important for a state that is a super-power. Civilian control can be most efficiently exercised when the military is kept "busy and satisfied", and professionalism is seen as as the best recipe for this. His ideal type of civil-military relations contains a proper division of labour between the military and the political decision-making institutions. In a recent work, Huntington describes the main characteristics of objective control as follows:

> 1) a high level of military professionalism and recognition by military officers of the limits of their professional competence; 2) the effective subordination of the military to the civilian political leaders who make the basic decisions on foreign and military policy; 3) the recognition and acceptance by the leadership of an area of professional competence and autonomy for the military; and 4) as a result, the minimization of military intervention in politics and of political intervention in the military (Huntington 1996: 3).

Huntington's formula tries to reach an equilibrium between military autonomy and political control by means of maximising military professionalism: professionalization of the military at the institutional level is the main "remedy" against its interference in politics. While in general obeying civilian supremacy, the military should therefore enjoy complete autonomy in a delineated military realm. The bottom line in this concept is a "splendid isolation" of the military from the rest of society, which by Huntington's critics makes the concept

> a useful heuristic construct but not a good guide for public policy (Sarkesian 1995: 135).

Huntington is still the most influential scholar in the field of civil-military relations, which also makes him the most criticized one. Most critics agree that complete isolation of the military is neither attainable, nor desirable in regard to the democratic prospects of a society. In fact, it goes against Huntington's own idea about the social imperative. Another target of criticism is his thesis that a highly professionalized military is unable to contest political power and civilian control. Bengt Abrahamsson (1972) points out that the effect of professionalism may be alienation, separating the military from the socio-economic balance of civilian society. Huntington sees any attempt of the military to break, thwart or pervert civilian control as a proof that it is unprofessional, but recent history provides many empirical counter-instances. His presumption that professionalisation leads toward neutrality and impartiality of the military has been found invalid by many scholars, such as Abrahamson and Nordlinger. Devotion to military professionalism entails focusing on precisely military security; yet the degree of emphasis on this may well be a matter of political choice, not just a professional one, especially if military security concerns turn out to oppose other approaches to security. A highly professional military can hardly be expected to be neutral in regard to security/defence affairs.

The second theoretical approach, found in the works of Morris Janowitz, is subjective control of the military. Civilian control is not only about external institutional control and procedures, but mainly about developing

> a set of values and norms which are compatible with the social and political decision-making process of the larger society (Janowitz 1972: 10).

According to him, the military should share the liberal values of society yet maintain a professional character in performing its main military mission. The essence of this concept is inculcating democratic values into the military, which is seen as a constituent part of society. By contrast, Huntington opines that inculcating societal values into the military would make it lose of its military character and presumably make it impotent. In his view, closer ties with society would make the military more vulnerable to the illnesses of this very society; but he ignores the opposite possibility: that a society might become *too* responsive to the demands of the military logic today. Israel might provide an example of this ambiguity. Depending on the lenses used, it comes out as a good model of civilian control with no evidence that the military even seriously considered taking over power—or as a praetorian state, where a majority of the leading politicians also have a high military background and where the societal values greatly emphasize military strength, toughness and audacity. For Janowitz the main danger is not "contamination" of the military by liberal society, but on the contrary the insufficient harmonization between the autocratic character of the military institution and the liberal values it is supposed to protect. Moreover, he does not make a dogma of military professionalism, but rather advocates a kind of pragmatic professionalism, seeing democracy as best served by a constabulary force whose professionals are knowledgeable about politics and to a limited degree engage in the political system.

> The military establishment becomes a constabulary force when it is continuously prepared to act, committed to the minimum use of force, and seeks viable international relations, rather than victory, because it has incorporated a protective military posture (Janowitz 1971: 148).

This idea of a constabulary force anticipated post-modern armed forces and new military missions (such as peacekeeping, "peace

enforcement", "humanitarian intervention", etc.) in the new international setting. When this concept was formed in the 1960s, however, it was equally opposed by military men and the part of the academic community that disputed the establishment of peace studies as a scholarly field (Segal & Waldman 1994: 163-164). In terms of civil-military relations in a national setting, this force was comprehended as an institution integrated into society, sharing its common values and maintaining a broad political perspective. While the military is not axiomatically involved in politics, it is undeniably thought of as strongly linked to the political system and the state. Janowitz's approach has the weakness of taking it for granted that the societal values to be incorporated into the attitudes and behaviour of the military are necessarily democratic and liberal ones. The societal imperative may, however, have a different nature in different environments. It is also difficult to define clearly (and non-tautologously) what is and/or what *ought to be* the appropriate system of societal values that is compatible with democracy.

In the literature about civil-military relations, American contributions have been those most permanently focused on this issue and therefore also the most influential. Besides the two mainstream traditions founded by Huntington and Janowitz, there is a range of more contemporary scholars who have been trying to revise or combine the arguments of these two basic approaches, the most prominent names being Charles Moskos, Sam Sarkesian and Peter Feaver. However, the common denominator of all these American theories is their being used as if they had a broader relevance in space and time, despite the specific historical and empirical data upon which they were based. Crucially, the first and most influential theories of civil-military relations were products of the Cold War period, when the main concerns were about the influence of senior military higher circles on foreign and defence policy-making in a country that was one of the two military superpowers.

Civilian control of the military was always considered a constitutional and institutional fact in North America and Western Europe. In particular, a main trait of the American society was the high suspicion and mistrust with which the military as the institution was treated in the so-called liberal attitudes: it was seen as a threat to democracy and human rights and freedoms. Yet the Cold War gave the US military visibility and great prominence. The main focus of research was therefore on how to reconcile the traditional societal attitude toward the military with the new national security doctrine.

Military security was given highest priority when American society was latently prepared for war. Huntington therefore predominantly stressed the functional imperative which mirrored conservative ideas arising from national security requirements. By contrast, Janowitz has argued in favour of maintaining the liberal values within the military and upholding societal influences on the military organism.

Despite their great relevance for the theory of civil-military relations, however, both theoretical concepts are typically American, and so are most followers of these two mainstream paradigms. They operate with the categories of the classical presidential political system, deriving their conclusions from the elitist theory that largely reflects the reality of the American system of checks and balances. The central issues in these theories concern the division of labour between the civilian politicians and the military, and in general the interdependence and relationships among the most influential elites. USA being in the minds of the authors, ensuring civilian control over nuclear operations achieve particular significance (Feaver 1992).

Being focused on the problems of a very particular society, the theories are not necessarily relevant even for other Western societies, not to speak about non-Western ones. For instance, when US scholars advocate democratisation of the military, the issue of relations between society and the military is primarily made a diversity issue: to make the military representative in regard to different societal strata and minority groups. Demographic changes and the increasing heterogeneity of the US population has made the military face political and social issues that are likely to affect its internal composition and the professional value system. Largely lacking in the American theories, however, are actors that are important in society while not being parts of the formal political system. The significance and the influence of the activities of various NGOs, independent media and citizens' initiatives are patently neglected in the search for an optimal balance of power between the military profession and the holders of political authority.

Civil-military relations never achieved such notoriety in the European Academia. The position and role of European armed forces changed less rapidly during the Cold War, and there were no claims for superpower status, Britain (before Suez) and in a way France (all the time) constituting exceptions. The study of civil-military relations in non-Western countries has focused on unstable societies subject to frequent and various interventions from the military: the phenomenon of praetorianism seen as typical for the so-called Third World. The

communist model of party control of the military characteristic for the Second World was less examined as sui generis than as a pre-categorized opposite to the normal Western model (Remington 1988: 75). The main literature on civil-military relations in communist countries during the Cold War period was also written by Western scholars (e.g. Herspring & Volgyes 1978, Perlmutter & LeoGrande 1982, Holloway 1983, Holloway 1989, Colton & Gustafson 1990), whose debate focused on how much autonomy the military could wield in their relationship with the ruling communist parties.

Academia in the communist states never considered civil-military relations an (academically) worthwhile issue. The model of civilian control over the military derived from the specific state-party relationship, representing a political operationalization of the ideological credo that "the party commands the gun and the gun shall never be allowed to command the party", in Mao Zedong's epigrammical formulation of a point all ruling communist parties agreed on. While the practical implementation varied in different communist countries, the principle of civilian supremacy was never disputed. The military institution was "untouchable" for independent research or criticism by civilian scholars, the literature produced in these countries mainly being written by senior military officers or politicians involved in the defence and security matters and thus having the character of "official" literature, or even propaganda. When any public and academic discussion arose over previously taboo themes, including civil-military relations, this was as late as in 1980s, it was in a very particular country: Yugoslavia, and even there the pioneers, like Anton Bebler in Slovenia, were few. The lack of experience and knowledge in defence and security matters, especially in civil society, constitutes one of the major problems in post-communist societies. There is no critical mass of scholars, experts, journalists and NGOs capable of building-up a strategic community that can open a public debate on civil-military relations, Slovenia and the former GDR being possible exceptions in this regard. In most cases the post-communist countries are forced to start *ab ovo* or to accept external assistance (sometimes forced on them) in shaping a new democratic model of civil-military relations.

The long tradition on civil-military relations with its rich empirical data is not sufficient to provide a guidebook for remaking civil-military relations in the post-communist states in their specific conditions of transition, democratization and trauma; experiences from long gone periods in their own history are of as little help as

those from different countries and regions. There have indeed been many situations when civil-military relations were defined as transitional (Germany and Japan after World War II, Portugal and Spain in the 1970s, several Latin American states after the fall of military regimes); and even today American scholars (e.g. Desch 1999) talk about US civil-military relations in crisis and transition. No known path to establishing democratic patterns of civil-military relations being able to provide a recipe for the emerging democracies in Eastern Europe, these countries are all in search of appropriate models, while the yearning to become a part of the West often makes them more inclined to accept Western models than to find their own paths. The concepts of civil-military relations created during the Cold War (and still prevailing in the West) were to answer two basic questions: how to organize a standing military force to meet the needs of the Cold War and how to avoid that this had negative consequences for democracy. Both are irrelevant for the post-communist countries: the Cold War is over and a truly democratic system is at best still in the construction phase.

This shortage of models to guide post-communist civil-military transitions underlines the need for a basic theoretical framework for analysis. Yet the general debate on civil-military reforms in Eastern Europe is mostly inspired by the process of NATO enlargement and ubiquitous governmental aspirations to join it. Pragmatical and formal examinations of the process of democratization and the military therefore predominate and there is little theoretical discourse on the concept of civil-military relations in the democratization process. Surprisingly, the "founding father" of the theory of civil-military relations, makes a very positive evaluation:

> Against this general pattern of failure or mediocre performance, the record of new democracies in dealing with civil-military relations stands out in pleasant contrast. Obviously, major difficulties exist from country to country, and significant problems still confront new democratic regimes. Yet overall, much progress has been made. With one soon-to-be-mentioned exception, it is hard to think of any new democracy where civil-military relations and civilian control of the military are in worse shape than they were under authoritarian rule. Civil-military relations are a dramatic exception to the lackluster performance of democracies in so many other areas (Huntington 1996: 5).

His thesis, however, seems to be more based on wishful thinking than proved facts. No reliable criteria are stated for the evaluations made and Huntington's stated reasons or explanations—"objective civilian control", the increasing professionalization of the military around the world, and the influence of the US military assistance and training programs—are open to dispute. As we will demonstrate in the following chapters, there were cases when communist ideology detracted from military professionalism, but they are the exceptions rather than the rule; in several East European states, and especially Former Yugoslavia, the military tended to have a rather high level of corporative autonomy and respect for the professional norms of behaviour. If it is true that

> 'objective civilian control' would be achieved by militarizing the military (Skauge 1994: 190),

then it is open to question whether this is desirable in the post-communist societies. Huntington furthermore argues that military and civilian leaders alike have an interest in objective civilian control; yet this neglects two other actors with strong, but not necessarily coinciding, interest in civil-military relations: the wider society in the respective country and the NATO alliance. His third reason for claiming success is also empirically disputable: that

> civil-military reform imposes few costs on society and produces widespread benefits (Huntington 1996: 3-4),

one of them being cuts in military spendings.

NATO has defined two thresholds for the post-communist countries that wish to join. One of them consists of political criteria: democracy, rule of law, civilian control of the military, no serious conflicts with neighbours or minorities inside the country, etc. The other threshold is military, and the "interoperability" called for actually calls for *more* military spending. If much emphasis is laid on the second threshold, then it will be so costly to pass that this threatens the fulfilment of the political criteria. Civilian elites, civil society and the military are competing for allocations of very limited national resources and calls for meeting the high NATO military standards would raise the level of tensions among the different participants in the field of civil-military relations. In fact, the military investments that had been made by Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic when they became NATO members were only a fraction of what had been

estimated by US think tanks like Rand Corporation or (inofficially) by Pentagon. This may be taken as an indication that the "civilian control" part of NATO's demands has a clear first priority, whereas meeting NATO military standards, whether the offical ones or merely the *de facto* degree of interoperability among the old NATO members, seems to belong to the rhetorical level more than the actual defence budgets, which could never afford it anyhow.

The states in the world where these matters are open to public debate at all (and for that matter some of the others too) tend to have a discourse over the legitimization of military expenditures. At one level, this legitimization is in terms of the defence/military doctrine of the state and its official perception of potential security threats (at other levels, employment arguments, state symbolism, etc. may also figure). In some states, this doctrine remains constant over long time periods and since credibility is believed to depend on the permanence of the doctrine, *de facto* alterations in it tend to be rhetorically covered up. By contrast, practically all post-communist states have spent several years in search of a doctrine. Some of them have not even completed the search; and among those who have, the doctrines are so fresh that they lack the weight of tradition and broad national consensus, so arguments in the discourse are often formulated in other ways. Meeting the criteria for joining NATO is the justification of the military expenditures most often used in the post-communist countries, threat pictures being relegated to second rank. The government policies of our post-communist states (and also the Central European Ones) tend to have the following predominant features:

1) The setting-up of the military establishment is argued and defended in terms much influenced by the USA, especially Huntington. His concept of professionalization is unanimously supported by governments and military establishments alike, who state purely military reasons as well as its being central for healthy civilian control of the military. This support is manifested by the concrete efforts to meet NATO military standards: governments are eager to show their cooperativeness, while the military hope they will face a better future as members of the NATO club. One reservation is made, however: financial restraints prevent the full implementation of this process. By contrast, the support for Janowitz's idea about the need to harmonize relations between society and its military tends to be limited to rhetorical lip service. Yet if civil-military relations are seen as parts of broader democracy-building objectives, then more attention should be paid to the issue of the value system within the military, which is precisely one of his main points.
2) Whatever the rhetorics, the Cold War security context is lingering in the building of civil-military relations in our (and other) post-communist countries. *Military* security still prevails and military means are seen as crucial to protect the state and society from various security threats. The military is therefore granted a central role in the state apparatus, which supports its tendencies to see itself as sole protector of the state and equalize itself to the values it is supposed to protect. In the transitional societies we deal with, this may easily clash with another crucial issue: how to make the military accept a back seat in relation to the democratic civil institutions which are still in their formative stage.
3) In the wider context there is a marked asymmetry: post-communist states are looking westward, while the West is highly self-centered. The predominant Western approach to the process of democratization in post-communist Europe has a marked trait of messianism: bringing civilized government and order to the "barbarians" (or at least "Others"). The more advanced West serving as the reference group for post-communist states in their pursuit of democracy, its military is the chief reference group for their military, which, having lost its old legitimacy basis and being unable to openly repudiate democracy, has no alternative to acting in its name. In fact, the version of democracy imported from the West sees the military as a highly professional and respectable institution and therefore suits the post-communist military well. By the development of the PfP programme in particular and the promised process of NATO enlargement in general, Western countries encourage this institutional and attitudinal transformation of the post-communist military. One extremely important thing is neglected, however: the structural preconditions for democracy in these societies are largely lacking. Imposition of democracy from above or outside resembles the way in which the communist revolutions were carried out—by the resoluteness of pure political will and against unfavourable social conditions. Where democracy is imported and the democratization process of the military sphere encouraged by NATO enlargement, a new militarisation of the

post-communist societies is a decided risk. If democracy is an uncertain state, democratization is a uncertain and sometimes reversible process.

1.3. The Challenge of Redefined Military Missions

After the Cold War, the theoretical field of civil-military relations is in transition in the West and East alike. Huntington supporters claim that the necessity of objective control has now increased, civil-military relations having deteriorated both in the USA and Russia due the inclination of the leaderships there toward subjective control. Changing military missions are seen as an important part of the explanation; one author asserts that during the Cold War both the USA and the USSR had "healthy (if different) patterns of civil-military relations", due to the clear external military missions of these armed forces. In this view,

> While these two protagonists differed significantly in terms of their political systems, cultures, and histories, they had two important things in common: the militaries of both nations had traditional, external military operations as their primary mission, and both nations proved to be models of military subordination to civilian control (Desch 1996: 15).

This approach emphasises the military mission of a nation as a determinant of its civil-military relations; objective control is linked with an external and subjective control with an internal military mission:

> A state facing a traditional, external military challenge is likely to have stable civil-military relations. Such a threat environment forces the institutions of civilian authority to become more cohesive and thus makes them better able to deal with the military in a unified fashion. The civilian leadership under such circumstances usually adopts objective control mechanisms, which involve granting the military substantial autonomy in the narrow military realm in return for complete political loyalty... Moreover, the external threat orients the military outward, making it less inclined to meddle in domestic politics, since it depends on the state's unwavering support, especially in this age of total warfare....

> In contrast, if a country faces significant internal threats, the institutions of civilian authority will most likely be weak and deeply divided, making it difficult for civilians to control the military. Civilian politicians often cannot resist the temptation to bring the military into the domestic political arena, both to support their particular faction in its struggle with rival groups and to ensure their group's control of the armed forces.... Subjective control refers to the effort to control the military, politicizing it and making it more closely resemble the civilian sector. A significant domestic threat also includes the military to adopt an internal orientation, making military intervention in politics almost inevitable... In short, a nonmilitary and internal mission will produce the worst pattern of civil-military relations (Desch 1996: 14).

If this evaluation largely echoes Huntington's views and criteria, the main teorethical discourse today is rather focused on new military missions. While post-communist countries are more concerned with the classical distinction between external and internal military missions, Western countries attempt to redefine military missions in a way they see as more appropriate for the post-Cold War era. The debate, however, is still related to power politics, rather than looking for non-violent means of promoting peace. In a radically changed threat environment the military establishments are primarily concerned with their *raison d'être*.

Today, there is a rather broad consensus that war, while being as present as ever despite expectations by the end of the Cold War, has fundamentally changed its characteristics (van Creveld 1991). Decade by decade, the classical inter-state war becomes an increasingly rare phenomenon, even completely disappearing in some regions, while intra-state conflicts increasingly predominate whether we count the numbers of wars or (very predominantly civilian) victims. The latter category, however, is a mixed bag, containing inter alia civil wars deriving from conflicts between regions, between ethnonational or religious groups, between class-based political factions (all combinations possible)—and for that matter terrorism and banditry. In some of these cases, the mode of fighting the war resembles traditional inter-state warfare, in many others we rather see "post-modern warfare", which calls for appropriate responses from post-modern society (Møller 1996). Modern conventional military forces tend to be ill-prepared for intervening in those new kinds of conflicts,

which define new tasks and challenges, the "war on terrorism" since 2001 being a good example. The military therefore tends to be ambivalent vis-a-vis the new reality; van Creveld claims that

> a ghost is stalking the corridors of general staffs and defence departments all over the "developed" world—the fear of military impotence, even irrelevance (van Creveld 1991: 3).

How, then, will the military core mission be affected by all the changes emerging or culminating during the post-Cold War era? More important still, how will the military adapt to the new challenges? There are still many dilemmas and different attitudes concerning the mission of a democratic military in the Post-Cold War era. The military elites still basically support the strict traditional interpretation of the military mission, seeing its core mission as enhancing its capability and preparedness for war-fighting. While agreeing that the military may occasionally play other roles, Operations Other Than War (OOTW), they insist that their involvement in missions other than war is not only inefficient but will also erode their combat effectiveness. OOTW therefore should not be any important part of the raison d'être of the military, nor be permitted to take scarce defence money and training time wawy from the primary mission. The view is tersely formulated by the former US Secretary of Defense Perry who warned, "we are an army, not a Salvation Army" (Graham 1994).

When "security" is understood more broadly than just military security, a different definition of the military mission tends to be derived. The military must then still be prepared for potential external aggression, but that is not enough; it is also expected to assist different non-combat missions, non-military threats posing as much of a threat to national security as that of an armed conflict. From that perspective, the new military mission has an international dimension, where the predominant tasks include enforcement, missions that are "peacekeeping" in a much wider interpretation than the traditional concept[6], and humanitarian relief. It also has a domestic dimension, including e.g. police functions (maintenance of order); curtailing illicit activities, such as drug traffic and smuggling; protecting the environment; constructing public works; providing education and health services; and engaging in commercial activities to fund or supply the military.

These dilemmas concerning military missions may constitute the most critical determinant of civil-military relations in Western developed countries. Not surprisingly, there is a clear divergence between the values and attitudes held by the higher military circles and the civilian elites (in particular those in political power), especially in American society. The most important question is therefore whose preferences will prevail in the definition of the national security agenda and military missions? The US military is concerned about an expanded mission demanding it to demonstrate its capability and effectiveness in undertaking a wide range of noncombat operations, at the same time as it is obvious that it cannot solve all new global and domestic problems. Its main concern is defence spending, which was reduced significantly during most of the 1990s, as well as the force reductions in most developed democracies after the Cold War. Increasing civil-military tensions are caused by the cost considerations and the differing perceptions of military and civilian leaders concerning the relative importance of noncombat missions. Pressed by demands for a "peace dividend", it was impossible for politicians to use traditional military missions as legitimization for continued high military expenditures. The political leaders seem to have seen the solomonic solution in limiting the cuts by invoking new missions that could be politically sold under nice-sounding names, such as "humanitarian interventions" or "conflict management actions"; if the military were displeased with this, they must be taught that the alternative was even deeper cuts in the military budgets. The Kosovo crisis can be seen as a test case, with far from encouraging conclusions: the discrepancy between the official justifications in terms of humanitarian relief and defence of Western moral values and the ambiguous military mandate of the NATO forces actually resulted in a humanitarian catastrophe for the people they were supposed to protect, a political fiasco of the leadership of the Western democracies and deep military frustration in the NATO military leadership. Seen from a military perspective, the misery stemmed from politicians defining the military mission in a vague way while ignoring military advice (to either avoid war or fight it in another way) and continuing to limit military options for political reasons. Seen from a political perspective, the politicians were forced to do this in order to get sufficient domestic support for going to war and continuing it while avoiding that the division among NATO states became public and made the war politically impossible. The remaining question for future analysis is whether the fiasco was inescapable in a conflict of that type

(with the conclusion that this kind of action should never be repeated), or merely due to various situational factors that—at least theoretically—are amenable to improvement, e.g. by "Europeanisation", bigger and better prepared standing forces, improved interoperability, better plans and resources for post-war reconstruction activities, etc. In the public discourse the latter perception seems to prevail; the risk of a new test case must therefore be taken seriously.

Military leaders in the underdeveloped post-communist countries find themselves in frustrating dilemmas. The dominant threat perceptions held by the Balkan political establishments are still predominantly concerned with external sources of insecurity. Yet this cannot be formulated in their doctrines with such a weight as to legitimize significant increases in military expenditures, since their wish to join NATO does not permit hostile perceptions of their neighbourhood. The frustration is increased by a low combat capability that sometimes leads to an inferiority complex. To alleviate this, the Balkan countries try at least to catch up with the developed countries in regard to the new agenda on the international scene, such as (traditionally or more expansively understood) peacekeeping activities, preparing themselves for this and especially activities included in the PfP agreement. This gets a touch of absurdity by the very fact that the Balkan region still represents a focal point of inter-ethnic, regional and other conflict, an arena for performing all kinds of beautifully embellished operations by the military forces of the developed countries. In any case the Balkan countries are as a rule ill-prepared for these and other non-traditional missions, their eagerness to promote them motivated by the wish to join NATO rather than self-defined security interests. As for domestic (internal) missions, they all claim the old tasks to be gone with the communist regimes; yet there are many internal problems that might lead to military involvement, in particular protecting the territorial integrity of the country against internal divisions and secessions.

Civilian analysts have claimed that while non-traditional missions of the military must be seen as transitional in a democratic society, the fact that many civilian governments lack the expertise needed for effective oversight may make these transitional roles lead to a direct or indirect military involvement in politics. For instance, political leaders may not to be able to resist the temptation to look to the military for support in resolving social and other domestic problems. Internationally, the post-Cold War period has shown pressure for

expanded domestic roles for the armed forces, including disaster relief and a range of functions associated with law and order; and as the domestic roles of the military change, so will civil-military relations. Already among Western societies there are considerable variations as to whether or not the suppression of domestic threats is doctrinally defined as a part of the missions of the military. To the extent it is, that makes the issue of civilian control more difficult when it comes to distinguishing between complete and—by some criterion—legitimate civilian control. It is then supremely important that there are clear and respected rules as to who is in charge of defining domestic threats, what is considered as subversion by what criteria and what should be done in such a case.

Let us now return to Huntington's thesis, widely supported by military elites, that external threats are a positive factor for the maintenance of good civil-military relations: can it claim validity after the end of Cold War? That very end, combined with the (fairly credible) assumption that the Western democracies have built a security community where war is very improbable, seems to give the thesis the implication that in order for Western countries to preserve the democratic character of their civil-military relations they have to find new enemies in the international arena. This is also at some variance with the widely held belief that the Post-Cold War world is moving towards a more peaceful future[7]. In the Balkans, new civil-military relations in the Balkans are literally being built in "the fog of war" (of external or internal conflicts). With some exceptions, the theory of civil-military relations has yet to overcome the legacy of mental barriers from the Cold War and re-consider its basic premises in line with the expectations of a "peace dividend".

The crucial relationship between the military and society is to a large extent determined by prevailing threat perceptions, in particular concerning possible emergences of armed conflict. The predominant threat picture in a given country tends to legitimize the military mission chosen as well as its level of military preparedness and, by implication, military expenditures. There are, however, two different types of answers to the underlying question what makes threat pictures prevail. By the "official" images, usually publicly stated by their "authors" (whether analysts or politicians), they represent an objective assessment of an objective reality, to which it is therefore rational to adapt one's level of military preparedness and the costs for that. There is, however, also much to say for the other answer, which sees the relationship as being largely the other way around: the threat pictures

undergo a process whereby they are adapted, whether by changing risk assessments or by "securitization" and "desecuritization" (Buzan 1998), to legitimize at least approximately the traditional level of military expenditures a state happens to have. If there are clear indications that things get more dangerous, then the threat tends to be downgraded, so as not to make the military preparations look meaningless[8]. When there are strong indications in the opposite direction, new threats and derived missions for the military are found. It should be underlined that there is no need for any conspiracy theory to adopt the second answer: the processes it assumes are not necessarily planned or conscious. The military may be assumed to be no less inclined than scholars or other professions to perceive the world in such a way that it and its capabilities are highly relevant and important for society. It may therefore face a dilemma concerning the emerging military missions: on the one hand, they add to its relevance in the Post-Cold War era, but on the other hand they may threaten the military profession and establishment in the ways referred to above.

A few decades ago, "security" was almost exclusively thought of at the *national* level and in the *military* dimension. Whether we go by such political documents as UN resolutions or the writings of leading academic analysts, this time was over already well before end of the Cold War, and the profound changes taking place after it have further accelerated the process of defining a new security agenda where the military aspects of security lose their previous absolute primacy and other dimensions of security achieve high significance. In the security discourse, what remains of threats linked to a (potentially) malevolent enemy compete for attention with economic collapses, political oppression, scarcity of natural resources, pollution, overpopulation, ethnic strife, drugs, crime and terrorism (Fischer 1993). By the traditional concept, civil-military relations are about maximising military security with a minimum sacrifice of other societal values, which are somehow treated as residual. The new security concepts and the new security agenda, however, make the maximization (or optimization) of "security" conceptually more complex, the military dimension no longer having an unquestioned priority after the end of the Cold War. One conceptual component of the traditional paradigm that has to be re-evaluated is the insistence on professionalization of the military, since a preoccupation with military threats and the ways of responding to them implies a relative neglect, no longer supportable, of various kinds of non-military threats. It is not even axiomatic that military means always provide best solution when

pursuing classical national security goals (such as preserving state sovereignty and independence); and far less so for the other threats included in the new security agenda—the results achieved by attempted military means tend to be modest at best and catastrophical at worst.

One of the most analytically thorough reconceptualisations of "security" is that by Barry Buzan and his collaborators (Wæver 1993, Buzan 1998), indicating five security sectors: military, political, economic, environmental and societal, the last one being particular by having the *nation* (in the sense that is not synonymous with the state), rather than the *state* as subject.In these terms it may be argued that the ideal state of affairs in terms of military security is not necessarily that the state is *absolutely* secure. Such an ambitious goal is rarely, if ever, achievable anyhow, and attempts at achieving it may be deleterious in several respects. First, they cannot avoid endangering the other four and no less important sectors of security already for budgetary reasons; and little, if any, tradeoffs can be expected, since military means tend to be inadequate at best, and counterproductive at worst, for intervening into other security sectors. Second, attempts at achieving absolute security may be self-defeating in terms of military security itself, by the mechanisms described in the literatures on the security dilemma, arms races and non-offensive defence (summarized in Møller 1992).

1.4. Methodological Considerations

The Balkans, often called the "powder keg" of Europe, always attracted the attention of scholars, due to its highly complex security aspects and conflict dynamics. In the Cold War era, the security equation was sometimes expressed as "2+2+2", with the two non-aligned (Albania, Yugoslavia) almost completely interposed between the two NATO members Greece and Turkey and the two WTO members Bulgaria and Romania. This "equation" was of course too simpler, neither of the pairs being without internal problems. Keeping peace between Greece and Turkey for fifty years may be seen as NATO's major peacekeeping achievement; relations between Bulgaria and Romania had their historical burdens in addition to their fairly different relations to the Warsaw Pact itself; Albania and Yugoslavia were definitely parts of each other's threat pictures. Yugoslavia's relations with Bulgaria were as problematic as those with Romania were friendly; and after the early postwar period, relations between

Yugoslavia and Greece were also increasingly friendly, while those between Albania and Greece definitely were not.

The end of the Cold War brought about a major change in the Balkans, including the breaking up of the old equation—and of Yugoslavia itself. By contrast to Latin America, the former Soviet Union and Central Europe, there is very little theoretical and comparative examination of civil-military relations in the post-communist Balkan countries[9]. This task is a real challenge, linking, as it were, two transitionals: the current transitional state of the discipline with its lack of an adequate theoretical framework for examination of the transitional civil-military relations in the post-communist states. A third component of the challenge might be added: defining the geo-political and cultural borders of the "Balkan region". Its name stems from a mountain ridge in (today's) Bulgaria far from geographical centre of the peninsula. Since the fall of communism, every country there tries to get rid of this burdensome tag, redefining its location as being part of Central or, at least, Southeastern Europe (while usually perceptually locating its southern neighbour in the Balkans however). The name is burdened by heavy historical legacies and associated with some intellectual prejudices. The former communist countries have gone through problematic periods after the collapse of the *anciens régimes* at the end of the Cold War, strengthening the image of the region as a "gray zone" in (or even outside) the civilized Europe. In political theory, the main contribution from the region is the term "Balkanization" with its deeply negative connotations in terms of neighbourly relations, domestic cohesion and political systems. For instance,

> Balkanization is generally understood to be break-up of larger political units into smaller, mutually hostile states which are exploited or manipulated by more powerful neighbours (Der Derian 1991: 488).

At the same time, the term may also have had a "useful" function as a tool for legitimizing an international order without a (named) enemy (Wæver 1993: 19).

Because of the widespread use of the name, with its traditional connotations, in social science literature, mass media and everyday discourse, one of the first tasks in writing about "Balkan countries" is to demystify the term and clear away a host of misunderstandings. The first of these is the assumption often made by scholars and analysts from outside the region that the term "Balkans" connotes some common "reality" consisting of the common features of these countries. It reminds of the traditional stereotype in Western Europe of "Eastern Europe" being a homogeneous region, whereas in reality it is in many respects more heterogeneous than Western Europe itself. The latter is not much less true of "the Balkans" if, for instance, we define that as the "2+2+2" area, whose variety in terms of religions (Orthodox and Catholic Christianity, Islam), languages (from five different families), historical legacies (including old empires and eternal underdogs; and with the Austro-Hungarian, Russian or Ottoman empire as traditional topdog) or economic development (between Slovenia and Albania) is at least as great as that of Western Europe. The myth of the Balkans does the harm to overshadow all these local particularities and differences, whether we discuss more general issues or, as in the present book, focus on civil-military relations, for which those differences between the states and the societies in the region are indeed important.

The book has a limited geographical scope: not even the "2+2+2", but merely what used to be two of these pairs, the former communist states, of which Albania, Bulgaria and Romania remain within the same boundaries, whereas Former Yugoslavia has been broken up into a number of splinters—exactly how many depends on whether we look at constitutional and diplomatic fictions or social realities, and may anyhow be difficult to predict from one year to the next. The successor states we treat here are the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republics of Macedonia, Croatia and Slovenia[10].

Having emphasized the heterogeneity of the region, we should also point out some respects in which we may expect some similarity. These countries belong to the same broad regional context, at least in geopolitical and to some extent economic terms; similarities deriving from a common regional environment may therefore have had some influence on their national security concepts and the states of civil-military relations in them. From a bird's eye perspective they may also be said to have had common or at least comparable historical experiences; yet there is great variance in the ways in which these experiences have affected different states, not to speak about how they have predominantly been interpreted in the respective country. Recent political and security changes occurred not merely in the same region but in addition (almost) simultaneously. There is also some kind of cross-fertilisation effect between reforms and relationships in all post-communist Balkan countries, challenged by the difficulties of the

transition toward democracy. In the field of security, their threat pictures are quite similar, at least in abstract terms: they tend to be ambiguous, with the main external threat being located in a neighbouring country or in the wider region, at the same time as their internal conflict potentials tend to appear more serious than the external threats to an outside observer. The Balkans still looks like "a system of communicating vessels". Plights and changes, whether positive or negative, within one state tend to influence the others and the entire region, at least indirectly.

Most of the countries under study still suffer from old identity problems, sometimes recently aggravated; and a crisis of identity of a state (or nation) tends to be mirrored in a crisis of identity of its military. Multiethnic and divided countries and nations—a main characteristic of the Balkan region—are likely to be faced with a problem of militant nationalism, where the devotion and loyalty of the military are likely to be more oriented to the nation than the political government. The democratic prospects of polyethnic Balkan societies are determined by the search for new identities of the state as well as the military. Whether it is possible to establish the military to see itself as a constitutional (state) institution, rather than as not as an institution representing the (ethnic) nation, will therefore be of crucial importance.

The present study cannot have the ambition to give any definitive analysis of civil-military relations in any particular country or the region as a whole. Due to the current developments in the Balkans, such an objective would look like painting a moving train. We therefore prefer to focus on a comparative analysis of civil-military relations in a historical perspective, which might contribute to a better understanding of the tangled and even unpredictable evolution of the Balkan states and their military establishments. The creation and stabilization of democratic civil-military relations is seen as one possible way of overcoming historical legacies as well as a concrete contribution to peace in the region and its environment.

The present work derives from a complex research endeavour undertaken in 1996-98, at a time of major turbulence in many countries of the region, now up-dated to include the developments up to mid-2001. Dealing with such a complex group of countries called for careful considerations on methodology and how to locate that between the idiographic and nomothetic extremes. The former extreme involves collecting as many variables as possible, or at least as might make sense for the specific research purpose, about a single case; the latter to collect a more limited number of variables about as many cases as possible (or as may make sense for the specific research purpose) and then correlate these variables to test or generate hypotheses. The fact that N=7 spoke against the nomothetic extreme, as did the fact that whereas some variables, such as military expenditures or size of the armed forces, are to some extent amenable to meaningful quantification, many others are not—or only by Procrustean techniques. Against the idiographic extreme, where the data collection would have been guided by what was interesting about that specific country, there was the argument that we wished to make a comparative study. The compromise chosen was therefore a structured comparison of case studies, so as to be able to make some use of the richness of details provided by expert observers of the countries studied, while trying to discipline the data collection sufficiently to make meaningful comparison possible.

One basic premise for the present study is that history counts; each case therefore includes a historical background so as to put the differences between our countries in perspective. To make this more than a banal proclamation we must consider more carefully *how* history counts and *what* history it is that counts. The tentative answer to the first question is that the historical legacy counts in two main ways: one part of the legacy consists of inherited material and social structures within which actors are located and which affect the options they have (as well as those that are excluded or can only be enjoyed at great expense). Another part consists of cognitive factors: the repository of assumptions (often seen as "knowledge") and attitudes that the actors have inherited. As a rule of thumb we may expect that the further back in history we go, the less likely it is that structures will have survived until today and the more likely that the important information is what we find reflected in today's cognitive sets. The issue of reflection contains the further challenge that there are two (or more) histories. One of them is history *as it actually was*. The (often incomplete) access we have to this is owed to the toils of professional historians, whose degree of agreement, however, varies considerably, depending on what country and time period we are interested in. The other is history *as it is perceived*, whether fairly unanimously (professional historians not necessarily included) or differently by different groups of actors. Where the two kinds of history differ, it is the latter that is found in the minds of actors and affects the beliefs and values underlying their actions.

The accounts for all case studies have therefore been given parallel structures. Each account begins with an account for the pre-communist history of the present country and in particular its military institutions and their achievements and failures. Here, the emphasis is on cognition rather than structures, little of which is assumed to have survived several decades of communism, at least not when we look at military matters. The history that interests us and that we primarily try to depict is therefore that which predominates in perceptions rather than what professional historiographers may have some consensus on, even if we occasionally add bits of the latter. This must be underlined: we do *not* try to capture "objective history", but history as predominantly perceived, in other words the *myths* in the cognitively neutral sense of that term. When we refer to something as a myth in the following text, there is no implication as to whether it is or is not true; the point is that it is widely believed to be true.

The second part of each account consists of history under communism. The length of this period is approximately the same in all our cases, whereas there are considerable variations in its content, Bulgaria representing the extreme of constant close alignment with the USSR, Yugoslavia the opposite extreme and Romania and Albania shifting their de facto and/or de jure positions. Since it is the structures from that part of history that served as the point of departure for later attempts at reforms, changing civil-military relations etc., we have here tried to come as close as possible to what actually happened, albeit aware that much of this will still take long time to uncover with any degree of certainty.

The history of four of our cases had large common parts during most of the twentieth century, when they belonged to First or Second Yugoslavia. To avoid repetitions, we try to cover that period in a separate chapter, "From Corfu to Brioni", focusing in the four individual chapters on their history before that period or what was specific during it.

It is commonly agreed that after communism came transition. There is less agreement on exactly when or what to mean by transition or what actually happened. Our simple answer to the first question is the emergence of multi-party elections, whether or not they resulted in a marked change of regime. The second and third questions are dealt with in the subsequent parts of the case chapters: what were the challenges to the military and to civil-military relations posed by the specific circumstances in each case? If we look at the military, these circumstances vary greatly in terms of its continuity, prestige, socio-

economic priority and actual missions. In some cases, the first mission was to fight one or more wars; in others it took many years for the political system to clarify what the missions are and settle priorities among them.

For these and other reasons, the further developments after the initiation of transition differ considerably among the seven cases, including those of constitutional and legal structures, national security doctrines with their definitions of missions and the actual processes in the armed forces, whether or not in line with new legislation. The presence or absence of external or internal war, collapse of the economy or even the entire state, bid for NATO membership etc. have different chronologies in different cases and we try to follow them individually while asking to some extent the same questions concerning civil-military relations.

Each chapter ends with an attempt at assessment of the present state of civil-military relations in the country treated there, with its present problems and apparent prospects, based on existing constitutions and legislation as well as the de facto development.

The concluding chapter tries to draw the lines together by identifying to what extent common features appear in many or all of our cases, as well as assessing what differences in background and circumstances may account for the differences in civil-military relations we observe.

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[1] Internal wars show more complex relationships, which we may summarize in the following proposition: stable democracy is associated with the lowest risk for internal war and stable autocracy with a slightly higher risk, whereas the highest risk is found in states that are both somewhere inbetween and under change in this respect (Hegre 2001).

[2] The "on average" in the first proposition should be underlined. Some democracies, like India and the USA, are involved in far more external wars than average, others in considerably less; and the same is true for non-democracies.

[3] It has been argued that the statistical absence of a clear difference is misleading, democracies predominantly fighting defensive wars and therefore basically being more peaceful than others; but no clear statistical evidence supports this claim.

[4] For recent assessments of the empirical evidence concerning these issues, see Brown 1996 and Russett 2000.

[5] At least in the traditional sense of "defensive". Tony Blair and other leaders spoke of it as a war to defend values—but a number of leaders of non-democracies have also justified their attacks on other countries in such terms.

[6] Until the early 1990s, this concept had three elements: 1) consent by all parties to the conflict; 2) impartiality; 3) use of armed force in self-defence only. A major UN report (Boutros-Ghali 1995) concluded that successful UN operations had in common that these three rules had been observed, and less successful operations that one or more of them had not. The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was crucial, nevertheless in changing the military roles in UN (and other multinational) interventions, civilian politicians showering additional demands, sometimes incompatible and often far beyond the resources allotted, on UNPROFOR (Biermann & Vadset 1998).

[7] In reality, the long trend upwards in the number of major armed conflicts in the world continued through 1991, followed by a few years of decrease and again, since 1997, a new increase (Sollenberg & Wallensteen 2001). The very great majority are fought inside the boundaries of a single country—but often with foreign intervention by neighbours or by great powers (with satellites) under various flags.

[8] For instance, when it got increasingly clear around 1960 that Sweden would not acquire nuclear weapons in spite of a military consensus about their necessity, its military doctrine was changed (under the guise of continuity) to the new position that while a major war in Europe was still a non-negligible possibility, it would not be nuclear, so Swedish nuclear weapons were not needed (Agrell 1985).

[9] The main exceptions are found in Bebler 1992, Bebler 1997, Danopoulos & Zirker 1996, Cottey 2001, Pantev 2001, Vankovska 2001, Born 2002a, Born 2002b, Danopoulos 2002, Forster 2002, Hadžić 2002 and Edmunds 2003.

[10] Bosnia-Herzegovina is too complex and difficult: theoretically it has two independent armed forces (which are equally theoretically expected to merge in the future), that of Republika Srpska and that of the Federation, but in reality the latter also consists of two essentially independent ones, the Croat and the Moslem/Bosnjak.

Chapter 2

Civil-Military Relations in Albania

2.1. Military Traditions of the Albanians

Few European countries have a more obscure history than Albania. After its total isolation as a result of the Communist regime's policy, there have been different and often opposed conclusions on its military traditions and developments of civil-military relations.

Having been a nation without a state, Albanians never acquired any glorious military history. Being at the borders of mighty empires, they were often recruited as mercenaries although never fully assimilated. They were considered brave combatants, whether in foreign armies or defending their own clans against them or other clans. The country's geo-strategic position in the Balkans, and the features of its internal tribal social system have determined the military traditions. Albanians generally perceive their past as a history of subjugation and humiliation. They see themselves as a peace-loving people who have merely been victims of other people's military invasions and aspirations but at the same time they nourish the image of the brave and noble Albanian warrior. In between these two exaggerated versions, the historical facts show a different picture.

At the early stage of the Ottoman invasion, the easiest way of surviving was to retreat to the much safer highlands. The permanent pressure of external threats together with self-isolation within their own clans resulted in a specific kind of military (or militarised) mentality. Military values were deeply rooted, while one of the most cherished and traditional rights of the Albanians was (and still is) the right to bear arms. The common law (i.e. the unwritten *Lek Dukagjini* codex) created under those circumstances left deep traces in the collective memory and political culture.[1] The dispersion of the clans and their own confinement contributed to the very late appearance of a national consciousness and a sense of national unity.

Dispersed and disunited Albanian clans were unable to offer significant resistance to the Turks. When they finally decided to join the other Balkan peoples in the battle on Kosovo Field (1389), it was too late to change the outcome. There were sporadic attempts at

resistance by the late fifteenth century but once subjugated, the Albanians adjusted themselves much better to the new rulers than the other Balkan peoples. The most significant event in the older history is the rebellion led by Gjergj Kastrioti (known as Skënderbeg)[2] in the fifteenth century. He is the most prominent national hero, symbolising not only the resistance of the Albanians, but also their national unity. The brief period of independence that followed the uprising left an indelible mark in the collective memory.[3] In recent interpretations of history the emphasis is now on Skënderbeg's alleged contribution to the weakening of the Turkish drive towards the heart of Europe (and towards Western Europe) (Vaknin 1999). Similar self-perceptions as "defender" of Western civilisation against Turkish invasion prevail also in Bulgarian, Serbian and Romanian historiography.

The stability of the Ottoman Empire was much due to its tolerance of ethnic, linguistic and religious communities as long as they did not create a basis for formation of national consciousness. Albanian soldiers recruited voluntarily into the Ottoman military were initially granted land property, the so-called *timar system* which had its problems: warlords were thus able to seize real power both in political and military terms, and as they grew more potent they became more ambitious and less obedient to the central rule. An alternative basis for military loyalty had to be introduced and conversion to Islam was the most reliable way to secure social cohesion and military efficiency. By the eighteenth century two-thirds of the Albanians had converted to Islam and the power balance among the ethnic groups in the region was shifting according to the success of the Islamisation. With Albanians incorporated in the administrative and particularly the military system, often in high ranks, the others perceived them as merely Turks' allies. Many Albanians dreaded the Christian (Slav) pretenders to the Turk patrimony, which had granted them privileged status. This was a collision of political outlooks or concepts among the Balkan nations.

Albanians were the last of the Balkan peoples to develop the loose tribal organisation into a more coherent community, based on a distinct national identity. The national movement gathered momentum in 1878 when prominent national leaders established the Albanian League in the Kosovo town of Prizren. There is still a dispute among historians over the real objectives of the League. Many believe that the dream (or project) of Greater Albania was defined in Prizren. The League, however, was originally a cultural movement; the political substance was implanted much later. When the movement began to envisage the formation of a nation-state it also became a framework for the dream of a Greater Albania. Neither circumstances nor the Albanians' particular strategy favoured the creation of a military as a means of national liberation or a symbol of national unity.

Albanians' loyalty to the Empire was pragmatic and sometimes misused in personal areas. Many Albanians felt—as did the other Balkan peoples—that the final decline of Ottoman rule was an opportunity to gain state independence, but they were not united to join the Balkan League. The efforts of the Serbs and Montenegrins to make Albanians choose their side in the First Balkan War were in vain, Albanians following the maxim "better the devil you know" (Vickers 1997: 53-76).

Finally, Albanians were not the ultimate arbiters of their statehood, which was a result of bargaining among the Great Powers. The state that was created at the negotiating table in 1912 became one of the major national (and regional) traumas, since more than a half the Albanian population was left outside its borders. Being under the auspices of the biased custodians, it was also deprived of the opportunity to learn its own lessons in state building.

"Sovereign" Albania faced tremendous difficulties, particularly in terms of institution building and establishment of the central authority. By 1924 it had experienced severe conditions of internal divisions, poverty and anarchy. Firm institutional foundations and a workable political authority were set up only under the leadership of Ahmet Zogu, a minister of internal affairs and of war until 1922 and then prime minister. His combination of dictatorial methods and tolerance for the traditional form of rule seemed to be the only workable governing formula. He secured clans' loyalty through different means, such as a system of "pensions" and "salaries" associated with the granting of military titles (Vickers 1997: 53-76). For some time, all chieftains were obliged to pledge their *besa* (oath) directly to Zogu.

The national army was built during Zogu's government. Until 1925 it had consisted of about 5,000 men strictly selected from Zogu's home district. They appeared to be his personal guard rather than a serious army capable of guaranteeing national security. Universal conscription began the same year, but it was conducted under direct Italian control and therefore did not necessarily mean that the central government had a full military control over the state territory. In accordance with the second Pact of Tirana a large Italian military mission was deployed in 1927, making Albania a *de facto* Italian protectorate. In 1928 Zogu was granted royal status and proclaimed

himself "Zogu I, King of Albanians". At that occasion he granted each officer a step up in rank, a pay rise and a dazzling new uniform. The purely symbolic steps did not change the reality in which Albania had no sovereignty even over its territory and population. As for the Albanian military, the only control it knew before the state disappeared in 1939 was that exercised by foreign officials.

This Albanian military had not been a serious institution even in the eyes of its own officers, having no honourable role within a society in which everybody had the right to bear arms and brigandage was one of the principal means of livelihood for a part of the population. Since 1927 King Zogu had been trying to secure order in the chaotic country and to strengthen his personal dictatorship by legally prohibiting the carrying of arms (but excepting his own Mati tribe and the northern tribe of Merdites). The regular army was poorly equipped and over-dependent. The situation could not even be described as humiliating, since the military had not developed any kind of corporate ethos. Not surprisingly, King Zogu never really relied on it, and with British assistance he organised a gendarmerie as a second armed pillar of the state. However, all that was insufficient to secure his position or prevent the Italian annexation. Finally he went into exile with his family and 500 officers of the high command. The regular soldiers voluntarily deposed their arms when disarmed by the Italians or even by members of the Merdites tribe. Albania returned to the chaos of war, which began to look like its natural status.

2.2. Civil-Military Relations under the Communist Regime

The Second World War seemed to bring a dramatic turnabout in Albania's national history. Albania and Yugoslavia were the only European countries that won their liberation and established Communist regimes without any significant assistance from the Soviet Army, but they greatly differed otherwise. In the early phase, the Albanian Communist movement's development and state building were under the heavy influence of both the Soviet and Yugoslav leaderships. The Soviet influence might be seen as more ideological/political and strategic, while the Yugoslav one was more direct and operational.

In a country deeply divided, with inter-clan frictions and drawn into anarchy, there was no authentic Communist movement. The Albanian Communist Party (ACP), the last one in the Balkans, was created in the Soviet Union in 1928 under the auspices of the Comintern and lacked any social basis or wider societal support. At the beginning of

the war ACP had only 150 registered members and no possibilities of mobilising the people into a resistance, even though the national sentiment was strongly against the Italians and their puppet government. The myth of the heroic partisan movement started with direct assistance from the more experienced and better-organised Yugoslav Communists. It underpinned the new regime's legitimacy, but was *de facto* false: the society was not even able to rally around a common cause during the occupation years. Clashes emerged over political, inter-clan, social and even national unity issues (the creation of Greater Albania).[4] The existence of different factions, but also interference by external actors, made it likely that Albania might even face a fratricidal war.

The National Liberation Army (NLA) was formally established in July 1943, with help from the Yugoslav partisans. Although lacking the societal support that the Yugoslav movement had achieved, the Albanian partisans eventually obtained high prestige as the only well-organised and highly devoted group with a clear strategy in the struggle against Nazi forces. The foundation for their success was turning to the peasantry, which had always been disregarded by domestic and foreign rulers.

With some war experience and the military created on a completely new basis, the Communist Albania was now to establish national civil-military relations for first time in history, although external influences remained to be important determinants for a long time. At the outset the political and military leadership of the National Liberation movement created a symbiotic relationship, which lasted through the first period after the war.[5] The Communist elite arose from the guerrilla military, while NLA staff consisted mainly of Communists.[6] After the consolidation of power, the relationship substantially changed. The civil-military relations fluctuated according to the internal situation and the foreign orientation of the leadership. The only constant thing was the unquestionable role of the Albanian Party of Labour (formerly the Albanian Communist Party), embodied in the personality of the dictator, Enver Hoxha.

Communist Albania went through four phases of its foreign policy orientation, defined by which powerful ally was preferred. The very close relationship with Tito's Yugoslavia until 1948 was just a continuation of the wartime relationship. This intimacy became uncomfortable when the Albanian leadership began to suspect Tito of having ambitions to create a Balkan federation with Albania as the seventh republic. Yugoslavia's friction with the Comintern in 1948

was a perfect justification for Albania seeking more powerful ally—the Soviet Union. This "honeymoon" lasted until 1961, when re-established friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia made Hoxha suspicious. China was now chosen as the preferable supporter, being seen as both powerful and distant enough not to threaten Albania's independence. When this long-distance romance ended in 1978, the leadership opted for self-reliance and voluntary international isolation.

These radical changes in foreign and security policy were not always caused by external pressures but often reflected the dictator's internal concerns. Burdened with distrust and sometimes even paranoia, the foreign policy was in line with the more persistent features of the history of the Albanians, who never found the proper balance when looking for an ally who would be at the same time powerful enough to protect them from the hostile neighbours and remote enough to let them preserve their own lifestyle and traditions.

The abrupt changes of external security orientations echoed loudly within the military and had a major impact on the civil-military relations. The frequent and sometimes radical shifts in training practices and military procurement undermined military professionalism (if there was any). The army could never be sure of its strategic perspective, military skills or military mission. Every turnabout in foreign policy was explained in an Orwellian manner: "What was true yesterday is no longer valid today." There was only one constant—the leader and the country are always on the right course.

Every change in client relationships was followed by purges, trials and even executions among the senior officers. One of the first victims was Temo Sajko, the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy when the first alliance with Yugoslavia ended. In 1961 he was executed together with other military officers on the basis of the accusation that "in collaboration with the Sixth American Fleet, Greece and Yugoslavia" they sought to invade Albania. One of Hoxha's close associates, Beqir Balluku, was removed in 1974 and his successor, Mehmet Shehu, suffered the same fate. He had been known as a founder of the guerrilla movement and as one of the most capable military leaders and could potentially undermine Hoxha's cult of personality, built on the latter's false and exaggerated partisan background, perhaps "borrowed" from Shehu's guerrilla record (Vickers & Pettifer 1997: 209-220). Not surprisingly, Shehu apparently committed suicide after he was purged in 1981 and was replaced with a junior candidate member of the Politburo, Prokop Murra. Between military officers and the political elite there were permanent feelings of insecurity and mutual distrust, weakening and, finally, killing the symbiosis born in the war. Like every Stalinist leader, Hoxha eliminated his (imaginary or real) political rivals at the outset. He was mostly afraid of his ex-comrades, who were very distinguished military leaders, so they must be disabled and the Army dispersed.[7]

The military had a big handicap as an institution. It had to build its public image and legitimacy on the partisan mythology, a very shaky ground in society that had backed the partisan movement strictly along clan lines. The military that emerged out of the war consisted not only of Communists but was also mainly from the Tosk tribes. It mirrored the internal division in the Albanian national body. Its atempted image as both an all-national institution and a symbol of national unity was actually contradictory and threatened by the divergence between mythology and reality (Vickers & Pettifer 1997: 169).

One of the most difficult and humiliating periods for the Army started in 1966 when Hoxha discovered Chinese methods of reinforcing party control over the military. Military ranks were abolished as a sign of a "bourgeois class differentiation" between the officers and ordinary soldiers. Before this radical step the Central Committee of APL, in its Fifteenth Plenum, approved the so-called "Open Letter" sent to "all the Communists, officers, soldiers, and the rest of the people". Behind the official explanation on the necessity to strengthen connections between the military and society there was a very prosaic motive—reducing the prestige of the military leadership and its potential to become a power centre rivalling the party. When military professionalism became a secondary consideration to political reliability in determining promotions, the Army lost the very essence of its professional ethos.[8]

On the surface the model of party control over the military resembled that of other Communist regimes of Eastern Europe.

> The APL relations with the military ran along the lines of the Soviet prototype. Party control had been channelled through a special department in the Central Committee with party committees and cells extending to all company-size units. Political commissars had been installed to oversee every military commander (Danopoulos & Çopani 1997: 110).

These measures were accompanied by the secret police and its system of informants. Formally, there was an institutional political structure behind military policy.[9] Behind the constitutional façade, however, Hoxha had direct and personal authority over the military until his death in 1985. His supreme position as Commander-in-Chief was supported by the Constitution giving it to "the First Secretary of the Albanian Party of Labour's Central Committee", who at the same time possessed the function of head of the state.

The political and professional profile of the military during the Communist period was ambiguous. While seen as an important pillar of political power, it was also the object of rigorous scrutiny. It had a special role in symbolising national unity and heroism against the hostile outside world and was a colossal institution, but also primitive and backward. Deprived of contacts with modern military doctrines and technology, it had to engage in imaginary endeavours.

> Out of a population of some three million, some 800 000 men [were] to serve in defence, most of them in the army, whereas the other belonged to the territorial forces, the student armed youth units and civil defence. In addition, general defence roles were allotted to many segments of government branches, state enterprises, and public service sector. In this wider sense, almost all the people, from 16 to 60 years old, were directly affected by defence planning (Chopani 1996: 101).

In addition, the proportion of soldiers in the population even exceeded that of the Warsaw Pact countries, with the highest ratio of commissioned officers in the world—one for every two enlisted men (Zhulali 1995). The country with the lowest per capita income in Europe spent a hefty part of the nation's budget on defence, particularly during the last two decades before the collapse of Communism (Isakovic 2003). In spite of that, the military was unsatisfactorily equipped and inefficient, lacking any rational analysis or strategic thinking. Most of the time it was busy with senseless plans, mass actions and exercises supposed to create an image of a heroic mountain people determined to preserve the unconquerable Albanian highlands. This specific variant of the Marxist, concept of a people in arms was supposed to increase internal cohesion against real or imagined external enemies but the question is whether the Army was ever capable of exercising its essential military mission. Whether or not Albania did in fact face any immediate threat after 1945, the state leadership perceived, or wanted to present, such threats as very likely scenarios, even though the national security policy treated them as secondary to the internal security of the regime.

Society was highly militarised in a specific way, aptly called "bunkerisation"[10]. Every development in the region, or even beyond it, was easily transformed into an urgent security issue. The political elite used this to create a xenophobic and paranoiac social atmosphere, in order to preserve the internal status quo. The Land of Eagles was transformed into a Land of Bunkers. The siege mentality was part of the political culture, but was also important for the military to show its indispensability—in fact, imagined and exaggerated threats faced an equally imagined military proficiency and capability.

As long as there was a conviction that the country was in danger, the military could rely on its position in society and disregard its objective inability to face any real external challenge. Illusions were a substitution for real life, the sealed borders and totalitarian system preventing any external disturbance of Albanian virtual reality. Although highly backward, primitive and humiliated, the military corps could enjoy a relatively favourable social status and be more satisfied than any other Communist military could have been under such circumstances.

2.3. Democratic Transition and the Military

The earth-shaking changes in Eastern Europe eventually reached Albania. Internal processes had already prepared the fall of the dictatorship; the collapse of the other Communist regimes was only a catalyst for the deep internal crisis. The pressures for changes from the different segments of society quickly mounted and President Ramiz Alia (Hoxha's successor in 1985) had no alternative to holding elections in March 1991. The APL won an overwhelming majority, the opposition being weak and having little time to organise. The faked victory could not stop the demise of the regime. Soon growing popular unrest forced the Government to resign in June 1991. The strongest opposition party, the Democrats of Sali Berisha won the next elections in March 1992. This turnabout was expected to bring a decisive break with the Communism. The new government of Aleksander Meksi faced the daunting task of reconstruction. The near-collapse of the economy and the breakdown of social order made thousands of desperate citizens flee to Italy and Greece.

The behaviour of the military during the turnabout was in marked contrast to the dramatic social ambience. The use of military force against the mass anti-Communist protests was considered and the Presidential Council made a formal decision to declare martial law, but eventually President Alia withdrew it, not being convinced of the loyalty and obedience of the lower ranks of the military officers (Danopoulos & Çopani 1997: 113). The military, which had been without a clear chain of command and authority as well as without military ranks for years, did nothing and showed no willingness to rescue the Party and/or the regime. In the past decade the military had suffered the same pains and illnesses as the rest of the society. The widespread process of decay of every segment of the state apparatus and social institutions did not exempt the military.

In the late 1980ies, the first public information began to appear about problems with conscription, unwillingness to accept assignments to remote areas of the country, social malaise and the growth in religious belief among youth. Although the military press only quoted instances of "individual and group excesses", the situation worsened rapidly until the 1990ies saw a complete decline of military order and discipline. Official explanations of the alarming situation referred to an increased influence from the West, i.e. the political liberalisation and democratisation of the society, which was at least partly true: the Cold War security environment could no longer provide an acceptable justification for the total mobilisation and militarisation of the society.

In 1990 the APL made an attempt to restore military prestige and influence in politics by closer integration of military officers into the political leadership, needing a loyal ally during the period of social unrest at home and Communist disintegration everywhere in Eastern Europe. Gen. Kiço Mustaqi, a former chief of the general staff and first deputy minister of defence as well as a candidate member of the Politburo, was appointed minister of defence and full member of the Politburo in 1990. He appeared on the public scene in the 1986 purge campaign where Mehmet Shehu was removed, but President Alia soon replaced him with Muhamet Karakaçi, a young former officer and deputy chief of the general staff. Alia reportedly feared that Mustaqi was planning a military coup d'état.

Finally, the political leadership realised that something had to be done in terms of a major military reform.[11] In November 1991 the Communist-led coalition government reintroduced military ranks and Western-style uniforms replaced the plain Chinese fatigues. The main reason for this initial act was the alleged emphasis on military professionalism, training and discipline, at least in a symbolic way. The political opposition called for further reforms in terms of reductions of military spending and military units as well as rationalisation of the conscript system.

In early 1992 the post-Communist political complexion was only beginning to evolve. The position of the military was still ambiguous and discipline broke down completely. Dereliction of duty, absenteeism and desertion became epidemic, due to poor food, deteriorations in living standard and working conditions and low pay. Many soldiers were among those who fled to Italy and Greece in 1991. The great majority of the officers were still formally APL members (the party was renamed the Socialist Party of Albania (SPA) in June 1991). Despite the promised reform and, in particular, depoliticisation of the military, the coalition government could not accomplish the task in a democratic manner. The SPA Political directorate continued to exist within the Ministry of Defence. Radical military reform as well as civil-military reform had to wait for better times and different political leaders.

The peaceful behaviour of the military during the critical period of the transition is usually explained in two ways. The first says that the military staff resisted the temptation to use force against their own people in spite of the demands from a group of high military officers because there was an internal division between the reform and the conservative wing, where the dominance of the former made the military neutral. The second explanation stresses that the military corps was in disarray and unable to make any decision. There was nothing left in the Communist system for the military to be anxious to protect. The demoralised, impoverished and humiliated military officers had nothing to lose any more and stayed idle. In 1990-92 there was no reliable basis for a military intervention in either direction. The officer corps had not developed any corporate interest or even awareness of such a need, and the conscripts were beyond control. The vast majority of military officers welcomed all promises for democratic reforms, but did not realise the extent of future trials.

2.4. (Post-)Totalitarian Civil-Military Reforms

The Albanian political environment did not essentially change when attempts emerged to create a new constitutional framework. What was usually the easier part of the post-Communist transition appeared to be a very controversial process in Albania. For a country with no

experience of rule of law or a democratic legal and political culture—and where the traditional (clan) codex still went before state authority—it was a most challenging task. Putting politics within the boundaries defined by law was a mere chimaera: since politics could not overcome clan divisions, the system of law rested on no workable state institutions.

The first multiparty parliament commenced work by abrogating the Constitution of 1976 and adopting an interim constitution (The Law on the Main Constitutional Provisions) in April 1991, which was to serve as a small transitory constitution pending a final completed version of the new constitution that was expected to be adopted soon (Luarasi 1996). The hoped-for reforms did not come true, however, and the constitution became the principal bone of contention among the political forces. Several unsuccessful drafts from either end of the political spectrum were tabled in 1993-95, before the new Constitution was finally adopted and approved by a national referendum in November 1998. The issue is likely to remain controversial since the main opposition party boycotted its drafting as well as the voting process.

From a legal point of view, some very elementary premises were defined for providing civilian control over the military. An analysis of these constitutional provisions indicates some ambiguity and weaknesses in the division of power between the legislative and the executive branch. Although imperfect, the initial legal reforms would have had some practical significance if the Albanian state and the military had not collapsed in the 1997 crisis. Since then Albania has been in a phase that might be called a transition from authoritarianism to anarchy, only recently showing some certain stabilisation.

The Albanian case is the only one where the issue of a consistent legal framework and constitutionally defined relationships between the three branches of power was often meaningless. The institutional structure has either deviated in operation or failed to work to all. For instance, the Parliament was intended to be the central democratic institution, especially regarding civilian control over security matters. Yet in spite of this constitutional role, the Parliament was in an extremely weak position. Some analysts tried to explain this in terms of the understandable deficiency of competent civilian expertise in defence matters among members of Parliament and the relevant Parliamentary Committee, which is typical for emerging democracies without parliamentarian experience. On the other hand, President Berisha, as leader of the ruling party, had every opportunity to

discipline and control the work of the legislative body. For long the functioning of the Parliament was blocked by highly antagonistic and even violent behaviour of members of opposing parliamentary groups. After the armed incident in September 1997, it was nicknamed the "Kalashnikov Parliament".[12]

In regard to the position and functioning of the Government and ministries, one may make a distinction between two phases during and after Berisha's years in power. There were nine governments since the end of the Communist regime and results of their work are catastrophic in every sphere of society, which indicates the inefficiency of their functioning. During Berisha's period, the government was in fact an obedient servant to an omnipotent president. The government itself as well as every ministry was replete with people loyal to Berisha—northerners and/or Democratic Party members. The state establishment became a one-party structure, where the ideology of Communism was simply replaced by clan loyalty. Patronage, nepotism and purges did not leave any room for promotion of expertise or any kind of merit principle.

The appointment of the first civilian minister of defence was supposed to be a major step towards democratisation of the security sector, but merely became a facade for Berisha's personal control over the realm. The minister, Safet Zhulali was known as Berisha's "iron man" or No. 2 in the Democratic Party hierarchy (Basha 1997). His first move was a radical purge of the ministry's staff and the military corps on a purely political and even clan basis, seen to be in line with the political aims of his party boss. Decision-making and exercising authority in the security domain were concentrated in very few institutions (or, more precisely, persons), which were *de facto* unaccountable. Eventually, Berisha's presidency was transformed into a personalistic form of governing.

When the Democratic Party won the second free elections in 1992, many believed that democracy was on its way. The change of government was expected to make the promised reforms come true, especially in the economic sphere.[13] Berisha seemed like the right man to lead the country out of its long Communist nightmare. Yet within only four years he created what Human Rights Watch named "a one-party state based on fear and corruption". After the unsuccessful referendum in November 1994 where the citizens rejected the draft constitution, he undertook every necessary step to secure his victory in the next elections. The parliamentary election fraud in May 1996[14]—and especially his re-election under martial law in March 1997—

showed Berisha's leadership to become steadily more dictatorial.[15] Many understood that he would never agree to be removed from office through fair elections. Albania possessed the institutions of a Western democracy, but increasingly resembled the inter-war dictatorships of Eastern Europe.

Berisha directly controlled the work of every political institution. Civilian control over the army became the personal control of the president and commander-in-chief. The alleged positive reforms within the military were loudly announced in order to get international support from the USA and NATO. What really went on in the military was a mystery, but the evident strength of the military's functional rival—the security forces—indicated that Berisha wanted a more reliable partner to enforce his policy. The recipe was well known throughout Albania's political history. While in office Berisha tried to consolidate support for himself by appointing people from his native town of Tropoja and other parts of the north to powerful positions, particularly in the security forces. Thus most of the police, whether in plain clothes or the uniformed branch, were from the north. The National Intelligence Service—a security organisation known as SHIK, after its Albanian initials—expanded to a force of 3,000 agents supported by another 3,000 informers and operated as an enforcement corps for the Democratic Party. The security forces were Berisha's "Praetorian Guard", since their absolute loyalty was secured by a blood relationship, which in Albania has always had a sacred value and priority over other affiliations.

Dictatorship in the name of democracy and pyramid schemes instead of free initiative were the result of the mutation of the Communist system.[16] Soon the revolt in the south turned violent. At this stage, people in southern Albania were rebelling against the regime. On 3 March 1997, the Parliament declared a state of emergency and the very next day Berisha was re-elected president for another five-year term.[17] He was disdainful enough to believe that his regime had enough troops and police to suppress the insurgents in the south—"red Communist units directed by foreign intelligence agencies", as he called them. This was a clear miscalculation because, apart from the well-paid secret police, the government in Tirana had no public support whatsoever.

The major surprise for the regime came from the military side. For many it was an enigma how the military could collapse in just a few days, making Albania a collapsed state without a military. After the mass desertion by military units, the insurgents seized weapons from

government arsenals and Berisha had to admit a partial defeat. On 5 March, Gen. Çopani, the President's military adviser, replaced the Chief of Staff Gen. Kosova.[18] This desperate step could not stop the army's disintegration. Many cases were reported of army commanders and soldiers abandoning the posts without a shot after rioters stormed them. The ruling party saw the behaviour of "some military officers" as a disgrace. *Rilindja Democratike*, Berisha's party newspaper, said that military prosecutors were investigating cases of suspected dereliction of duty and that soldiers and officers "of all ranks" against whom there was evidence would be put on trial and risked stern punishment.[19]

The post-Communist Albanian army, which should have been granted a new military mission, found itself in the old familiar role during this uprising (as once before during the Hoxha regime) of defending the ruling Party from a popular insurrection. It was called to action in protests even before the formal imposing of a state of emergency. In late January military forces were posted outside the Defence Ministry, the other public buildings and the state radio and TV centre. But the major problems within the military increased the very moment the state of emergency was proclaimed by the Parliament.

There were several reasons for the military's collapse. First, it was almost impossible to maintain military unity in actions against citizens (the army was given shoot-to-kill orders under the state of emergency). Secondly, many military members had also lost their life savings in criminal pyramid schemes. And thirdly, there was a quiet but strong dissatisfaction with president Berisha's "military reform" when the military was practically decapitated. In the course of 3-4 months the army staff was divided into three parts: one joined the rebels, the other stayed loyal to the government and the third consisted of deserters engaging in gang criminality. There are even opinions that the unrest in the south was orchestrated by various generals who had been laid off by Berisha.

Peace was restored with political and military assistance from the international community (Operation *Alba*) and parliamentary elections were held in June 1997. Prime Minister Fatos Nano, the Socialist Party leader who came to power in July, undertook what looked like a mission impossible—to restore and stabilise the state and to provide basic conditions for personal security and public order. Surprisingly, the new government relatively swiftly strengthened the state institutions and conducted important legal reform. The 1998

Constitution closed the dispute and created a new institutional setting with the President in a limited executive role. The state is still shaken by sometimes even violent clashes between the two major political parties, but the major crisis seems to be overcome.

2.5. Rebuilding the Albanian Military: The Enigma of the Dead Army

Albania is still an enigma to foreign observers and its own citizens. The 1992 turnabout was supposed to be an overture into new political developments. The events in 1997 showed that a long and uncertain road lies ahead. Democracy is still not really on the agenda, the primary task being to establish stable and workable political institutions. This includes rebuilding the military, which collapsed with (or even before) other parts of the state apparatus. While other post-communist countries have made (varying) progress in military reforms, Albania often looks like Sisyphus when trying to establish central state authority over the whole territory and at least a minimum of civilian control over the armed forces. The 1999 regional crisis over Kosovo had a tremendous impact, while new security threats include organised crime, corruption and the proliferation of non-state security actors.

The period under Berisha's rule may be described as simulation of political, social and military reforms. Albania pretended to be democratising the military and the security sector (Brokaj 2001). Some radical changes did occur in or to the army, but they were either cosmetic and decorative or very substantial and punitive. The first range of measures were on depoliticisation, the aim being to boost military reform by the Law on Departyisation and Depoliticisation of Some State Bodies. In addition, the Law on the Status of the Military banned soldiers from any form of political activity (these provisions were also essentially included in the 1998 Constitution). However, the way they were implemented provoked resistance from a part of the professional military.

The first government action was to downsize the irrationally large officer corps. The first wave hit officers over 48 years and all commissioned officers who had not graduated from military academy, leaving about half of the officer corps. The painful measures seemed to be accepted without any serious reaction. The army went from 18,000 commissioned officers to 8,200, with only one general (Zhulali 1995). That number soon increased significantly to 25, many promotions seen as dubious. The reductions were made on the

grounds of depoliticisation and rationalisation and the official evaluation was that

> the Albanian military responded positively to the liberal changes introduced by the Berisha government (Danopoulos & Çopani 1997: 116).

In reality (but not officially), there was a purge of the offspring of Tosk partisan families.[20] The dramatic changes undertaken in only a two-year period (1992-94) had a boomerang effect on the regime during the 1997 events and later.

After the 1997 crisis the military was hit once again. The new government undertook "new" reforms, similar to the previous ones but in the opposite direction. The first victim was the Chief of Staff, who, according to the official statement issued in mid August 1997 by the new President's office, was sacked to rid the armed forces of the "old guard".[21] The new Defence Minister Sabit Brokaj told the Parliament he would replace "inexperienced and incriminated" people with experienced officers. Eventually, 40 top military officers were sacked in the same month. In the political code of the official vocabulary "experienced" meant officers sacked from the army during the campaign from 1992, while "inexperienced" were those officers who had more recent qualifications and were loyal to Berisha.[22]

The "depoliticisation" has, clearly, followed a different logic than that exercised in other post-Communist countries. So far, every government behaved in accordance with a winner-takes-all philosophy, while the military corps has been re-politicised all over again. It may be the political class, rather than the military, that was not ready for democratisation. Also it has never been clear which criterion has priority—political or clan loyalty. The top political changes, which are part of democratic life, have brought traumatic changes for the officers of any qualification and political/clan orientation.

In April 1995, the Council of Defence adopted a document on the Security Policy and Defence Policy of Albania (Chopani 1996; Koceku 1995), where Albania has no stated enemy country. The fairly sterile official documents are unrelated to the real security agenda and were probably created for external consumption. Yet, Albanian state and society are clearly still deeply traumatised and paranoid, which creates immense problems for the process of normalisation in the country and in the region. In spite of the official posture, the major

security concerns relate to neighbouring states (Yugoslavia, Greece and Macedonia). The appeal for an integral solution of the historical "Albanian Question" as well as demands on Albanians' rights in the Yugoslav province of Kosovo and in the western region of Macedonia have defined highly explosive sources of conflict.

Officially, the Albanian military's main missions are guaranteeing lasting peace, preventing war, defending the country, and assisting in disaster relief. The 1998 Constitution, however, sees both an external and an internal military mission. Constitutionally, the Army is to secure the independence of the country as well as protect territorial integrity and constitutional order. If the constitutional order or public security are under threat, the military may intervene (upon Parliament's decision) only when police forces are not able to restore order.

In fact, the Army has had little success in either mission. First, it had the misfortune to be engaged against its own people, which fragmented it. It could neither save the regime, nor solve the internal problems. Within months the (embryonic) state building and the institution building of the military lay in ruins. Even today, there is a deep split within society and the military in regard to the use of force. Those who took part in the events claim that it was their duty to obey the orders of the political leadership. The opponents argue that the regime had lost its legitimacy long before the revolt and its orders were completely illegitimate. The consequences were catastrophic—the military's legitimacy suffered badly and the clan division looms larger than ever.

In addition, the military is still very ill-trained and badly equipped. Not yet overhauled after the domestic crisis, the army then faced an external crisis. In March 1998 the Yugoslav forces repeatedly shell-fired Kosovo Liberation Army bases in northern Albania. The Albanian military hesitated in returning fire. A similar but more serious situation happened a year later during the NATO intervention against Yugoslavia, and again the military and politicians waited for NATO protection. Regardless of such incidents, it is now a widespread opinion that the military is in such poor condition that it could hardly serve as a serious defence force for its country.

Hence, political statements that "the Albanian Army has changed into a modern army of the Western type" sound absurd. It has a long way to go to become a respectable military force. For long it has fluctuated between being a regular state institution and a paramilitary

force out of any state control. A major problem is that any reform endeavour in the military presupposes a stable state apparatus.

2.6. Looking West: International Environment and Civil-Military Relations in Albania

Opening its doors to the world, which knew nothing about the hermetically isolated Albania, was seen as one of Berisha's policy achievements, while domestic opponents complained that he neglected appalling internal problems. On the other hand, intensified cooperation with the West, especially in the military domain, seemed a way to stimulate domestic endeavours. Civil-military relations defined one of the issues used to be addressed in a new and positive way in accordance with the democratic principles of NATO countries.

The country that was known as "the indomitable citadel of communism" seemed to adopt its new foreign and security policy orientation in a surprisingly swift and smooth way. It was the first former Communist country to apply to join NATO in 1992 and one of the first to sign the Partnership for Peace in February 1994. These efforts to integrate into Euro-Atlantic security structures were interpreted as Albania's concrete contribution to enhancing peace and security in the region (Chopani 1996: 104). Behind this official rhetoric, however, other goals were inspired by what was seen as Albania's national interests. The country's foreign and security policy is one of the rare issues over which all main political parties have agreed.

As usual, Albania wants protection by a mighty (and remote) military ally. Some claim that there is a tendency to think of governance as a partnership with foreigners rather than managing the needs and concerns of the public (International Crisis Group Reprt 2001). The explanation that by joining NATO Albania aimed at filling the "security vacuum" in which it found itself at the end of the Cold War is too weak and vague. The Balkan security environment was certainly never peaceful, but Albania's main security threats are not of a military nature. Once opened towards the external world, Albania became aware of its defence inferiority. The external security guarantees seemed the best solution, with many additional useful functions. Albania's wish to be join the West is largely argued in the same way as in the other candidate states: "naturally belonging to Western civilisation". Albania's real priority, however, is rather to get Western economic, humanitarian and political assistance. Given its catastrophic record, Albania is one of the leading countries among

consumers of international aid and will presumably so remain. Yet the official standpoint is that full NATO membership will help Albania to overcome its damaging Communist legacy of isolation and help the reform processes. The more realistic approach is that building closer ties with great and powerful allies is seen to bolster pan-Albanian interests in the Balkans. The Constitution proclaims Albania's concerns over the status of Albanians in neighbouring countries.[23]

Among the military officers there have been two opposite attitudes. The so-called progressive or reform part of the military corps is allegedly truly devoted to the policy of European integration. Another group of officers is allegedly less enthusiastic and would prefer to stay outside NATO. In their view, NATO membership would subject the country and the military to the alliance discipline, over which Albania, as a small state, would have little influence. Instead, they prefer closer bilateral ties with Turkey and the Islamic part of the world.[24] Despite these alleged divergences, there is no substantial contradiction in the motives of the military. The goals (i.e. Albanian national interests) are the same, only the preferred allies differ. After the 1999 NATO war over Kosovo it seems clear to every Albanian officer who is the main ally.

The official pro-NATO policy has helped emphasise the military's imperative of urgent modernisation. The military equipment is extremely old (most of it Chinese from the 1970ies). The Berisha government hoped that prospects for NATO membership would facilitate the military re-equipment, but what happened was quite the opposite: during the 1997 uprising the military's depots were completely emptied. The goal of creating a modern well-equipped army had to be redefined into rebuilding any military structure and disarming civilians.

USA was always Albania's main donor and provider of military assistance. However, Albania was impatient with the international military aid being given in small portions and in the form of foreign experts training and educating the Army. However, neither NATO nor the USA was ready to make any major investments in the Albanian military infrastructure.

The Berisha administration was extremely eager in its commitment to NATO. The best demonstration of this was during the NATO operations in Bosnia, when Albania's government put at the disposal of NATO forces all its waterways, ports and airports, and created all the necessary military facilities on its territory.[25] The rewards expected by Tirana included support for a definite solution to the

"Albanian Question", full membership in the Alliance and political support for its internal policies. The latter was particularly important as a kind of internal legitimisation for the ruling party i.e. as a compensation for all the domestic failures.

Despite all its efforts and the official statements that

> the threat to Europe comes more from the south, not the north, so the enlargement of NATO should start from Albania (Zhulali 1995),

Albania has not made it yet. At the peak of the Kosovo crisis, there was a belief that if Albania could not get into NATO, then it was good to have NATO in Albania; but that was a consequence of the external situation rather than an achievement of Albanian policy.

Albania's chances of joining NATO are nil, it being obvious that its economic backwardness makes bringing its armed forces up to NATO standards a mission impossible, which would have been extremely financially onerous for both NATO and Albania. Even the dedicated cooperation under PfP entailed substantial costs that Albania is not really able to afford. After the tremendous internal and external crises, Albania has never been so far away from NATO membership. The Atlantic dream is still badly needed in Albania, the question being why—for internal or external security reasons, or both? Presumably, the dream is among the rare things that can unite traumatised, impoverished, desperate and disunited Albanians. The real problem is whether they will be able to recognise the proclaimed values of the Euro-Atlantic community or would rather just take advantage of its military usefulness.

2.7. Albanian Turmoil Once Again: Political Decay and the Military

The escalation of violence in the country and in Kosovo made Albania a *place d'arme*. Few, if any, countries in the world have seen so many weapons and military groups under no civilian control whatsoever. After the 1997 collapse between 500,000 and 750,000 weapons from depots were possessed by civilians (Report of the International Crisis Group 1998), making one weapon for every four adults. And adults were not the only ones with access to the weapons—the figure of killed or wounded children (by incident) is still terrifying.

The international humanitarian mission, ALBA, was deployed in the country to help the authorities restore order and give basic humanitarian aid. In winter 1998/99 a large number of members of the

Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) found shelter in the northern highlands and put the region under their effective control.[26] With the beginning of the Kosovo war, huge NATO forces were deployed too. Even apart from the numerous mafia-type groups and local gangs, the various other military troops for a while outnumbered the regular army.

Once again Albania is at a crossroad and not many things are clearer than in 1991/92. The government is focused on rebuilding the ravaged country by economic reconstruction, restoration of the political order, reforming the police and the army. The police force has largely fallen apart, as has the army, and civilians have appropriated guns from their arsenals.[27] The whole state apparatus has been rebuilt and re-institutionalised from its ashes. In this endeavour there is a big question: who is going to be given priority—the police or the military? Furthermore, stable and workable political institutions are *sine qua non* for any civilian (not to talk about democratic) control of the military and the other security structures. The most urgent task for the state is to recapture the monopoly of use of force, a rather difficult task when the main opposition party calls for disobedience, claims citizens' right to keep the weapons "for self-defence" and even calls for an armed rebellion. Today's opposition (Berisha's party) is trying to picture Albania as a country without a government and holds hostage the democratic development.

Formally, all governments have declared their commitment to democratic principles, including civilian control of the military; but each of them has, on the contrary, tried to take control over the military and police forces under a democratic facade and in the name of Western ideals. Internal clan divisions still existing in the society additionally complicate the military's transformation. Despite the apparent advantage of ethnic homogeneity, Albania faced a state- and nation-building process. Albanians have the difficult task to turn their country from loosely organised tribes into a nation, and to enable a transition beyond blood ties, the construction of a civil society and state-building upon principles based in the rule of law.

The Communists imposed community co-operation, establishing artificial and painful links between individuals and between them and the state while creating no basis for any sense of community. The fall of Communism left Albania in a state of anarchy and faced with a crisis of identity.[28] Albanians lack a strong nationalist substratum that would have converted Communist authoritarianism into a nationalist one, and also the roots of democratic institutions to establish a democratic nation-state. As a consequence, the Albanian military has failed to become a symbol for national unity. The unstable regional situation, and in particular the unresolved question of Kosovo's international status, are likely to be the major challenges for Albania in the years to come.

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[1] The fifteenth century chieftain Lek Dukagjini succeeded in systematising traditional norms of Albanian society, believed to have much older roots. This so-called Kanun was intended to regulate all aspects of the life of the community. In some communities, these norms still prevail over the state legal system.

[2] The rise of Gjergj Kastrioti as a military leader and national hero against the Turks was rather peculiar. The story goes that at an early age he was sent to the Sultan's court and, having renounced his Christianity, joined the Turkish army under the name of Skënder. As a reward for his extraordinary military abilities during several campaigns, he was given the rank of general, after which he was also titled "beg". On many occasions his own people asked him to lead them against the Turks, but he hesitated until Hungary heavily defeated the Ottomans at Niš (1443), when he deserted the army (Vickers 1997: 7-10).

[3] "In 1444, George Scenderbeg, an Albanian national hero, convened a national assembly in the city of Lezha where the representatives decided to found a politico-military league and raise a joint army. This act marked the creation of the second Albanian state. In the course of the next 25 years, Scenderbeg and his army repelled all Ottoman invasions against Albania. Through his successful battles, he managed to end the regional expansionist efforts of the Ottoman Empire, the most powerful of its time to invade Europe." (Koceku 1995).

[4] Ironically, the only period when a kind of Greater Albania existed was between 1941 and 1943, when, at least formally, the territories and population of Albania, Kosovo, Western Macedonia and parts of Montenegro were united into a puppet state under Italian auspices. The most enthusiastic response to the Italians' offer came from Kosovars, while in general it was not a strong enough national cause to unite the Albanians. On the contrary, the Kosovo issue was a point of contention among different Albanian options. Furthermore, Kosovars held the leading positions in so-called Greater Albania and very often engaged in harsh reprisals against non-loyal compatriots.

[5] "Symbiotic relationships are characterized by low levels of differentiation between military and civilian elites, and the circulation of elites between military and nonmilitary posts ... Symbiotic relationships are most

common in Communist systems that come to power by waging guerrilla war." (Perlmutter & LeoGrande 1982: 784).

[6] At the beginning of the war there were three movements with different political goals. The only matter they agreed about was the country's liberation. The first group, Balli Kombetarë, united the feudal landowner class, which wanted to restore the old pre-Zogu system; the second group gathered around Communists with a political aim—to establish a Communist regime consisting of the intellectuals and working classes; the third group, named Legalitetri, brought together the conservatives, who supported the monarchist system. During the first phase of the resistance nationalists and Communists came closer to each other, but later the Communists dominated the movement.

[7] Almost all the generals who had led the guerilla war were either executed, imprisoned or interned. The Headquarters of the National Liberation Army consisted of 12 people in 1943; only Hoxha and two others survived. Seven of them were killed or died in prisons and the two others (including the former Commander-in-Chief of the General Headquarters) were discharged and fell into oblivion.

[8] The complaints of the top military leaders were focused on the obvious erosion of professionalism and military skills as well as on the revival of clan activity within the Army, trying to persuade the party leaders that "a well-disciplined and well-trained [army], relying heavily on the skillful use of modern weapons, and exercising a certain degree of independence from the Party and the masses could guarantee Albania's sovereignty." (Prifti 1978: 215).

[9] According to the 1976 Constitution, the People's Assembly had authority to declare a state of emergency or war. This authority devolved to the president when the People's Assembly was not in session or was unable to meet because of the exigencies of a surprise attack on Albania. The Army reported to the minister of defence, who was a member of the Council of Ministers and was, by law, selected by the Assembly. He had authority to exercise day-to-day administrative control and, through the chief of the general staff, operational control over all elements of the military establishment. The chief of the general staff was second in command of the defence establishment. Both the minister and the chief of general staff were members of the Politburo of the Party, which also had an active and dominant organisation within the Army.

[10] The leadership claimed that in case of aggression on the country it could raise about 600,000 armed citizens. In 1986 the number of regular troops was about 42,000 plus 155,000 reserves. The most bizarre detail was the 400,000 concrete bunkers built everywhere. Neither reserves, nor recruits got any military training, engaged in non-military and even senseless activities.

[11] The first calls for changes emerged within the military ranks after Hoxha's death, when the so-called reform wing led by Gen. Karolli proposed measures to transform the irrational and inefficient defence system. President Alia, who was believed to enjoy respect among the officers, took a more conservative position and did not push for more radical reform (Vickers & Pettifer 1997).

[12] The situation dramatically worsened in the aftermath of the 1997 uprising and during the new constitutional debate in September 1997. A member of the parliament from the Democratic Party was shot and seriously wounded in the Parliament building. On the following day there was a bomb attack at the Socialist Party headquarters in Shkodër. The consequence was a boycott of the parliamentary work by the Democratic Party, i.e. the main opposition party. (Report of the International Crisis Group 1998).

[13] For example, Albania maintained its place at the top of the IMF list ranking the Eastern European countries according to the implementation of economic reform. IMF also stated Albania's growth rate of 8% in 1994 was the highest in the region. The economy continued to grow considerably in 1995 (by 11% according to the IMF) and industrial output grew by 6-7% in real terms. However, while the reform policy implemented in Albania continued in this way to receive support from international organisations, the government was left to face the social consequences (Ziogas 1994).

[14] "The parliamentary elections held in May 1996 were characterized by considerable intimidation, and cannot be regarded as being a genuine expression of the will of the electorate. The OSCE issued a highly critical report claiming that there had been manipulation of the poll and intimidation by police and secret police officers." (Smith 1996).

[15] The very day when Berisha was re-elected. Neritan Ceka, the head of the opposition Democratic Alliance stressed: "Today is the day of open dictatorship in Albania. Only a dictator could be elected under such conditions, with martial law." (*CNN Report* 1997).

[16] At the beginning of 1997, thousands of Albanians who had put their savings into investment schemes that promised fabulous interest rates were infuriated to discover that they had lost their money. Their anger turned to indignation against the government. In southern Albania, losses from the investment schemes were even greater and the hatred of the regime even stronger than in the rest of the country. But the opposition in Tirana was too distant to channel the sense of outrage in the south into a political challenge.

[17] It was a culmination of irony when a smiling Berisha promised to "protect and develop democracy, freedom and human rights" as his defence council put the tough new powers into place. (*CNN Report* 1997).

[18] A statement from the Prime Minister's office published in the newspaper *Rilindja Demokratike* said that Kosova had been fired for failing to ensure adequate security at military posts stormed and looted of their weapons by "terrorists". The statement said Kosova's action "resulted in military installations being destroyed and a considerable quantity of weapons and ammunition being looted by terrorists".

[19] Reported by *Reuters*, 5 March 1997.

[20] During Communism both the APL and the Army were Tosk-dominated, with the majority of its members from Tirana and southern Albania, and national security policy was initially primarily focused on extending of the state authority into Geg-inhabited northern regions. After bitter war experiences, it was very important to make the Army a unifying force for the Albanian people, primarily through wider political indoctrination, (see also Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 217).

[21] Adem Çopani, promoted by former president Berisha in March when a wave of violence ripped through the country, was replaced by 46-year-old Aleks Andoni. Çopani was known as one of the most capable generals, educated in an elite US military academy. Rumoured to be connected with attacks on civilians in southern Albania, he denied any part in the attacks in a newspaper interview and insisted that the head of the secret police had taken command when a state of emergency was imposed in March.

[22] In early September the North Atlantic Assembly protested against the purge campaign conducted by Defence Minister Brokaj in the Army, and the Democratic Party condemned these "Stalinist type" political purges. *Press Release*, Democratic Party of Albania, Press and Information Department, Tirana, 5 September 1997.

[23] Albania's main security concern is the FR Yugoslavia, where Kosovo, a part of Serbia, is largely Albanian-populated. Tirana supported the Kosovar Albanians' leaderships in their desire for self-determination (although it often changed its political preferences and partners in Prishtina), and called for third-party involvement in any dialogue between Prishtina and Belgrade. The secondary security concern is Macedonia, where almost one-third of the population is of Albanian ethnic origin, concentrated in the region neighbouring Albania. Inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia have always been tense and even violent. While Albanians in Macedonia call for improvement of their collective rights and constitutional status, Macedonians are afraid of their secessionist and irredentist aspirations.

[24] Albania joined the Islamic Conference Organization in December 1992, and Berisha gave much emphasis to developing ties with Moslem states. After USA, Turkey is Albania's most important security partner.

[25] Berisha unilaterally offered the strategically important island of Sazan and the mountain plateau Biza for military bases, which was, however, declined because of possible wider geo-strategic implications and confrontations with Russia.

[26] According to the report of the International Crisis Group from 6 January 1999, "throughout the mountains of December, January and February this part of Albania is virtually cut off from the rest of the country … The KLA can therefore be assured that until the spring thaw begins at the end of March, they will remain undisturbed and can rely on the support of the local population to make sure that their operations are not hindered by any outside interference" (Report of the International Crisis Group 1999: 5).

[27] The UN said Albania's political situation remained "unstable and insecure" and only 45,000 of an estimated 600,000 weapon stolen from state armouries had been recovered. (Reuters, 17 October 1997).

[28] Fatos Lubonja's comments in the Tirana daily, *Koha Jone*, of 13 July 1997.

Chapter 3

Civil-Military Relations in Bulgaria

3.1. Historical Background

Bulgaria's history has always been extremely complex. The enterprise of "democratic transition" has been marked by memories of old glories and past traumas. Like its other Balkan counterparts, Bulgaria faces the same problem—throughout the centuries it has acquired more history than it is able to consume. The analysis of civil-military relations, however, takes into account that what really matters is not always the "facts", but rather the mixture of historical truths, myths and perceptions. This mix is of great relevance in shaping modern civil-military relations.

The roots of the martial traditions are usually found in the phase of the Bulgars' migration in the mid seventh century AD. The dilemma on Bulgarian ethnic origins raises the question whose martial traditions should be given emphasis? Bulgarians are considered to be descendants of the Slav tribes, but also of the so-called proto-Bulgarians, a nomadic tribe that penetrated from Asia. Some argue that the proto-Bulgarians contributed to "the organizational structure and the name of the state and the ethnos" while the Slavs provided "the human resources and the basis for power" (Dimitrov 1995). The first state established by the proto-Bulgarian khan Asparuh (679-681 AD) is known as Slav-Bulgarian State. The oldest military myths are related to the proto-Bulgarians, who allegedly possessed the highest warrior-like qualities.[1] The issue of ethnic identity among Bulgarians is kept deliberately open. The horsetail that once used to be the proto-Bulgarians' flag is again shown at parades as a symbol of the modern armed forces. The emphasis on proto-Bulgarian elements at the expense of the Slav ones has a political motive. The "discoveries" aim at bringing Bulgaria closer to the West and further from the old Cold War ally (Russia). The paradox consists in the endeavours directed far back in pre-history and towards another continent (Asia). These myths

may also have a twofold military function: first, to place more emphasis on the glorious past of the brave ancestors, and secondly, to stress Bulgaria's devotion to NATO.

Independent kingdoms in the seventh and eighth centuries were maintained thanks to the military power. The "Golden Age" myth is connected with the rule of the khan Krum, when the state reached Budapest and occupied the whole territory of what is known today as the former Yugoslavia, bordering the empire of Charlemagne (8th-9th century AD). The other important historical episode is related to King Samuil (969-1018 AD). His capital (Ohrid, in today's Macedonia) is still considered a "Bulgarian Jerusalem". The kingdom had been in constant conflict with the Byzantine emperor Basileos till the decisive defeat of the army in 1014. According to legend, 14,000 soldiers were blinded. Apparently, after the shock of seeing his soldiers, Samuil died of a heart attack. The Empire of Samuil is a cornerstone of the Macedonians' national history. Both Bulgarians and Macedonians see Samuil as their own hero and his defeat as a national catastrophe. Bulgaria became a vassal of Byzantion until a new kingdom rose in the late twelfth century, lasting some 200 years until the Turks came.

During Ottoman times Bulgarian statehood ceased to exist. The official interpretation is that the defeat came about after heroic battles and heavy losses. Accordingly, Bulgaria is seen as a victim of the clash between European and Asian civilizations during the 14th-15th centuries.[2] The role of "defender" of Europe and Christianity is symbolised in the figure of Bulgarian military's patron saint—Holy Great Martyr George the Victorious.[3] One of the foundations of the military ethos is the belief that it has never been an invader but only a defender of what was believed to be Bulgaria.

The dominant perception of the following centuries is associated with merciless Turkish oppression. The truth is that Bulgarians (as all other non-Muslims) were excluded from the Ottoman military on the basis of their religious, rather than ethnic, affiliations. The heroic image from this period is related to the so-called *haidut* movement was a symbol of Bulgarian resistance and a form of collective self-defence. Bulgarians share the legend on King Marko with Serbs and Macedonians. He was ostensibly a freedom fighter and a "national" hero, although in reality his role was somewhat controversial. The Ottoman state did not openly suppress the Christian population. In principle, the Christians were not allowed to bear and/or to produce arms, to acquire military training or even to ride horses. However, Bulgarians believe that their military qualities were highly respected.[4]

They were actually recruited into the army, either by force or by offers of payment. Young Christian boys, forcibly removed from their parents and given the best military education after they had been converted to Islam, formed the so-called *janitzar* units. Military service in some cases became a profession for whole villages in Bulgaria. Enforced mobilization was strongly stressed in the histories of every Balkan nation as proof of the severity of Ottoman rule, while the second way of recruitment (with financial incentives) is hardly mentioned for obvious reasons.

The myth of an external saviour was invented when the Bulgarians had lost hope of self-liberation. The legend of "Grandfather Ivan" (i.e. Czar Ivan the Terrible who fought against the Tatars) was nothing but the personification of the protective Russia and the expression of pan-Slavic sentiment. If the local myths only had a symbolic meaning, it appeared that this one had more to do with geopolitical interests. It was not a self-constructed myth but rather one backed by external factors. The Russo-Turkish wars, some of which were fought on Bulgarian soil and with Bulgarians' participation, helped confirm the credibility of the legend. Russian influence was of the utmost importance both in terms of Bulgarian statehood and nationhood, but also of the creation of regular armed forces. The date when the Treaty of San Stefano was signed between the Russians and the defeated Turks (3 March 1878) is still considered as one of the brightest historical memories. *De facto* the treaty was never implemented and Greater Bulgaria remained only a memory of a would-be state rejected by the European Great Powers. At the Congress of Berlin (13 June-13 July 1878) Greater Bulgaria was erased from the map. The Berlin Congress created an autonomous principality rather than an independent Bulgarian state. Russia was responsible for setting up a local government, which enabled it to establish a vassal state loyal to their Czar. The status of that state was ambiguous: it was still formally the part of the Ottoman Empire and the mighty ally tried to dictate to it. This ambiguity was accepted far more easily than the national trauma of losing Macedonia and Thrace, which were seen as inherent parts of the national territory.[5] The feeling of injustice was greater due to the considerable human losses on the Bulgarian side during the Russo-Turkish wars.

The Bulgarian military was created from scratch. It had little on which to build, so the senior positions had to be filled by officers on loan from Russia. External influence became decisive within the military ranks, but also had political consequences. Prince Alexander

of Battenberg, an officer in the Prussian army and the Czar's nephew, was entrusted the office of head of state. He established a reign of personal power, and with Russian support suspended the constitution in 1881. Having appealed to national pride by promoting Bulgarian independence, he disappointed Russian expectations. The Czar and his nephew broke off relations and the Russian advisors were sent home in 1884.

The so-called Great War for National Reunification (1885) was fought without foreign assistance and united the principality with East Rumelia, which had been an autonomous province within the Ottoman Empire. The significance of the war comes from the belief that it reunited the Bulgarian people after five centuries. Concentration of the whole military strength on the Bulgarian-Turkish border was seen as a good opportunity to attack by the Serbian king Milan. The victory over Serbia, at the Battle of Slivnica in 1885, was an additional source of national pride. It increased the military's self-confidence and provided national support. The relatively small battle is remembered as a brilliant victory of young and inexperienced Bulgarian officers against a much better equipped and powerful enemy (hence, its name: the "War of the Captains against the Generals").

The next years were marked by internal strife. The military ranks were under a dual control—that of its formal head and of the external great power—which led inevitably towards internal conflict within the military and between the military and the political leadership. A regiment led by Russian-trained army officers forced Alexander to abdicate temporarily in 1886. Strengthened nationalism, however, led towards open confrontation with Russia. As a result, Russophile elements were finally weeded out of the military.

In the late nineteenth century Bulgaria became a remarkable military power. On the eve of the First Balkan War, she was not an independent state yet, but the army was already built on firm foundations.[6] Taking advantage of the Empire's internal and external difficulties, Prince Ferdinand declared independence and proclaimed himself Czar of the Bulgarians in September 1908. Full independence made Bulgaria a more aggressive party in the complex Balkan politics. The regional scene was prepared and the era of wars and epopees was opened. It was an ideal milieu for strengthening the military's institutional and political positions as well as for gaining public support and prestige. The political elite opted for military solutions for the essential issues of national politics, the principal issue being emancipation from the Turks and liberation of territories

perceived as Bulgarian-populated. The two Balkan wars as well as the First World War are perceived (and actually named) as wars for national unification. Apart from the motivations and results of the First Balkan War, which are more or less indisputable,[7] the other two (i.e. the second Balkan war and the First World War) represent major "national catastrophes".

The Treaty of Bucharest concluded the Second Balkan War in August 1913. The loss of human life was heavy, with 156,000 Bulgarian fatalities. The army was totally defeated and Bulgarian political leaders were never reconciled to the loss of Macedonia. The disastrous results of the Balkan Wars preordained Bulgaria's participation in both world wars on the wrong (German) side. The politicians entered both wars with only one motivation—territorial gains, while the soldiers were convinced that they were fighting for the freedom of their own people.[8] Every time the politicians made the wrong decisions, it was the military that suffered most. On this basis two important myths have been planted: first, the military was never defeated on the battlefield;[9] wars were always lost by the politicians. Second, Bulgaria is the only country in the world that has "borders with itself"—all around its state territory there are areas that once were (or still are) Bulgarian-populated.

Since its creation, the military had been given priority as the tool to achieve statehood and as a guarantor of future national reunification. Exactly this significant role provided the military's privileged social and political status. There were almost no budgetary constrains and, as a result, the military brass was soon able to define its own corporate interests. On the eve of the Balkan wars a parliamentary debate on reduction of the officer corps and the military was opened for the first time. Against economic reasons emphasised by the advocates who called for demilitarisation of society, the Minister of Defence Gen. Ivanov addressed the parliamentarians with Napoleon's words "One who is not willing to feed one's own military soon will feed a foreign one." From the military's point of view, it was a happy coincidence that soon afterwards two rebellions in Macedonia were heavily defeated. Instead of reduction, the military was increased dramatically from 60,000 to 600,000 soldiers, while by the end of the First World War it reached its peak with 920,000 soldiers. After immense war efforts, peacetime brought a "punishment". Yesterday's heroes and professionals were treated as a burden. The process of demobilization was something more or less expected, but the major breakdown of the military came about as a result of the Neuilly-sur-Seine peace

agreement (1919). Bulgaria was forced to reduce its professional army (including the number of the *gendarmerie*) to only 30,000, while conscription was forbidden.

Having been heavily humiliated, Bulgarian officers faced a dramatic internal situation. The state turned a deaf ear on their social demands. The promotions were made on political criteria rather than professional ones. The response from the dissatisfied military came in the form of a new association—the Military League, whose mission was the preservation of "military values". Soon it became a powerful interest group in society. The Agrarian regime of Stamboliski (1919-23)[10] further radicalised the internal situation. The military overtly defended its corporate interests in an alliance with various political forces through a coup d'état. Deprived of their external mission, the military became concerned with internal strife and turned into an active political factor. The next overt military intervention by the so-called Zhveno group happened in 1934 but was short-lived. In 1935 King Boris suspended the constitution and set up a royal dictatorship, which lasted until the Second World War. The king governed as an authoritarian through compliant politicians, while foreign policy became more closely aligned with that of Germany.

The Bulgarian military has had a long tradition of involvement in the political struggles as well as in coup d'état activities. On several occasions the military was used as an instrument of political terror against its own people (in 1923 and 1925). In the interwar period the political system drifted to the right and the military could not avoid a significant role in this process. From the beginning of the 1920ies the military had been exposed to the fascist ideology. The pre-Communist legacy of civil-military relations had been burdensome. The military proved much more successful in the battlefield than on the domestic scene. Thus the problems of the military have always been seen as something related to the unreliable and incompetent politicians. More importantly, the military had always been one of the most respected institutions in the public regardless of its real defeats or victories.

3.2. The Bulgarian Military under the Heavy Hand of "Big Brother"

In the Second World War the Bulgarian military was again in an alliance with the wrong warring side. Its indoctrination had in fact been completed long before the war and, there was therefore no military obstruction to the political decision. As a reward for its loyalty Bulgaria was given Macedonia and some other neighbouring

areas. Its military was spared from involvement on the Eastern Front and from a direct clash with its former protector Russia.

There are several perceptions in regard to Bulgaria's role in the Second World War, usually providing justification for historical mistakes. Czar Boris III is praised for his alleged secret diplomacy that saved his people and the military from involvement in the major operations. Also it is believed that Bulgarian Jews did not suffer in the Holocaust because of his personal involvement. In this interpretation Bulgaria was a small and weak state that was only trying to protect itself from a war. Thus, the military is pictured as non-offensive and force with clean hands. The second perception concerns Bulgarian presence in Macedonia (which was a part of the Yugoslav kingdom). It is believed that the military only established an administrative rule, which was justified from both a historical and an ethical (and ethnic) point of view. Bulgaria was on its own ground in Macedonia, and therefore it could not be an aggressor. The Czar was named "The Unifier" as a person who finally realized the age-old dreams. There are no explanations for the war crimes committed against their "own" people. The resistance to the regime is seen as inspired and led by pro-Serbian Communists in Macedonia. It appears as if Bulgarians liberated the Macedonian "brethren" twice during one war: first, as part of the fascist bloc from the Serbs, and then, when the Bulgarians joined the Soviet troops, from the Germans.[11]

The Bulgarian Communists backed a third myth for obvious reasons. Their historiography has overemphasised the anti-fascist movement and guerrilla resistance. Bulgaria's attachment to the Axis forces has been explained by the royal dictatorial regime, which was against the genuine will of the people. The Communists, however, failed provide reliable data concerning the guerrilla fighters (the figures vary from several thousands to several tens of thousands).[12] The exact date stated for the beginning of the guerrilla resistance (24 June 1941) was supposed to imply that the Bulgarian movement was older than the Yugoslav one.[13] Actually, the resistance movement was undeveloped and was mostly of a terrorist character.[14] The explanation is that it was extremely difficult to organize a resistance and to carry out "a battle front in the Nazi rear". With prior permission, the Bulgarian military was allowed to join Yugoslav and Russian units in the final operations against German troops,[15] which was an opportunity for rehabilitation.

In August/September 1944, the Soviet troops were welcomed as liberators. There was no military resistance. After several days the

Fatherland Front, in which the Communists represented the *spiritus movens*,[16] established a new regime through a bloodless coup. Remaining in Bulgaria until 1947, the Red Army was the decisive factor in strengthening the position of the Communists. Bulgaria emerged from the war with no identifiable political structure, due to the disadvantageous experience of the royal dictatorship. That gave the Communists ample opportunity to capitalise on their favourable strategic position. After two years of post-war turmoil, political and economic life settled into the patterns set out by the 1947 Communist constitution. The evolution of the political system (1944-90) was determined by developments in the Eastern bloc. The split between Tito and Stalin in 1948 left its imprint on the next phase of relations between USSR and its Eastern European satellites. A specific form of Stalinism took place in the country, while the leader Vulko Chervenkov reproduced the cult of personality under Stalin's mentorship. The period 1950-53 was marked by purges within the Party and military ranks. The long-term Communist leader Todor Zhivkov came into office in 1954 and stayed there until the collapse of the regime.

The Soviet domination was something that had already been seen in Bulgaria's history. This time the "Grandfather Ivan" turned into the "Big Brother". Formally, the pro-fascist army was not dissolved and instead it was exposed to an intensive process of "internal transformation and indoctrination", which was only another word for severe purges. Almost 90 per cent of the officers were removed in the course of only six years (1944-50).[17] The military was seen as a symbol of the old regime rather than a protector of the homeland, which was quite a new historical situation for the Bulgarian military. The process of "Sovietisation" was swiftly conducted in various forms (by engagement of Soviet military instructors, by political and military training in the USSR, by adoption of Soviet military regulations, and by importing Soviet armament and military technology, etc.)

In an attempt to provide a respectable past for the renewed army, the regime associated its creation with the partisan movement.[18] *De facto* the Bulgarian People's Army was built upon false historical traditions. This time it was about an imposed interpretation of the recent past. It was not the popular perception of the anti-fascist struggle, but rather a political fabrication of the historical truth. The military that was supposed to be the people's had very weak ties with its own society, while its growing prominence was a result of the new geopolitical division in the world. In the name of "proletarian

internationalism" it belonged more to the new Communist family than to its own people.

Instituting the Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) in 1955 led to setting up more institutionalised forms of Soviet control over East European establishments. The acceptance of the Russian tutor in Bulgaria went more smoothly than elsewhere. The Bulgarian military establishment had limited sway in regard to decision-making in such professional military matters as the creation of national military doctrine, strategy, training, education, armament etc. National military representatives within the organs of WTO were used as mere tools of transmission, as messengers of the Pact, and the political establishment was obliged to behave in accordance with its decisions. The army was treated more as part of a supranational military structure than as a national and state institution.

In parallel, the Communist Party quickly established a firm control over the army. It only copied the Soviet model of rigid party-army relationships. The original suffered from its authoritarian character and the copy could not have been any different. The civil-military relations had become completely blurred by the 1970s (Gause & Nikolov 1997: 401). Political loyalty became the most important criterion for promotions. Party membership in the officer corps exceeded 85 per cent, while the remaining 15 per cent were members of the Communist Youth Union (Gause & Nikolov 1997: 401). The institution of "political officer" served as an extension of the party influence throughout the military establishment. The Party was aware of the imposed party membership and therefore implemented other mechanisms to ensure the political attachment. Security services and military intelligence services got particularly emphasised roles. The control increased remarkably after the first indications of dissatisfaction among the military ranks and even rumours about a military plot in the mid-1960ies. President Zhivkov used the rumours as a reason to tighten control over the army and to put the security services under his personal control. The measures for securing the subservient position of the military counter-intelligence service to the civilian Committee for State Security were a clear indication of distrust towards the military. The security sphere was veiled in absolute secrecy, thus rendering it invisible to the society.

The 1971 Constitution defined the institutional structure of the national security system in a more explicit manner. The formal control of national security matters was assigned to the State Council, i.e. its State Committee of Defence. Formally, it commanded all government

defence structures and also made decisions on appointments and dismissal of the military's high command. Yet, the real decision-maker was the Central Committee's Military Department with its veto power in regard to all decisions of the state bodies. Parliamentary control over defence matters was unknown. The office of defence minister was held by a military officer,[19] but his role as well as the role of the military in politics was only advisory. The Main Political Department of the Defence Ministry was a watchdog within the military and headed by a high Party member.

A strict supervision over the army was conducted by a dual system of control. Formally, the Party and the state institutions had a sovereign right to exercise the control. The external control was performed via the Warsaw Pact structure, which some rightly defined as the "Greater Soviet Army" (Rakowska-Harmstone 1984). According to orthodox Marxist premises the military should have been settled under a rigid *civilian* (subjective) control. However, WTO presupposed an imposition of direct *military* control through the chains of command. The result of the cross-pressure position heavily affected the ethos of the Bulgarian army. It was a servile segment of a foreign military force. Its internal raison d'etre was supposed to be protection of the Communist regime, but the first dimension obviously dominated. Its public prestige was tenuous due to its questionable legitimacy.

Being a part of a powerful military bloc, the Bulgarian military benefited, however, in terms of improved social status and increased professionalism. The continuous rise of professionalism strengthened its corporate spirit. The position in regard to "Big Brother" was seen as humiliating, which was articulated through some forms of military revolt. Allegedly, some officers undertook actions towards liberation from the servile policy in favour of the old military legitimacy and national pride. In 1965 there was a report of a coup attempt led by Ivan Todorov-Gorunya, a high party official and former partisan fighter. Their main goal was supposedly to replace Zhivkov and to establish a more nationalist, less pro-Soviet government. Overt military interventions in politics were highly unusual incidents in the Communist regimes. The politicisation was confirmed as a reliable method of so-called subjective civilian control and the Bulgarian case was not an exception. The military dissatisfaction did not have an authentic military ground. The military was involved in the struggle between intra-party factions with different magnitudes of pro-Soviet inclination (Gause & Nikolov 1997: 405). The internal competition

between the military cadres imported from the Soviet Union and those affirmed in the resistance movement mirrored the political quarrel. The conflict was particularly intense on two occasions—during the de-Stalinisation campaign[20] in Bulgaria and during the post-Khrushchev period.[21]

The domestic circumstances affected the military far more than the external orientation. Because of the tensions among the officers and the dubious loyalty to his leadership, Zhivkov relied on a narrow circle of his former partisan comrades. Appointment of Dobri Dzhurov to the office of defence minister in 1962 was the most visible step in this direction. The tight supervision by the security services contributed to keeping the military out of politics. There was still a big gap of distrust between the political leadership and the military. During the process of forced Bulgarisation of the Turkish minority, the regime employed special paramilitary units.[22] Given their institutional and organisational position, heavy armament and other equipment, one could say that the regime kept the military aside due to lack of confidence. Those units were also transformed into a functional rival that undermined the professional and social prominence of the military. The military got another sign of alarm from the society, as the military profession ceased to be perceived as attractive. The social recruitment base became very limited. Cadets in the military schools were mostly boys from the underdeveloped regions, for whom the military career was the only possibility to get a secure job position.

As a result of combined internal and external factors, by the end of the Communist regime the military had become a stable and tightly controlled institution. On the surface it looked as if the military had succeeded in making a deal with the regime that was seen as fair by both sides. The events that indicated the collapse of Communism showed that this relationship was far from satisfactory. It worsened increasingly, which was proved by the military's behaviour during the liberal turnabout.

3.3. The Problems of Transition and the Military's Attitude

In the mid-1980s many signals indicated that the long and stable Zhivkov era entered into a precarious period. The first serious quarrels on the relation Sofia-Moscow appeared in 1985-86 because of Zhivkov's opposition to Gorbachev's "new way of thinking". On the domestic front, his readiness to introduce the Yugoslavian idea of self-

management indicated how desperate his attempts were to save the regime from further decline.

In October 1989 Zhivkov was still trying to preserve socialism by unveiling a reform programme at the Party plenum. His party comrades were critical and pointed out Bulgaria's failure to keep pace with other countries from the Eastern bloc. Zhivkov's resignation in November 1989 seemed to be voluntary, but there were clear indications that there was substantial pressure from the top party and military leaders. Some analysts stress the personal role of Gen. Dzhurov in pushing Zhivkov to resignation. Given his 27-year tenure as Defence Minister he was believed to be one of his most loyal aides. Allegedly, he turned his back on his old comrade and gave the Politburo the necessary votes for the legal removal of the Secretary General. This move had to be given the blessing of Moscow and the majority of the Bulgarian Politburo.

During the Communist period the military establishment was substantial and well equipped. It was considered as a regional military force of significance.[23] The influence of Gorbachev's politics of *perestroika* contributed to the image of the military as a heavy burden to the state budget (Rachev & Pantev 1996: 27). The end of the Cold War had the same effect on the military as the ends of all the real wars in history. The radical reduction of the officer corps as well as defence budget restrictions had almost the same effect as the demobilisation process many years ago.

No matter how earthshaking the developments were on the international scene, the military had the deepest internal frustrations. Zhivkov's disrespect for the military and the personal patronage system made the military averse toward its Commander-in-Chief. The top brass was more loyal to Gen. Dzhurov, who was one of them and had high authority. The moment Dzhurov took the opposite side, Zhivkov knew that he could not rely on the military's support and left the position. The combined effects of both external and internal factors finally determined the military's attitude in the most critical moment of the regime's collapse.

Unlike some of their East European counterparts, the Bulgarian Communists avoided any immediate political reaction. Zhivkov's removal was, perhaps, one of the desperate moves of the elite to maintain power. The party reform began soon. The first step was abolishing the Politburo and a purging of the old guard. In order to remove the stigma of party interference in government and to improve the country's image, Mladenov (Zhivkov's successor) resigned from

the office of party chief in February 1990. Two months later, the State Council was abolished and Mladenov was named President of the Republic. The first months of the "new" regime brought few changes. Mladenov did not remove much of the elite and failed to separate state from party functions. Like in Romania and Albania, the Communist Party—renamed the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP)—won an overwhelming victory at the first free elections in June 1990. In the aftermath of the elections, however, it was unable to consolidate its power. Continued unrest led to the collapse of the government in November 1990.

At the very beginning of the troublesome interval, the Army leadership clearly declared its intention to be an apolitical factor in the peaceful transition to democracy. It was a sincere desire, whose realisation was difficult to achieve due to the uncertainty of the internal situation. Given the unsettled politics and economic hardship, which provoked waves of social unrest, the governments that followed the Communist regime were often challenged to use force against the population.[24] There was an increased reliance on the internal security apparatus, and ultimately on the military. Fortunately, the military remained quiet and primarily oriented towards the external military mission. The leading role of the Communist party was formally abolished in January 1990. It was only a symbolic step that paved the way for the more substantial transformation of the political system. The Army had a long way to go before its ultimate democratic transformation.

For several years, the BSP remained entrenched as the most powerful party, pleading for a slower pace of the reform and clinging tenaciously to already gained political positions. The fact that six governments ruled during a six-year period (1989-1995) indicates the uncertainty of the transition. The government of Dimitar Popov (December 1990-November 1991) was a collation of reformed Communists, non-party persons and anti-Communists. The next government, led by Filip Dimitrov, was altogether anti-Communist. Neither of them, however, was able to make any significant move, mostly because of the significant power of the Communists in the parliament and at the local level. The government of Lyuben Berov (December 1992-September 1994) was unique: former members of the Communist party were not even included, but the government was very much manipulated by the BSP. The caretaker government of Reneta Indzhova (Bulgaria's "Iron Lady") was anti-Communist in essence, but with a mandate limited to preparation of the 1994

elections. Political development in Bulgaria has been moving on the axis of Communist—anti-Communist options. The 1997 victory of the opposition was greeted both in the country and the international community as one of having

> finally recognized the need for a democratic political system and a free market economy (Harris & Walker 1997).

The crystal-clear victory of the opposition, however, did resolve neither the basic problems of society, nor the uncertain balance of power between Communists and "new democrats".

Bulgaria was caught in a vicious circle, which was termed a "bipolar model", in that neither the BSP, nor the anti-Communist Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) had enough seats to push through significant legislation, resulting in endless bickering over policies, failure to agree on economic reforms, and ultimately parliamentary deadlock. Weak government and political impasse have fed public disillusionment with politicians, diminished public confidence in state institutions and proven fertile ground for nostalgic looks back to the past.

This was a most onerous climate for establishing democratic control of the military. Given the ambiguous political and legal situation, the military has often been between "the hammer and the anvil". The need for military reform was recognised in a parliamentary resolution in August 1990. The depoliticisation process was the first signal of the reform process. From the military's point of view it came in the form of another purge with a wide scope: 116 generals, 4,379 officers and 2,591 others, all of whom were subsequently pensioned (Larrabee 1996: 146). A Bulgarian analyst describes the situation in the following way:

> Democratization created an entirely new situation in which the armed forces suddenly found themselves in a social and ideological vacuum and their integrity suffered a painful blow. Personnel reductions were probably the first earthquake to shake the military, and although the removal of old-guard, high-ranking officers was a necessary and expected move the exit assumed mass proportions. In 1992 alone, 3,000 officers were dismissed as unfit and a further 1,000 resigned, and since 1990 the armed forces have been reduced by one-third, i.e. 50,000 servicemen (Alexandrov 1995: 104).

The 1990 Law on Political Parties provided the legal basis for depoliticisation of the governmental institutions, including the military. In 1991 the Defence Ministry campaigned for the exclusion of active-duty military personnel from voting in elections. In the summer of the same year, a major purge within the top brass was undertaken. On the orders of President Zhelev, a wholesale turnover of the general staff was instituted, with a dozen officers brought in from lower ranks. Among those departing was the Chief of the General Staff, Gen. Mintchev, who was replaced with Gen. Totomirov. Nevertheless, the UDF opposition went on accusing the BSP of continued party recruitment among cadets and newly enlisted personnel after the State Council decree on depoliticisation. Apparently the Army has been depoliticised, at least legally, and is now formally responsible to the state rather than to any political party.

Depoliticisation did not go on without resistance, at least in its early stage.[25] By the end of 1990, 98 per cent of the military officers had resigned from party membership (Curtis 1992: 239). Allegedly, those who refused had political motivations and consequently were dismissed from service. This explanation overlooks the strong economic motivation of some officers. Many young and capable officers left the military by using a political alibi in order to terminate the long-term contracts. They left an army demoralised by the low living standard, irregular salaries and severe housing problems. Adaptation to civilian life was seen a less difficult endeavour than the continuation of the military career.

By contrast, the most indoctrinated (and much older) high-ranking officers did not have any choice but to stay in the service. Given the political turbulence, some of the top brass has shown an interest in active political engagement.[26] The politicians often tempted the military circles to give them support in their political games. There were some rumours spread about of the possibility of a military coup in summer 1996, after a secret meeting of the Prime Minister Videnov with high-ranking military officers. Reportedly Videnov wanted to find out whether the military would support him in the event of wider social unrest, which was expected.[27]

The Bulgarian military has stayed aloof from political developments. More importantly, it allowed a peaceful transition towards democracy. Most military professionals still keep in mind the Communist creed that the party (i.e. politics) commands the army and not *vice versa*. What seems to be a historical constant is the military's perception of politics as something unethical, dishonourable and

incompetent. An attachment to the military and its internal institutional ethics is seen as the only thing that is worthy, stable and based on principles of honour and merit.

3.4. Towards Democratic Control of the Military: New Challenges Ahead

Like Romania, after the liberal turnabout Bulgaria also rushed to adopt a new constitution. In July 1991 there were clearly no democratic achievements to be "constitutionalised". On the contrary, the political dialogue was disabled by major discord over issues of national importance. The political situation was very shaky but the new constitution was expected to form a basis for accelerated reforms. It was expected to promote the democratic control of the military, according to the principles of checks-and-balances.

The implementation of the legal provisions has faced serious difficulties. The normative concept, obviously, could not provide a sufficient guarantee for a consistent democratic control of the military. The principle of separation of powers was sometimes comprehended as an undeclared "war" between and/or within the institutions. Weaknesses could be pointed out in every political institution, and particularly in their relationships to each other. Some of them originated from the weak democratic traditions and the lack of experience, while others reflected the constellation of political forces and the highly polarised atmosphere.

Given its internal polarisation, the National Assembly (the parliament) has very often been unable to act in accordance with its constitutional position. Its prerogatives have rarely been used to their full extent, particularly in the sphere of the security policy, where the cleavage among the political forces was most visible. For a long period the internal blockage made it impossible to achieve a consensus over the national security interests. The Parliament constituted the National Security Committee (NSC) in November 1991. Given its composition, this body unavoidably reflects the power balance between the parliamentary parties. Instead of being a forum for exchanging ideas, information and effective oversight over security matters, it has often been an arena of partisan frictions. This body—and the parliament as a whole—lacks an expertise of its own, which makes it totally dependent on the Foreign and/or Defence Ministries. In situations when the President and the Government have represented opposite political choices, the Parliament has usually been caught in a trap, playing the role of "coalition partner" of either the former or the

latter. The parliament obviously was not always able to preserve its autonomous status, but became a "hostage" of the policies created in other power centres. Its inefficiency contributed to the transfer of most of the checks and balances to the executive branch.

The institution of the President of the Republic was introduced by the 1990 constitutional reform. The first President (Zhelyu Zhelev) was appointed in June 1990 and directly elected in January 1992. The President is entrusted with classical authorisations typical for a president in a parliamentary system. In practice, two opposite views on the President's position have crystallised. According to the first, the President has been entrusted with prerogatives inappropriately broad for a parliamentary system. By contrast, the second standpoint has advocated the thesis that his limited competencies have turned the presidency into an institution with more of a symbolic than substantial role in the political system (Rachev 1996: 79). However, the core of the issue is not the scope of the competencies but the source of legitimacy. The head of the state and the supreme commander of the armed forces possesses relatively limited although significant competencies. Since the president is elected by the citizens, it gives the institution major political weight and authority over the system of state management. S/he is independent from the parliament, although not above the law created in the parliament.

Along with the presidency, the 1991 Constitution inaugurated the Consultative Council on National Security (CCNS), a body under the president's auspices. It was supposed to strengthen the control of the national security system. Yet its role and mission were defined in a rather vague way, which raised many dilemmas about its true role. The 1994 Law on CCNS has made it clear that it is not a part of the presidency, but a consultative body designed to bring together representatives from the legislative and executive branches. Its broad membership indicates that this is not a decision-making body, but more a forum for discussion and advice. Chaired by the President, it includes the Prime Minister, the key ministers (of defence, interior, foreign affairs and finance), the speaker of the Parliament, the parliamentary whips and the chief of the General Staff. In practice, however, its real influence is limited due to irregular meetings and the injection of partisan politics into its functioning.

The creation of another "shadowy" institution, the President's Military Cabinet, contributed to further institutional confusion in the national security realm. It happened as a result of Zhelev's decision to appoint key people from the top brass to serve as a pool of military advice. It included a general-adjutant plus one officer from each of the three main services. The title of a "general-adjutant" was non-existing in the military nomenclature and it was given to Zhelev's military adviser. Attached to the president's office, this body had an ambiguous status—being neither a part of the military command structure, nor a constitutional organ. It was seen as a clear indication that

> the military's role in decision-making had not been diminished, only disguised (Gause & Nikolov 1997: 402).

The second president, Petar Stoyanov, dismissed the cabinet and instead appointed (or better renamed) his two advisers as secretaries for national security and the armed forces.

Constitutionally, the executive branch is held by the Council of Ministers (the government). The most critical point of inter-institutional collision is the relationship between the government and the President. The problem of "overlapping areas of authority" in the implementation of democratic control appears to be crucial. The problem partly originates in the unclear legal basis, but the remedy may not be of a purely legal nature. Given the weak political culture, there has been a rivalry in the national security realm rather than cooperation. Legal provisions make it necessary for these two institutions to collaborate at certain points. It has been an unachievable goal when the president and the government did not belong to the same political orientation.

The first conflict occurred in March 1994 when Zhelev declared that *he no longer had confidence* in this Government and appealed for a *change in parliamentary balance structure*. The Prime Minister Berov accused the President of violating the Constitution with *his political activism*. The public confrontation had no factual or legal effects in regard to their competencies, but indicated a deep cleavage between the two executive institutions. During the rule of the caretaker Prime Minister there were some speculations about the rising ambition of the President (Pantev 1994: 264). Most indicative was the clash between the President and Videnov's Government. Tensions flared up over various issues, including the reorganisation of the military and the NATO membership. The military was unwillingly drawn into one of these quarrels. In August 1995 the BSP government announced personnel changes in the top ranks (some 30 high-ranking officers, including the Chief of General Staff Totomirov). This shift

was justified by the necessity for an "improvement in the efficiency of the Armed Forces" (Schmidt 1995). The President refused to approve the changes, calling them "politically motivated reshuffles"[28]. During the crisis the National Assembly's opinion was that Zhelev "dramatised" the situation in order to attack the government (Krause 1995).

The Defence Ministry has been going through the most intense and rapid changes, which were particularly accelerated in October 1991. The Ministry was reorganised, and the appointment of a civilian minister was seen as a highly significant precedent[29] that was supposed to strengthen democratic control of the military. However, the experience with the two first civilian ministers showed that it was not necessarily a sufficient measure to achieve the civilianisation of the security sector. Minister Staliyski's public image was negative because of his frequently uncontrolled drinking habits. On the other hand, his main idea in reforming the military was an unconditional restoration of the old Royal military. These two facts were enough to provoke disrespect and dissatisfaction among the top brass. His successor, Alexandrov, was eccentric in his own way, publicly showing his personal interest in military uniforms and ceremonies. This illustrates the problem of civilians of a "military mind", who present more threats than solutions to democratic control of the military.

The first civilian defence minister Ludzhev eliminated numerous posts as a part of the action of "cleaning the house". The reform was, however, limited to a reshuffling of the personnel, which was reduced by 40 per cent. The most visible structural reform was the separation of the General Staff from the Ministry itself, between which there appeared to be a split. Anti-Communist ministers faced a kind of opposition and even hostility from the old guard in the General Staff. The areas of competency between formally separated institutions were not clearly defined by any regulation. The fact that the Chief of General Staff could not make any order effective without the signature of the Minister was a source of everyday tensions. The situation became more confusing due to the network of parallel bodies within the ministry and the General Staff being unable to cooperate or work in a synchronised way. Frictions between the Ministry and General Staff revealed the deep gap of distrust between civilians and military professionals.

The reduction of the military staff within the Ministry was not followed by substantial civilianisation. The lack of civilian expertise

in security matters has contributed to the continuing tensions between civilian and military officials, resulting in periodic showdowns. Many politicians and civil servants lack specialised knowledge and often even any genuine interest in these matters. This situation has been a huge obstacle to a truly effective democratic control. Instead it has induced mistrust and scepticism on the side of the military professionals, who feared ignorant civilians. The military has a strong sense of its own loyalty and it is still convinced that it knows best. As a result of this perception, appeals arose for the reappearance of a military professional in the post of minister of defence in 1994.

The main weakness in reforming civil-military relations in Bulgaria is the unclear division of responsibilities and lines of authority among the main actors. The law has not determined a clear distinction of the respective roles of the President, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Chief of the General Staff. The 1995 Law on Defence and the Armed Forces was expected to clarify the situation. It had been drafted for three years, while different governments expressed opposite views about the need for change and its extent. The situation raised serious doubts on the effective functioning of political institutions, especially Parliament (Pantev 1994: 264). Transitional civil-military relations have shown three main deficiencies: ambiguities in the present legal and institutional framework, polarised domestic politics and the low level of civilian expertise in security matters. If the first problem is relatively easy to detect and eliminate, the other two need more time, experience and permanent efforts by all national security agents in society.

The nascent civil society in Bulgaria, along with the antagonistic political sphere, formed an unpleasant environment for an independent strategic community. The proliferation of various NGOs, centres for security studies, discussion clubs etc. have created the wrong impression of a vivid civil society. Many of them were supposed to undertake important actions towards eliminating disadvantages on the civilian side of the politico-military spectrum. Their primary task was to develop civilian expertise but, interestingly, their proliferation has coincided with Bulgaria's more determined NATO orientation. The lack of a critical mass of independent civilian experts could not be eliminated overnight. Understandably, the founders and associates of the first independent institutions were resigned or retired officers and scholars. Some of them were politically biased, while others were concerned only with fund-raising from different international sources. Their influence on society is very modest and sometimes even

invisible. Despite some positive indications, the main problems remain, such as closeness or even distrust of the political institutions in regard to the independent experts, a heavy financial situation for the NGOs, the difficulty of access to the mass media and the low popularity etc. Political institutions are not used to relying on expert advice and independent think tanks, due to the Communist legacy or fear of their own ignorance in defence matters. Civilian expertise may become relevant only when a critical mass is created through a process of education. The bare fact that someone is a civilian cannot be a guarantee of qualified advice.

National security issues have indeed become frequent topics for debate, or, better, quarrels among the political parties. The military leadership, however, has complained that some parties failed to show a sufficiently responsible attitude. Very often these issues have been used in order to gain points in the political competition. The lack of a consensus over the most substantial issues has been proof that there has not been any serious concern for the severe situation in the military. Having overcome the period when the military issues were taboo, the mass media have gone to the other extreme. Reporting is more focused on scandals, rumours, etc.—which may in itself be interpreted as a positive signal that the military is no longer exempt from criticism of improprieties happening inside the "barracks". The military faces new public attitudes, no longer associated with stories of heroism and glory, but with the darkest incidents. Officers feel betrayed by their own public who are more concerned about the military's weaknesses than its everyday struggles to overcome its severe social and economic status.

The present tendency to link the hardships of the society with those of the military has both positive and negative impacts on the military's public image (Burudzhieva 1999: 167-172). The military is seen to share the heavy fate with its own people, and the public discourse might be helpful in finding solutions of the problems. On the other hand, the distressing conditions in the military have often been used in political duels. Previous governments are usually blamed for the military's hardships, letting some political parties gain dividends in the political game. The military is equally threatened by these political manipulations and by public humiliation and loss of its good image.

Despite everything, the military is still held in high public esteem, in spite of not being seen as capable to defend the country.[30] Only 22.6 per cent of respondents strongly believe in the military's ability to protect the country in the case of aggression, while 38.6 per cent think

the opposite. A poll carried out by the same agency in 1997 showed that the military retained its traditionally high public esteem—over 55 per cent of the respondents. So do these figures indicate a high confidence in the military institution or is it still seen as a symbol of Bulgarian nationhood and/or statehood? Both premises contain a portion of the explanation.[31] The exaggerated standpoints can also be very indicative:

> It is not a coincidence that the sociological surveys in our country have shown, as a rule, a high degree of confidence in our military. Our nation is not making a mistake again. It is important that the faith has not diminished the significant "people-military" relationship. It has not declined yet, despite the systematic efforts of mighty hostile forces in the country and abroad. The faith and the hope in the Bulgarian soldier are still alive: he has always been a guardian of the honour and the dignity of Bulgaria and even its very existence. And the Bulgarian officer is a victim of our tragic national fate as we all are. Nevertheless, despite everything, we all believe and know that he is motivated and hearty enough to repeat again the patriotic deeds of the great Bulgarian officers—our national saints and heroes from the past! (Predov 1999: 210).

Due to the fairly anarchic and hostile political scene, the military has been regarded as one of the most stable institutions. The frequent institutional blockages, inefficiency of the Parliament and series of *de facto* transitional cabinets have created the illusion that the military is one of the few united and working institutions. At least, the apparent unity of the military staff—and their resisting the temptation to take over the destiny of the nation, even at the most critical moments—make the military highly respectable in the eyes of the public.

Some elements of a democratic model of civil-military relations are emerging in post-totalitarian Bulgaria. There are significant achievements, but also big problems. The maturation of democratic institutions and procedures is the basic precondition for democratising the military. So far, it looks as if the military has shown more sound sense than many politicians. Democratic civil-military relations, however, have to do not with the military *per se*, but rather with the democratisation of the political sphere and a mature civil society—assumptions that remain to realise in Bulgaria's transition to democracy.

3.5. Reforms within the Bulgarian Army: Mission Impossible

The liberal turnabout in Bulgaria brought about rapid change in some political institutions, little or no change in others. The military was one of the institutions that had to go through deep and often painful internal changes. Officially, military reform follows the pace of the reforms of the political and economic system, which does not necessarily mean that it does so in a well-synchronised and successful way.

After the collapse of the Communist regime, the initial changes within the military were of a symbolic nature and cosmetic in their scope. The depoliticisation in the form of "departyisation" was given priority, mostly through legal means and purges among the officer corps. The "question of loyalty" of the officers has re-emerged once again and they were once more judged by a political criterion (i.e. devotion to the would-be democratic regime) rather than merit. Despite other conflicts, depoliticisation seemed to enjoy a *minimal* political consensus. The initiative came from the younger officers and the opposition (UDF), while at the beginning BSP criticised reforms as weakening the country's defence capacity.[32] Eventually, all parties feared that the army could split into partisan armed factions or become the instrument of one party and agreed on the proposed reform. "People's" in "Bulgarian People's Army" was now to be interpreted as "national" and not "proletarian". The military mission shifted from defence of the regime to defence of the homeland. The internal military mission was legally disapproved by the first constitutional reforms. The military passed a major test during the street unrest of January/February 1997, which was seen by many as a proof that it kept distance to internal quarrels.[33]

In the initial reform stage the institutional image for the reborn "democratic" military was of utmost importance. The debates over new military missions were intended to resolve the identity problems of the institution. Like in the search for post-Cold War military missions in the West, the Bulgarian establishment promoted new possibilities of military assistance in domestic (non-political) affairs, such as curtailing illegal industries, protection of the environment, providing health care for civilians etc. Peacekeeping and so-called peace enforcement operations are seen as the most appropriate way of Bulgaria's participation in the "New World Order".

The second factor that urged the military reforms was the dramatically changed national security environment. At the end of the Cold War Bulgaria lost much of its geo-strategic importance while its

strength and the old military doctrine became irrelevant in the global and regional framework. Bulgaria had to address simultaneously a new external security environment and domestic political, social and economic changes, which meant radical reorganisation and reduction of the military. It was a positive impetus to its national emancipation in security terms, but its immediate security environment was very adversely affected by the wars in the former Yugoslavia. The government(s) tried to create an adequate defence policy, but given the highly polarised political situation (the so-called "Bulgarian civil cold war" (Pantev 1991: 6-7)), the military was in a very unpleasant vacuum for several years. Lots of ideological (or even irrational) motives and narrow party interests shaped this "war", which made national consensus an unachievable goal. In the course of seven years (1990-97) as many as 13 documents were labelled *National Security Concept of Bulgaria*. They could not bring together the diverging political approaches in common action to formulate an acceptable national security concept. Fortunately, the unproductive political stalemate did not cause any military involvement in the fierce debate. The military corps was, nevertheless, highly anxious and frustrated by the situation.

The third wave of the military reform was inspired by the wish of the leadership to join NATO. Zhelev publicly acknowledged "a simulation of reforms" in a speech before the North Atlantic Council. That also implied the need for a redirection of Bulgaria's foreign and security policy. Reform has focused on three areas: restructuring, redeployment and rearmament. The aim was to get "leaner but meaner" forces by Western models. In spite of their high priority, both restructuring and redeployment have been stalled due to lack of financial resources: the state does not have the funds to build the new bases, housing and infrastructure necessary to achieve these goals. The reform appeared to be not only a military problem, but also a socially very sensitive issue, since redeployment is expected to affect soldiers' families and their abilities to find new jobs.

The military professionals have been calling for urgent improvement of the command, communications and control capabilities. Renewal and modernising is another problem to which military officers have given priority within the ongoing reform. In spite of the agreements on the supply of spare parts in partial repayment of Russia's debt to Bulgaria, much remains to be achieved in establishing an adequate defensive potential (Omri Daily Digest 1996). After the Gulf War, a number of ambitious politicians loudly

warned that Bulgaria was lagging behind in comparison to the modern offensive arms acquired by its traditional adversary, Turkey. Modernisation is considered a *sine qua non* to prevent the military-technical gap from growing even wider. Although there is no expectation of an armed conflict, the military officials still keep a watchful eye on the Turkish army and make comparisons, referring to "military imbalances" in the region.[34] The rhetoric characteristic for a security dilemma has changed since the pro-NATO policy was adopted. Nowadays, the military's modernisation is seen only as a necessary precondition for Bulgaria's admission to the Atlantic Alliance.

Professionalisation of the military is also comprehended as a part of the process of joining NATO. The process has been envisaged to proceed in three stages: first, professionalisation of sergeants and equipment maintenance specialists. It was estimated that by 1998 around 50 per cent of the army would be professional, leading to a complete professionalisation of the army by the end of the century. This was over-optimistic.[35] The military will remain a mix of professional soldiers and conscripts even if the country's birth rate (lowest in Europe) reduces the number of draftees.

Bulgarian officers have welcomed the announcement of more determined professionalisation, but the frustrations arise from this being an almost unachievable goal in the severe economic situation. The hardships inevitably affect the pace of the intended reforms. The army has gone through a painful period that affected its corporate interests (in terms of budget cuts, interference in the military autonomy, purges etc.), but resisted the temptation of openly defending these interests. The military self-restrain, however, does not justify the political leadership's arbitrary policy and treatment of the officers.

The Bulgarian decision-makers have been facing major difficulties in trying to find a delicate balance between the goals of welfare and human security and the stated priority of bringing the military closer to NATO standards. Problems of defence budgeting did not appear with the democratic transition. Due to the lowest GNP in the Warsaw Pact, Bulgaria had faced similar difficulties for a long time. The first major cuts of military spending were introduced by the adoption of Gorbachev's doctrine of *reasonable defence sufficiency*. Further drastic reductions have been made throughout the transitional period. The total pauperisation of the officer corps[36] at the end of 1996 and the beginning of 1997 showed the inability of the society to provide

necessary funds for ensuring the officers a respectable social status.[37] A letter complaining of corruption and unpaid wages in the army, signed by a "group of officers from Sofia", was published in early January 1997. It strongly criticised the Defence Ministry for allegedly spending money on lavish trips for top officers and expensive cars, while, the letter read, "hungry, ill-dressed soldiers" were forgotten. The letter cited what it called "widespread corruption in the Defence Ministry" (Indzev 1997; Krause 1995). The severe social conditions had resulted in the appearance of cases of corruption within the army. At the beginning the officers' dissatisfaction was discretely voiced, though condition for regaining confidence in state institutions,[38] but it soon erupted into public protest. Talks between the Chief of General Staff Totomirov and the officers failed and the officers held a silent vigil outside the President's Office.[39]

During the most severe economic crisis, the implementation of the military mission was seen at risk by the military, as was the country's national security. The budget allocations affected the commanders' ability to drill and train the soldiers for several years. At a joint meeting of the Military Council and the Chief of General Staff in January 1997, they agreed in a common statement that the severe material, technical and financial constraints had affected the progress of the reform. By stressing Bulgaria's lagging behind its European counterparts, the officers got a better justification for their demands than by just referring to their unfavourable social position.

3.6. Bulgaria at the Crossroads: Where to go after the Warsaw Pact?

While Romania was labelled a "naughty boy", Bulgaria was known as one of the most obedient Russian satellites. The former had established the basis of its own national security system prior to the Warsaw Pact dissolution, while Bulgaria found itself in a security vacuum. While elsewhere in Central/Eastern Europe former Communists or their successors resolutely turned their countries westward, Bulgaria hesitated for several years. The leadership continued to see Russia as the primary economic, political, and security partner. Bulgaria stood alone as the only former Warsaw Pact country not to seek NATO membership until 1997. To remedy the perceived security vacuum, the policy-makers pursued a multi-pronged approach. However, inventive approaches to the problem were missing, due to the conflicting attitudes of the political parties. From the main security choices four divergent options (or even a

combination of them) crystallised: full NATO membership; bilateral military agreement with the USA; bilateral military agreement with Russia; and military neutrality. There was a public and transparent debate on Bulgaria's national interests.

Due to the foreign and security policy pushed through by President Zhelev, Bulgaria joined Partnership for Peace (PfP) in February 1994. According to Zhelev, Bulgaria perceived PfP as an intermediate stage, as "a step, although far from sufficient, in the right direction". Yet, the political response to PfP was far from unequivocal. Sceptics viewed PfP as a polite refusal. In their view, PfP was a means of promoting rivalry and competition among the post-Communist countries, placing the onus for further integration on these states by requiring them to prove the sincerity of their intentions, the irreversibility of their changes and their ability to meet their obligations concerning the financial requirements needed for future integration (Slatinski & Caparini 1995). Other political parties openly appealed against building closer relations with the Atlantic Alliance.

At the end of 1993, the Parliament adopted a declaration according to which Bulgaria would avail itself of the opportunities for cooperation with the EU and NATO, with a view to joining them *if* and *when* they enlarged and *with consideration for the country's national interests*. However, in the course of several years no political consensus was achieved. The leaders of the then ruling Socialist Party repeatedly stated that because of the lack of a public consensus on the matter and its crucial importance, it had to be considered very carefully.

The most disputed issue in the 1995 National Security Concept was NATO, and a compromise formula was accepted: "continuing the efforts of utilizing the potential for cooperation, suggested by NATO and the WEU with the objective for Bulgaria to join them in their future enlargement while *fully considering and respecting the country's national interests*"[40]. The quarrel lasted until the presidential elections in autumn 1996. On the eve of the elections the issue of NATO membership was still high on the political agenda of each of the presidential candidates (Dragoeva 1997: 175). Finally, when President Stoyanov took office in February 1997, a categorical decision was made. The caretaker Council of Ministers took the decision for full NATO membership by consensus, which was strongly backed by the President. The parliament promptly echoed the government's position. Soon the inclusion of Bulgaria in the first wave of NATO enlargement became a central issue. The

Government's prognosis sounded optimistic and its actions were to be directed both outward and inward. It appeared to be making up for lost time. The real place for the public propaganda was Bulgaria itself. The cabinet tried to achieve broad consensus and maximise the country's adaptation to a future accession.

Public surveys have proved that Bulgarian citizens are ill informed about security affairs in general. Public expectations associated with NATO are very often exaggerated. This information deficit should be kept in mind when looking at the support for NATO membership in public opinion polls. The 1997 Madrid Summit showed that Bulgaria would have a long and difficult road ahead. Further decline of public support was partly a result of the Kosovo crisis. Despite the campaign that described NATO as a "guarantor of the national security of the country", the public was convinced that Bulgaria must stay out of the Kosovo conflict (47 per cent said so in March 1998). The second factor was the "concurrent effect" of the so-called "General Marin Affair". Having expressed publicly his disagreement with the pro-NATO policy, Gen. Marin was dismissed and the affair was followed by a media scandal. Traditionally, Bulgarians have had much greater confidence in the military professionals than in politicians.

Bulgaria's main expectations from admission to NATO are based on several beliefs. She wishes to escape from the Slavonic sphere of interests and end the old myth of a "natural" attachment to the "Big Brother". NATO membership is also seen as an expression of the country's belonging to the Euro-Atlantic family of values. President Stoyanov took a step further in this direction in his statement quoted in the Bulgarian daily newspaper *Demokratsia*:

> Bulgaria is a part of Europe and its inclination towards Euro-Atlantic integration and NATO is not a matter of a fashion or wavering, but a *civilizational choice*! It is clear that the reform has no alternative, that NATO is the only organization capable to respond to global challenges and Bulgaria's place is exactly there (Krause 1997: 175).

Bulgaria faces two myths at the same time: first, its own perception of belonging to Europe as a matter of political orientation; second, NATO not being a matter of security policy choice but an option without alternative. Political choices might be matters of reconsideration and re-evaluation, which is not the case with something called a civilianisational choice.

The 1999 NATO intervention against Yugoslavia was a major challenge for Bulgaria's eagerness to join the Alliance. For the first time, Bulgaria realised that NATO membership may lead against national interests and that the price might be too high. The most difficult decision the government had to make was that on putting the air space at the disposal of NATO jets. Some saw a parallel to a similar situation when Bulgaria had to support another military intervention (in CSSR in 1968). The crisis had a major impact on the perception of NATO as a security provider. A part of society perceived the intervention as unjust and also dangerous and the public support for NATO declined rapidly. The feeling of insecurity increased during the bombing campaign and was even strengthened due to missiles hitting Bulgarian territory, the threat of a refugee influx, ecological threats, economic losses etc. Possible confrontations with Yugoslavia were perceived as a scenario with long-term repercussions, particularly because of the historical legacy with Serbia and the fact that it has a small Bulgarian minority.

In the perception of the politicians, integration into the NATO family is

> as much a matter of policy and joint exercises as of industry, economy and trade[41].

It is wrongly advertised as an instrument for modernisation not only of the military but also of the country. The NATO membership is expected to have a mobilising effect on the implementation of the internal reforms. Before the Summit there were opinions that any signal of disregard for Bulgaria's aspirations would be received painfully by the public and could put to a serious test the progress of the reforms.[42] Obviously, it was a statement for external use and very much exaggerated, because the public had not been as extremely eager about NATO membership as in Romania.

Bulgaria still faces economic stagnation, which has worsened as a consequence of its new ally's intervention against Yugoslavia. For several years, the ruling government has been supporting a perception that NATO membership would improve the social and economic situation. However, no comprehensive estimation has been made of the financial burdens that would be additionally imposed on the economy when the question of membership becomes a reality.

Bulgaria expects NATO membership to strengthen the national security system, modernise the military and boost the prestige and

dignity of the officer corps. Integration should provide access to NATO structural funds for reorganisation and modernisation of the military (Behar 1997: 93). Allegedly, the Concept for the Reform of the Bulgarian Armed Forces (1996-2010) has been made to meet requirements stemming from prospective NATO membership. Too many frequent changes (seven of them in 1999) in the programme document have increased frustration among the officer corps.

The leadership has been aware that the country will not become a NATO member overnight, but this argument has often been a basis for manipulation of the public and the military corps, as a justification for calls for patience with the delayed and painful internal reforms. NATO has been pictured as a "Promised Land"—once reached it would bring solutions to all problems for the citizens. After the Kosovo war the issue of NATO membership has become a priority question on the agenda of the quarrels between the political parties. The government has never admitted that it was forced to support the NATO campaign, but emphasises the positive praise it received for Bulgaria's cooperative status. The opposition speaks about the blackmail that leads Bulgaria towards antagonised relationships with its neighbours. The military campaign was a highly politicised issue and even provoked nationalist passions. The opposition saw the NATO campaign and, particularly, its behaviour toward Bulgaria as being clearly against Bulgarian national interests. At the same time, the government also appealed to Bulgaria's external national interests—in defending "her sister" Macedonia. In this view, if something had gone wrong in Macedonia, Bulgaria would have had to intervene. As the main explanation for putting Bulgarian air space at NATO's disposal, the Prime Minister Kostov stressed that, allegedly, "Macedonia is calling for our help. It is endangered and we must help it when we are needed. Macedonia expects us to do that, otherwise the pro-Serbian political forces will take over the power in this country."[43]

Democratisation of civil-military relations is a long-lasting engagement, and there is as much value in the process itself as in the final result. The emphasis should be on finding an appropriate balance between the civilian and military elements. For now, the civilian element has failed to grow adequately. The military is also frustrated with the somewhat humiliating social status and belated reforms. In addition, Bulgaria's problems are still very dependent on regional settings and conflict dynamics. Trying to divorce itself from the troublesome region, Bulgaria has been repeating its old historical patterns in searching for powerful allies to achieve national goals.

Wavering between "Grandfather Ivan" and the NATO "Promised Land", Bulgaria has remained historically consistent, but this does not help it much in recognising its own regional identity.

There are no universal models of democratic civil-military relations. Each country follows unique cultural, political and military traditions. Bulgaria does not seem to have recognised its own choices. It managed to preserve the peaceful character of the liberal transition, but to a certain extent at the expense of speedy and efficient political and economic transformation. The degree of the public disappointment is huge. Out of desperation the citizens welcomed warmly the exiled King Simeon II in 1996. The so-called National Movement for Simeon II, formed in April 2001, surprisingly won the parliamentary elections the same year by a wide margin. Thus Bulgaria became a political curiosity by having a monarch as an elected prime minister. Yet, on the 100th day of the rule of his government mass rallies expressed deep public disappointment with unfulfilled promises. The culmination, however, had not been reached yet: In the autumn Bulgaria elected the ex-Communist Parvanov President. The traditionally uneasy and troublesome relations between the Prime Minister and the President are likely to continue. The democratic management of the security sector in Bulgaria seems to depend on the genuine democratic credentials of a king (and his supporters in parliament and government) and an ex-Communist.

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[1] There is little reliable information or material historical records left about the life of the Slavs or proto-Bulgarians. In regard to the latter there are some legends. One of them says, for example, that proto-Bulgarians belong to a nomad Asian tribe, which was known for spending most of its lifetime on horses. Allegedly, even their women gave birth while riding horses. Today's Chechens are thought to be descendants of one of the proto-Bulgarian tribes. In addition, Tatars are also believed to be Bulgarian relatives. Having declared their newly established autonomy in the early 1990s, there were allegedly proposals to name their "country" Bulgaristan, which was ostensibly stopped by Boris Yeltsin himself.

[2] "The might of the Bulgarian state was a barrier to the waves of barbarians dashing at Europe and to the onslaughts of Muslims invading it. The blood of its men, shed on the battlefields, had guaranteed the peaceful development of the European West." (Dimitrov 1995).

[3] The figure of this saint is pictured on a fresco, where he is seen as a brave warrior on the horse that is killing the dragon (the symbol of evil and unbelievers). The saint is a part of the Bulgarian MOD's emblem next to the state symbol—the lion. His day in the religious calendar is 6 May, which is officially the day of the Bulgarian military. On this date, which is also considered as a beginning of the springtime and symbolises rebirth, military parades are held and promotions of the generals as well as other celebrations occur. It is interesting that this traditional holiday was abandoned during the Communist time and introduced again in 1997.

[4] During the 16th-17th century Bulgarians were named *"vojnuci"* by the Turks, which literally meant "soldiers".

[5] The Bulgarian establishment and the public still foster special sentiments toward Macedonia. President Stoyanov once named Macedonia "the most romantic part of our history".

[6] The field army was divided into the active army and the active reserve. The reserve built up by that system became one of the largest in Europe, and it was of good quality. Command was exercised by officers who had been transferred from the active army, by young men who had passed the necessary qualifying examinations, and by sergeant majors who had served in the active army for ten years or more. When his service in the reserve was finished, a man passed into the militia, which, unlike the field army, could only operate inside Bulgaria's frontiers. According to an Austrian military analyst, in 1909 the Bulgarian field army had a potential strength of 378,000 troops, and the militia 57,600. For more see Johnson (1997).

[7] The dominant perception of the First Balkan War is that the burden of the warfare was not equally distributed between the allies. Bulgarian forces confronted a half million Turk soldiers and focused on the most important strategic points (such as Luleburgaz, Petra, Seliolu and the fortress of Edirne that was considered as the most unconquerable one in Europe). During that time, the Serb and Greek forces occupied Macedonia with far less casualties. This fact was crucial because after the war the principle of division of the territories among the allies was exactly *de facto* occupied territories and not the ethnic principle that was advocated by the Bulgarians.

[8] There is a popular song from the First World War that the Bulgarian soldiers were singing during the battles, which includes the following verse: "We will not leave a single piece of Macedonia to you! That land is ours, ours, and ours! The holy Bulgarian word is professed—that land is precious to us!".

[9] An excerpt from a newspaper illustrates this perception: "The Bulgarian army has always been small, but invincible—since its creation until today. From Golgotha, from the Eagle's Nest to Drava and Sobolch it has not lost any battles and no single military flag has been seized. After king Milan's shame in 1885 and the Turkish humiliation in Edirne in 1913,

which Europe has remembered for more than 90 years—great is the Bulgarian soldier!" ("Great is our soldier", *Trud (Labor)*, 28 January 1999, p. 11). The official newspaper of the Bulgarian military *B'lgarska Armiya* (Bulgarian Army) fosters the same image. One article, for example, says: "The Balkan wars are the most famous epopees of the Bulgarian people" ("Balkanskite voini prez realistichnia pogled na obiknovenia voinik" (The Balkan Wars through the Realistic View of the Ordinary Soldier), *B'lgarska Armiya*, 24 November 1998, p. 11). Another article reads: "Viewed through the eyes of our compatriots, all actions from that time look justified and all the battles heroic." ("Edin frenski pogled k'm B'lgarskia kipezh po vreme na Balkanskata voina" (A French View of the Bulgarian Sacrifice during the Balkan War), *B'lgarska Armiya*, 18 February 1999, p. 11).

[10] During the Stamboliski regime, the fear of eventual bolshevization brought the bourgeois parties together in a bloc against the Agrarians. Stamboliski's politics threatened both the interests of the upper classes and the military. In foreign policy, Stamboliski officially abandoned territorial claims, which he associated with a standing army, monarchy, large government expenditures, and other pre-war phenomena that the agrarians deemed anachronistic. Military officers feared plans for disarmament and a scheme to replace the army with the paramilitary "Orange Guard" militia and a labour draft. Nationalists grouped around the Military League and Alexander Tsankov's National Entente decided to take action against the regime in April 1923. Stamboliski countered the mounting opposition by creating the Orange Guards, made up of peasants devoted to his cause. Their intervention during the violently fought elections in the spring of 1923 secured 216 of the 245 seats for the Agrarians. The opponents responded to these rigged elections with a coup d'état. During the night of 8 June 1923, the garrison at Sofia took over key points in the capital and arrested government ministers. King Boris III, who had not taken part in the plot, requested Alexander Tsankov to form a new government.

[11] A headline from *B'lgarska Armiya* of 4 March 1999 reads: "B'lgarskite voiski osvobozdavat Skopie ot Hitleristka okupacia" (Bulgarian armies liberated Skopje from the Hitlerist occupation). The writer accuses the supreme commander of the partisan forces in Macedonia for falsification of history and as an attempt to hide the real contribution of the Bulgarian military during WWII.

[12] Official Bulgarian data indicate that the Russian general Tolbukhin, who entered Bulgaria in August 1944, found 812,000 troops. This figure is almost equal to those of the number of the Yugoslav partisans, but it does not say anything about the military mission and orientation of the troops

or whether they were members of the regular army or the guerrilla movement.

[13] There is a contradiction between two claims of this historiography. On the one hand, it is stressed that the Bulgarians were the first to start the resistance against the Germans, while on the other hand—in response to the allegations that during the war this movement was weak and underdeveloped—it is said that the resistance was the most organised one among the countries that were German allies.

[14] As illustration one might use the official version of an action of the guerrilla fighters near the village of Zhabokrek in 1943. The object of the "heroic" action of the partisans, which was given a significant place in WWII history, was the undefended sanatorium for the German soldiers near the village.

[15] The Bulgarian contribution to the anti-fascist struggle was realized through military participation on the Third Ukrainian front, which has been emphasised because of the high number of casualties. The battles in the region near the river Drava are also remembered as heroic episodes as well as the fact that the Bulgarian army even reached Klagenfurt in Austria. It was a dramatic transformation from being a German ally at the beginning of the war to one of the victorious armies on the opposite side—next to the Russian and Yugoslav ones.

[16] The Fatherland Front was created by the Communist Party, factions of BANU, Social Democratic Party and Zhveno group members.

[17] The purges started right after the turnabout. An analyst points out: "Despite the fact that Bulgaria had already joined the war against fascist Germany, removals and arrests among the officer corps continued during the fall 1944. As a result, in November 48.6% of the officers were removed from their posts (11.2% were dismissed, and 37.4% arrested). Having in mind the war losses in the war operations (33.4% were considered killed, wounded and disappeared), it appeared that only 18.0% of the officer corps remained in the army" (Stoimenov 1999: 115).

[18] In accordance with instructions from Moscow, the weak and fragmented guerrilla units in Bulgaria were given the name of "People's Liberation Army" (Narodnoosvoboditelna armia—NOVA) in summer 1943.

[19] The first Defence Minister in the government of the Fatherland Front was the same Damian Velchev, an officer who had directly taken part in the military coups in 1923 and 1934. He was removed from office very soon because of his alleged involvement in attempts to save some military men from being sent to the front.

[20] In the period 1956-62, Zhivkov replaced officers who were immigrants from Moscow with domestic cadres. However, the domestic military corps was divided from within—there was a chasm between members of the

different partisan groups with competing and opposite visions of the socialist society.

[21] There are two stories of alleged military plots against Zhivkov in 1965, which do not exclude each other. The first concerns the attempt of a pro-Soviet group of officers, consisting of some senior officers, including the commander of the Sofia Garrison, to overthrow the government. The second attempt, led by a pro-nationalistic group around Todorov-Gorunya, by contrast called for emancipation from the Soviet influence and aimed to overthrow Zhivkov. Actually, neither fraction was satisfied with the Zhivkov politics of compromise and balancing between his Moscow tutors and his own political ambitions.

[22] The so-called "Internal forces" under the command of the Ministry of Interior were dismissed upon the personal order of Zhivkov in 1962. Those units were re-established right after the unsuccessful military plot in 1965. These units were used in the campaign against the Turkish minority.

[23] These considerations were confirmed during the information exchange at the signing of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe on 19 November 1990. This revealed previously unknown details of the command organization, structure, strength and disposition on Bulgaria's ground and air forces.

[24] The threat of "getting the military out of the barracks" on to the streets was immediate during the period 1990-92, not because of the military having any praetorian inclinations, but rather as a result of the politicians' inability to handle the crisis. During the first anti-Communist mass unrest in December 1989, Zhivkov's successor Mladenov lost his nerves and said "It will be better to call the tanks." The other calls for military help mostly belonged to the sphere of rumours, but the military was given a clear signal that politicians would rely on its support if needed.

[25] At the beginning, the military leaders insisted that "the BSP's domination of the armed forces was the consequence of a "long historical process" and expelling that party from the military might not be a wise policy". (Barany 1992: 17).

[26] "The involvement of three very high-ranking generals in the political activity of the three major political parties that opposed each other in Bulgaria developed a bad reputation for both the people themselves and for their political mentors." (Rachev & Pantev 1996: 6).

[27] Gen. Totomirov told the newspaper *Standart* that as long as he was Chief of General Staff, the army would fulfil its duties ... and would not be involved in solving domestic political problems. He said people using the word "coup" did not realise that the problems created by a coup were bigger and more dangerous than the ones it could solve (Krause 1996).

[28] *BTA*, 19 August 1995.

[29] Bulgaria is one of the rare cases where the civilian leadership of the defence ministry was not a novelty in the transitional period. It had previously occurred for a short while during Stamboliski's regime in the 1920s.

[30] Public opinion pool carried out by "SOVA-5" from Sofia in March 1998.

[31] "Despite the personification and politicisation of media comments, one must not neglect the fact that the public do not perceive the military only or foremost as an institution, but rather as a symbol of Bulgarian statehood. In addition, the "traditionally" high public opinion may be interpreted both as a search for and attempt to maintain of the national ideal." (Nikolov 1999: 173-210).

[32] From a statement of BSP's representative, *Duma*, Sofia, 25 November 1991, p. 4.

[33] See: "Army to stay outside politics", BTA, 30 January 1997.

[34] President Zhelev in the address to the International Conference "The Army in Democratic Society", *B'lgarska Armiya*, November 18, 1991, p. 1.

[35] "Bulgaria: military Chief of Staff announces army reforms", *RFE/RL*, Sofia, 19 June 1997.

[36] The deep social crisis was described in the following way: "Economically the country is almost paralysed. Thousands of people were demotivated of active social participation because of the political irrationality. Social degradation has no equivalent in the Bulgarian history of the present century. Hunger and poverty have never been existent in such harsh forms as in the last few years. Unemployment is depriving from labour almost one third of the active working population. Hundreds of thousands of Bulgarian families are fighting every day with the need of bread, heat and dresses." (Pantev 1991: 10).

[37] In January 1997, the outgoing Government decreed that the pay of military professionals be brought into line with the level envisaged by the Defence and Armed Forces Act. Under the decree, a commissioned officer's wage would have started from the double amount of the average gross monthly wage in the public sector. Non-commissioned officers would have received at least 1.3 such average wages, volunteer soldiers 1 such wage, and conscript privates 0.1 such wage (cited by *BTA*, 30 January, 1997). It might thus be said that the military corps has kept a relatively priveleged status in comparison with other social strata.

[38] "The members of the Military Council voiced concern over the serious situation which has emerged in this country, which breeds mistrust of the officers that the requirements of the Defence and Armed Forces Act will be satisfied concerning a new level of pay. In this connection, the prompt adoption of a Council of Ministers decree to guarantee servicemen's pay was suggested. The command personnel in the Army will thus regain trust in the State institutions and the Executive which are concerned with the

problems of national security and defence." ("Military Council discusses army reform", *BTA*, 21 January, 1997.

[39] President Stoyanov wrote a letter to the officers in which he stressed that he would not permit officers to be involved in political manipulations and scenarios written by the people who had brought the nation to that deplorable condition. The official statement of the General Staff read: "The General Staff of the Bulgarian Army supports the servicemen's demands and considers them fair. These are not demands for more money but for strict and prompt observance of the law, for social and sheer biological survival of servicemen and their families, for preservation of their human and military dignity". At the same time, the General Staff pointed out that it did not believe that the problems of servicemen could be solved through unlawful actions.

[40] National Security Concept of the Republic of Bulgaria, *Bulgarian Army Newspaper,* 18 July 1995, No.13763, p. 2.

[41] "President Stoyanov on the decision to apply for NATO membership", *BTA,* Sofia, 17 February 1997.

[42] This opinion can be labelled as an exaggeration or a psychological propaganda move, because the results from the polls conducted by the European Commission during 1996-97 have shown a different picture. In Bulgaria as well as in some other candidate countries less than a third were in favour of joining NATO. At the same time, the 28 percent who were "against" in 1996 decreased to 13 percent in 1977. The most frequent reason given for a vote "against" NATO membership is people's preference for their country having a neutral status. This view has been shared by about one-fifth of the Bulgarians (Cunningham 1997: 16).

[43] From the interview with the Prime Minister Ivan Kostov at the state TV station on 25 April 1999.

Chapter 4

Civil-Military Relations in Romania

4.1. A Historical Outline of Romanian Military Traditions

Like most of the Balkan countries, the modern Romanian state and the military emerged as late as the second half of the nineteenth century. However, the myths and collective memories offer rich analytical material relevant to the study of military traditions. Regardless of their accuracy, they have influenced not only the military and its legitimacy, but also the relationship between society and the military.

The origin of the Romanians is a contentious issue. The analysis is sometimes tenuous because of the lack of reliable historical data, and political interpretations selectively emphasise historical events according to political needs. There are two predominant hypotheses, the first pointing to the Geto-Dacian tribe, and the second emphasising the "Romanity" of their ethnic identity.[1] Each has been given a different weight at particular times. Yet the conclusion has always been that

> the Romanians are representatives of a glorious past, which is reflected in the greatness of the contemporary era (Gilberg 1990: 17).

The first version, especially popular during the last years of the Communist regime, makes Romania the cradle of European civilisation. Today's regime also likes it and its idea that Romania has been a natural part of European culture since its antiquity. From the military's point of view, this image is successfully linked with stories on the warrior qualities of the Geto-Dacian tribe, "the most valiant and just of the Thracians" (Herodotus). Allegedly they were the only ones to resist the Persian king Darius I (513 BC) in his progress from the Bosporus to the Danube.[2]

By upholding the thesis that modern Romanians are products of the ethno-genesis of Geto-Dacians and the Roman legionaries who settled

the region of Dacia, another glorious dimension is added to their history. The elements of "Romanity" and "Latinity" were given more emphasis in this ethnic mix, particularly during the early Ceauşescu years. There has always been a wish—as a kind of subtext to this approach—to prove the uniqueness of the Romanians and also their superiority over their neighbouring Slavs (Gilberg 1990: 19). Current historiography advocates that

> from the Thracians on, the uninterrupted phenomenon of the Romanian people's birth can be traced

and also that

> Daco-Roman symbiosis [was] finalised in the 6th-7th centuries by the formation of the Romanian people.[3]

To Romanians, the name of their nation-state shows that they are the only ones in Europe who have preserved the

> seal of the ancestors, of their descent, that they have always been aware of[4].

Finally, the element of religion has been added to the national identity in that the Romanian nation's emergence is seen as the appearance of the first Christian nation in the region.

For centuries, Romanians gained little military glory while suffering under successive waves of migratory tribes between the fourth and thirteenth centuries. This is taken to explain the postponed state formation; yet the official rhetoric has also stressed the belief that Romanians have survived all kind of invasions and oppressions due to their superiority not only to their neighbours, but also to their conquerors. The thesis of "domestication" of the assimilation process proclaims the superiority of the oppressed people's culture and its domination over the cultural traits of their invaders.

The history from this period is full of stories about local heroes, the bandit or rebel tradition being seen as a kind of native military tradition. During the Middle Ages there was a kind of military "protection" of the population by local military leaders, the so-called *voivodes,* in exchange for allegiance and tribute. Only during times of mass danger did local *voivodes* engage the free peasantry as soldiers under their command. One of the most controversial legends is that on Vlad Ţepeş (or Vlad the Impaler in the Turkish chronicles), better

known as Dracula in the West. In the folk narratives, he is given a honourable role as a valiant defender of his principality (Wallachia). The 1859 revolutionary movement also looked at Vlad as a symbol of independence and nationhood. In reality, he was a controversial person, seen by many as a bloodthirsty tyrant because of his infamous cruelty. Ceauşescu took advantage of the myth by tracing a parallel between Vlad's methods and the position of the Communist Party with respect to nationalism, foreigners and the maintenance of law and order, while the vampire connection with Vlad was interpreted as a deliberate move of the West to undermine a national hero, or even a Hungarian plot against the Romanian people. Ceauşescu never realised how close was the parallel that he had stressed.

The Middle Ages witnessed the establishment of small entities (*kniezates* and *voivodates*). Three neighbouring principalities (Wallachia, Moldavia and Transsylvania) were known as the major parts of "România Mare" (Greater Romania). The national perception is that the political and military strength of these entities was minor due to opposition from the powerful neighbours. What was really going on could be described as shifting alliances to different powers. Eventually, several *voivodes* became famous for their heavy battles against the Turks. This rather unorganised resistance was imbued with major significance as a factor that allegedly delayed Turkey's expansion to Central Europe. Whatever its justification, this has been a source of national pride for the Romanians, who have elevated these leaders to the role of saviours and martyrs in the battle for "Europe". This perception is actually common to all the Balkan peoples.

Romanians believe that they were the only ones to succeed in finding a way to maintain the state entities along with the original political and military structures. The preservation of domestic autonomy as well as protection against more powerful enemies was due to the tributes paid to the sultan and the principalities were forbidden to keep armies. Both the state and the military were weak and not threatening to the might of the Empire. Nevertheless, battles against the Turks that combined the force of ethnic identity and religious fervour contributed to the consolidation of the Romanian sense of identity. Ştefan cel Mare ("Stephan the Great") and Mihai Viteazul ("Michael the Brave") are remembered as the most prominent figures in this resistance. The later succeeded in uniting all the territories inhabited by Romanians, at least for a while. Soon the Ottomans reasserted their control, but this very short-lived union has remained one of the most inspirational symbols for posterity.

Around 1700 A.D. the expanding Russian and Habsburg empires began to contest the Ottoman domination of the Balkans, which provided an external impetus for a Romanian national consciousness. By the nineteenth century the emerging national movement had two main goals—independence and the unification of all Romanian-populated territories in a nation-state. These two national missions have influenced the creation of various shifting attachments to different powers. Having realised that they were unachievable goals without a powerful ally's assistance, Romanians started looking for the most suitable ally. Since Russia had gained significant strength, it became acceptable as a protector. The image of Russia could not be expressed in a similar way as in Bulgaria because of the lack of a common ethnic background. The Russians were embraced on the grounds of Christian/orthodox solidarity against Islam. The Wallachian *voivode* Tudor Vladimirescu led a brigade of 6,000 soldiers in the Russo-Turkish War of 1806-12. Like Bulgarians, Romanians stress that most of the battles took place on their territory. The reward was often minor, so the perception is that the wars were always accompanied by devastation and irrecoverable losses, population displacements and painful territorial amputations.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, nationalist leaders from Wallachia and Moldavia tried to build coalitions and to take advantages of the games among the European powers. Between the 1820s and 1850s, France was welcomed as a major ally on the grounds of "common Latinity". This perception provided an important symbol of commonality as well as a favourable reason for accepting a powerful external "protector", which enhanced national consciousness. The political culture of the Romanian elites was at a low level while the masses' undifferentiated nationalism was largely manifested in a symbolic way, making it easy to manipulate national sentiments through emotive symbols, such as a national flag and a sovereign leader. The military was seen as essential in the fight for unification into a modern state and as an institution able to stimulate patriotism. In 1848 a first attempt was made to form a military as a national institution and as an instrument of national liberation. The first prince of the United Principalities, Col. Alexandru Ioan Cuza, is considered the founder of the modern military. He established an active military relationship with France, which had tremendous influence on the future development of the army. Emperor Napoleon III sent a military mission of instructors to the United Principalities in 1859; Moldavian and Wallachian officers were accepted into the

French military academies. Cuza formed a Ministry of War and a General Staff to administer and train the army. He also established a legal framework for the army organisation in the form of a law passed by the parliament. As a result, a regular standing army of 20,000 soldiers and territorial defence units with 25,000 reserves were set up.

Soon Romania, like other Balkan nations (except Serbia), imported foreign monarchs. Cuza's successor, Carol I, was an imported prince from Germany, who had some personal military experience and continued the development of the military. The 40,000 soldiers headed by Carol I are seen to have made a significant contribution to the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. While this may be disputed by Bulgarians and others, this engagement was certainly significant by giving the newly created military practical experience as well as strengthening its legitimacy.

Romania's independence came as a result of the negotiations between the Great Powers over spheres of influence in the Balkans. Romania declared full state independence in May 1877, which was officially recognised by the Berlin Congress a year later. Yet, Romanians were not satisfied with what they saw as the unjust decisions there that left almost a half of them under foreign occupation. This became a driving force for many decisions in the country's foreign policy and served as a favourable basis for military mobilisation in achieving national goals.

The period that followed (1878-1914) was peaceful and established the conditions for further progress. Still, the independent state faced massive domestic problems. After the initial euphoria, a deep gap emerged between the elites and the masses. The latter soon realised that they had only substituted foreign rulers with domestic ones. The culmination occurred in 1907 with the greatest peasant rebellion in recent times in Europe. The regime used violence in order to suppress the rebels, which definitively undermined its legitimacy and that of its institutions.

The leaders only managed to overcome the deep alienation on a few occasions by mass mobilisation when external threats produced internal cohesion, such as during the Balkan Wars and the First World War. Sometimes the alleged external danger was only a justification for military actions whose motives were different from the professed ones. Romania did not take part in the First Balkan War because nothing important was at stake, but it joined the alliance against Bulgaria during the Second Balkan War with territorial aspirations on Southern Dobrogea. During the first two years of the First World War

Romania stayed neutral, but in August 1916 it joined the Allies who promised national unity by territorial expansion into Transsylvania. The Romanian army fought with little success—most of Romania was occupied—but the promised reward came as a result of extraordinary international circumstances—the collapse of Austria-Hungary and the Soviet revolution. The Paris Peace Conference confirmed the unification of all Romanians into one single state.

In the interwar period substantial constitutional reforms created at least a general political framework, but the democratic experience as well as the political culture were still in an embryonic state.[5] Achieving the eternal ideal of all Romanians in one state could not surmount the tensions; Greater Romania rather faced new problems due to its vast enlargement, now being the second largest state in Eastern Europe. The problems of integration included both synchronising the different conditions of all the newly attached parts and creating coherence of the populations (Crampton 1994: 107).

In 1938 Carol II successfully asserted his mastery over both the politicians and the region's only genuine fascist movement (the Iron Guard), the pseudo-democracy succeeded by an open royal dictatorship. Like the other royal dictators of interwar southeastern Europe, he legitimised his regime by reference to the failures of the politicians and parliament to put the country on secure foundations. As an author rightly stresses,

> they were traditionalists who ruled through the army, the bureaucracy, and such political collaborators as they could co-opt (Wheeler 1996: 7).

The military was one of the main pillars of the dictatorship. It had already lost its mission, having achieved the goals of national policy, so it could turn itself to the protection of the regime from internal enemies.

On the eve of the Second World War, Romania was dismembered through a series of diplomatic arrangements between Soviet Union and Germany (which awarded its loyal allies Hungary and Bulgaria with parts of the Romanian territory). Greater Romania came easily and went just as easily, losing in a few weeks one-third of the territory and one-third of its population, among which six millions were of Romanian origin. The military did not intervene in either case. Instead, a military coup d'état took place in September 1940. King Carol II was forced to abdicate in favour of his son Mihai I under the

pressure of the officers led by Gen. Ion Antonescu, who, supported by Germany and the Iron Guard's cadres, soon took over complete control of the country. The royal dictatorship was thus replaced by a fascist regime where the Iron Guard unleashed a reign of terror with the General's blessing. When the Second World War broke out, the army joined the Wehrmacht, hoping to re-establish România Mare as a reward for loyalty to the Germans. Romania's good fortune ended at Stalingrad where about 150,000 soldiers were killed.

Participation in the costly war, combined with its pre-war record cost the military legitimacy. Under the influence of military defeats and the victorious Soviet Red Army, internal political change occurred in the form of another coup d'état where Antonescu was ousted by military officers and technocrats.[6] This put the military in a position to play a political role once the war was over. In August 1944, the Army capitulated, and after King Mihai's declaration of war against Germany it entered the war—but now on the other side and under the command of the Red Army. This was too late for any rehabilitation in the eyes of the domestic and the international community. Despite the numerous casualties during the last months of the war, Romania was denied co-belligerent status and had to pay huge war reparations.

According to a domestic author the Romanians are still uncomfortable with the past:

> History-induced, and sometimes objective anxieties and national ego questions have been accentuated, in the case of Romania, by its position at the crossroads of Western, Slavic and Muslim cultures (Baleanu: 1).

This explanation of the historical misfortunes is common for all Balkan states. Romanian military history can be described as a history of "an alliance partner". The military has not fought a major battle in any other capacity. It wavered between the European powers to achieve major national interests.

4.2. The Romanian Army under the Communist Regime: Mutation and Surveillance

Romania's Second World War record was disastrous, while its future was once again determined by external factors. Western countries did not find Romania crucial to their geo-strategic interests, while at the same time the Soviets were very interested in expanding their sphere of interest. In the game of the powerful players, Romania was satisfied with territorial gains (Transsylvania) from a war that it had already

lost. From this perspective, the Soviet Union seemed quite a suitable partner.

It took some time and effort to transform Romania into a Soviet-type regime. Once established, the system showed rapid deformation tendencies, particularly in the realm of foreign and defence policies. The Romanian case stood in clear contrast to that of Bulgaria. The Communist ideology (or even leftist radicalism) had not been embedded in pre-war society, so that the Communist take-over faced more problems there than in Bulgaria. Inauguration of the pre-eminent role for the Romanian Communist Party (RCP), in spite of overt Soviet assistance, took more time and had to be done with caution. The Party could only rely on its thousand registered members, since there was no mass support for the Communist programme. Ethnic differences were embedded too deeply, or Communist ideology was too weak, to unite workers from the same social but different ethnic background. Paradoxically, the Communist movement had found more support among members of ethnic minorities than among the majority. The only fortunate actor was RCP, which had an unexpected opportunity to come to power.

The Soviet presence in Romania was more decisive than in Bulgaria. The Romanians had never had such deep traditional and emotional ties because the main component—pan-Slavic sentiments—was lacking. On the contrary, the Soviet presence and deployment of the Red Army until 1958 heightened the anti-Russian sentiment that had been fostered by historical grievances. The coup d'état of August 1944 was the first in a series of military-led transitional governments until March 1945, when, finally, a Soviet-style government took power and the constitution was adopted. During this short period the senior officers openly demonstrated their anti-Soviet attitudes. Given their background (i.e. a history of intervention in politics as well as engagement as an ally of the fascists), they were highly incompatible with the regime. Unlike the Bulgarian military, which had never been engaged on the Eastern Front, the Romanian one brought a heavy legacy from Stalingrad in its post-war relationship with the Soviet Union.

The mutation of the military started during the last stage of the war. As a nucleus of the "new" military only parts of the old Army were selected, as well as the Tudor Vladimirescu First Volunteer Division, and some units recruited by the Red Army from Romanian prisoners of war taken at Stalingrad who were willing to submit to Communist indoctrination. The purges removed around 30 per cent of the officers

and non-commissioned officers in 1945-46, but the military remained a massive institutional apparatus. Entire ranks were filled with young officers trained in the Soviet Union. Soviet military experts and advisers were soon engaged within the army units. The Soviet military-political influence, as the Romanian case confirms, was notably stronger in countries that did not succeed in organising authentic Communist movements.

Gradually, the Romanian military establishment was reorganised in accordance with the Soviet model. Soviet surveillance was strengthened through the appointment of Emil Bodnaras as the first post-war defence minister in 1947. Given his exile in Moscow during the war years, he was considered as a reliable cadre. When the Soviet troops voluntarily withdrew, the Soviet leadership trusted the RCP because of its appropriate behaviour during the crises in Eastern Germany and Hungary. However, the Soviet confidence had been built on false assumptions. The successful consolidation of the RCP's power and the strengthening of its self-confidence increased nationalism. This was first evidenced by Romania's change of course in foreign policy and afterwards by dramatic internal reforms. The stress on the primacy of national goals resulted in antagonism with the USSR. Romania gained the reputation of being "a deviant state" or "a naughty boy" among the WHO members. This kind of turnabout had been predicted to a smaller degree during the period when Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, the leader of the post-war epoch, headed the Party and the state. The political transformation was definitely completed after his death in 1965, when Nicolae Ceauşescu established absolute power.

All these changes had echos in the military sphere. Major efforts were invested in a revival of the military traditions and revamping Romania's national military doctrine. The Army was granted a "new" military mission, which excluded its engagement in "rescuing" operations on a foreign territory, contrary to the Brezhnev doctrine of "proletarian internationalism". New military paraphernalia and rituals were introduced. These and other symbolic gestures strengthened the impression of emancipation from the Soviet exemplar, even if they were more cosmetic than substantial. At first glance, the impression of intensive de-sovietisation and national emancipation in defence affairs prevailed. Criticism of the WTO and the Soviets, actually based on the old Russophobia, was very useful in raising Ceauşescu's stature. Romania remained in the Warsaw Pact, which had a twofold utility for

his regime—as a *cause célèbre* and an object of public criticism, depending on the regime's domestic goals (Shoup 1990: 125-28).

The most visible military change was the Romanian variant of "people in arms". Legitimized by fears of a Soviet invasion after the Czech experience in 1968, it eventually acquired some internal functions as well. The regular army was supplemented with militia-type units. The importance of these so-called Patriotic Guards was emphasised not only for military and strategic purposes, but also to counterbalance the professional autonomy of the military, whose defence budget and other resources had to be shared with the Patriotic Guards, without any possibility of exercising full control over them. Organisation and control over the wide network of irregular paramilitary and guerrilla detachments were the responsibility of the RCP. Ceauşescu's younger brother headed the Patriotic Guards. The equipment needs of a large number of militia units caused a decrease in technology and arms standards, in conflict with the military's aspiration for its own professionalisation and its corporate interests.

The effect on civil-military relations were peculiar. Ironically, Romania's distancing itself from Soviet mentorship had no positive effect for the military. An author rightly argues that

> the Romanians developed a system of civil-military relations that better conforms to the Soviet tenets than any other system in the entire region (Bebler 1988: 1204).

The civilian leadership restored full control of the military, but the methods of this control were identical with the Stalinist original. The military was under "dual" internal control—by state institutions and by the Party, the most effective form of control being Ceauşescu's personal surveillance over the military.

The National Assembly had constitutionally defined responsibilities for national security issues, which included: the authority to declare war or a national emergency; mobilisation; to ratify an armistice or peace treaty; to appoint the supreme commander of the armed forces; and to award the highest military ranks. Since it rarely met, the second constitutional body, the Council of State, effectively exercised all these powers. Its chairman was the President of the Republic as well as Party leader: Ceauşescu.

The Defence Council, also chaired by Ceauşescu, included the prime minister, the defence minister, the chief of the Higher Political Council of the Army, the chief of staff of the Patriotic Guards, the ministers of the interior and of foreign affairs, and the chairman of the State Planning Committee. The chief of the General Staff served as its secretary. Theoretically responsible to the National Assembly and the Council of State, the Defence Council directly advised Ceauşescu on national security issues. By its composition Ceauşescu, his clan members and closest aides represented *de facto* the highest national security decision-making authority.

The role of the Ministry of National Defence was minor: mainly day-to-day administrative authority over the military in peacetime. Its most influential part was the Higher Political Council of the Army, which had a somewhat autonomous status. Although operationally an organisational unit of the Ministry, it was directly subordinated to the RCP Central Committee. The Council embodied the Party authority, exercising strict control both within the Ministry and the military. It was responsible for conducting political education within the military, supervising a huge network of political officers, reviewing promotions and other personnel matters, and monitoring and reporting on the political reliability of the military personnel. The tight control showed the regime's distrust of the military. On the surface it looked as if the military brass was integrated within the Party and the policy-making structures.[7] Being no more than 4 per cent of the party structures, their participation was symbolic and usually limited to the top brass.

Party membership was *sine qua non* for military promotions. Officers were subject to party discipline outside the military chain of command and the Party had power to remove officers of all ranks on purely political grounds. In 1989, approximately 90 per cent of the military staff were members of RCP or its youth organisation, but the party leaders still kept a close eye on the military, as it was potentially a strong political institution able to challenge Ceauşescu's rule. One of the directorates of the internal security service *Securitate* had particular responsibility for counterespionage within the armed forces. Its wide competencies made *Securitate* the main tool of civilian control of the military, being omnipresent and deeply penetrating all army levels to monitor the loyalty of military professionals.

The new defence doctrine did not improve the military's stature but rather made officers more frustrated by their professional marginalisation and losing functional exclusivity (Bacon 1999: 180). The distancing from the Warsaw Pact was perceived as harmful to military professionalism, preparedness and equipment. Ceauşesecu's policy towards the military heavily undermined its corporate interests and badly diminished its professional pride and autonomy. The

persistent political indoctrination and austere control did not prevent the appearance of praetorian inclinations. In the 1970s and 1980s, numerous military plots were rumoured, but very few were proved.[8] The rumours' accuracy was difficult to determine since the regime's attitude was not consistent: normally it was not in favour of making these affairs an object of public debates, but sometimes it intentionally provoked the rumours to justify political manoeuvres in the military. Ceauşescu frequently rotated cadres within the Defence Ministry and the top brass in order to avoid the emergence of strong, politically independent military leaders. He used to fire senior officers and promote ambitious lower ranking officers against regular procedure. Not surprisingly, the military staff felt insecure and the whole institution became an object of political manipulations.

The most logical explanation for the military's dissatisfaction and interventionist aspirations might seem to be the pre-Communist military legacy, but this may be too easy. The military status under Communism was unfavourable in social, economical and political terms. It has been argued that the military intervenes in politics when the budget is cut and when the government interferes in its internal affairs (Nordlinger 1977). The Romanian case is then an example *par excellence*. The professionalism and *esprit de corps* were especially damaged by the defence budget reductions. The military had a lower social status than the Patriotic Guards and the internal security forces. Ceauşescu treated the military staff as a low-cost labour force for his megalomaniac civilian projects in a deteriorating economic situation. The military was almost totally deprived of its professional autonomy, even regarding education, promotions, training etc. All these circumstances make many analysts believe that there was much accuracy in the rumours of military plots in the 1980s.

Ceauşescu's military policy contradicted the most essential components of the military's professional ethos. Rebirth of nationalism or national Communism could have been a window of opportunity to improve its prestige and self-esteem, but paradoxically it was not allowed to establish itself as a respectable institution. The nationalism expressed itself as isolationism. Ceauşescu successfully balanced between the East and the West, which made him confident that there was no serious external threat to his rule. Consequently, he could turn his attention to the domestic mechanism of building a personality cult. In a regime allegedly based on national interests, the massive military apparatus was necessary, but very much mistrusted.

The most national institution, as the military is usually defined, was a "victim" of this specific form of nationalism.

4.3. The Pains of Transition and the Romanian Military

The overthrow of the "ancient" regime in Romania happened in the most spectacular and violent way, in front of millions of TV spectators. In spite of the great expectations, it soon became clear that the transitionalists' pessimistic prognosis had been correct. In December 1989, Romania lacked most of the socio-economic and cultural characteristics considered as prerequisites for democracy (Fischer 1996: 178). The so-called "Romanian revolution" had lasted for several years before the first hopeful results appeared. Unlike Albania's course of transition, where the first positive impression great soon gave way to disillusionment, Romania had many difficult years before the first encouraging results of the democratisation process.

The myth of *the Romanian revolution* has served as an important determinant of the transition process. It was a new form of the myth of the alleged *Romanian exceptionalism* created in the Ceauşescu period. The revolution, comprehended as a spontaneous popular movement, was a legitimating pedestal both for the new regime and for the military, the main argument for the allegedly democratic character of the new political structure, which was initially taken for granted. There are still many obscure details—for instance, who was the real protagonist of the revolution? Opinions are still divided, but agree that it was not a result of a spontaneous popular uprising only.[9]

Many different perceptions of the revolution have emerged. Every political actor tried to use the myth so as to take political credit. The Iliescu presidency long claimed to be the only authentic interpreter of the revolution, its participation in Ceauşescu's overthrow being its best political credential. Critics stress that Iliescu was not committed to the revolution's ideals and eventually failed. But was there a revolution at all? And who defined the revolution's ideals if any? The second president, Emil Constantinescu labelled the December events a riot, not a revolution. Yet he kept the concept, claiming that his predecessors had not carried out a revolution at all, and that it would take place soon.[10] The Romanian revolution was still a politically attractive idea.

The myths upon which the military has built its new legitimacy are important for the analysis of civil-military reforms. Its interpretation was that the revolution rehabilitated it from its heavy historical debt

when it proudly stood in protection of the people; but this issue soon proved to be a Pandora's box for the military's credibility. In the aftermath of the revolution a deep internal strife among military professionals became more obvious. Analysts have discerned three main factions or, more precisely, three groups competing for leadership positions in the military (Bacon 1999: 188-89). While fighting was still underway, the upper hand belonged to the group of alleged "conspirators" around Gen. Militaru: high-ranking officers who were in retirement or the reserves, some of them compromised during the Ceauşescu regime. The re-introduction of a patronage system caused a *déjà vu* effect among the officers who expected revolutionary changes even in their own institution. The new Group for the Democratisation of the Army (CADA) brought together mostly younger officers who had actively fought *Securitate* forces. They received the support of senior officers who were not compromised in the former regime and were devoted to promoting military professionalism. The moment when the government felt Militaru's group to be a burden, it got rid of it. The leading position was given to the group of officers that had switched sides during the December events. Still being products of the old system, they were far more reliable for the neo-Communist establishment than CADA's ambitious cadres who called for more radical reforms. Militaru's successor as Defence Minister, Gen. Stanculescu, "pacified" and eventually banned CADA. This apparent victory for the third group lasted a few years until unresolved questions provoked public criticism.

The enigma of the military's real role in the revolution and influence on the course of the transitional interlude was particularly attacked after NATO's Madrid Summit in 1997, when Romania's failure to join it spawned a heated debate on the democratic control of the military. Eventually, the campaign stressed the need for demystifying the military's role in the revolution, apparently less heroic than proclaimed. High command officers had taken actions that cost many civilian lives. The military reacted traditionally and rigidly by accusing the media of "mean attacks" directed at undermining the army's public image. There were speculations that access to *Securitate*'s files was blocked by the old guard officers who tried to cover up their real role in the revolution.

What looks indisputable is that the Army's and *Securitate*'s firing on the unarmed protesters in Timisoara on 16 December 1989 was the first of the chain of events that led to the collapse of the regime. Only later, when the protests culminated in Bucharest, did the military

switch sides and turn against *Securitate*'s forces. After the impromptu secret trial of the dictator and his wife, a military firing squad was the executor. The National Salvation Front (NSF), the interim coalition that then took power, was made up of former Communists, military officers and a handful of political newcomers. Although it was not a classical military coup d'état, the military's participation was of great importance for the outcome (Fischer 1996: 178) and the officers had a significant role within the coalition. By some speculations the military started planning a coup six months before the popular uprising.[11]

Once protests had begun, the Army was internally divided. Some of the military leaders fired against the protesters in Cluj-Napoca on 21 December 1989.[12] The military leadership claims that the army suffered a lot of casualties during the Revolution, when the soldiers ensured the security of all the most important objectives, the activity of all the institutions, and the defence of human lives and assets. Defence Minister Babiuc rejected the media's allegations of military involvement in the massacres of innocent civilians by saying that this was

> not only false, but also an insult to the Romanian Army (Baleanu: 1).

After Ceauşescu's brutal dictatorship, which had made organised dissent and social pluralism virtually impossible, a political vacuum followed the breakdown. The NSF—an interim coalition headed by Ion Iliescu—sought to fill it. From the very beginning four general officers were its members and held ministerial posts. In the new governmental structure the army apparently played an important role, although it is an exaggeration to claim that the military ran the NSF.[13] The Front won an overwhelming victory in the 1990 parliamentary elections, but found it difficult to consolide its authority, facing almost continuous strikes and social and ethnic unrest. At critical moments it seemed that the potential political instability raised the likelihood of a military solution, for which there was ample precedent (Fischer 1989). Defence Minister Militaru looked like a strong military ruler who might have offered an attractive alternative to anarchy.[14]. The complex explanation of the army staying away would seem to be that the top brass remained loyal to Iliescu and could offer no real alternative, while the majority of the military were deeply divided.

The NSF proved to be less reform-minded than many had hoped: the old state apparatus survived and filled up the political vacuum.

Iliescu's government did not bring an immediate break with the Communist past. Many former second-rank officials under Ceauşescu got governmental posts. After the adoption of the 1991 Constitution, new elections were held, but Iliescu and his circle remained in office. A domestic scholar describes this situation as

> a real *tour de force,* albeit a sad one, full of perverse consequences for the country (Craiutu 1997).

The society was divided: one camp unconditionally supported Iliescu and his government, another vigorously opposed them; this appeared to be one of the main obstacles to the democratic reforms. Economic problems were tremendous and some extremist political groups gained strength. Iliescu himself played a risky but profitable card—nationalism.[15]

The constant instability made the military, although placed in the margins of the political life, feel uncomfortable. Flirting with nationalism in the deeply frustrated society affected a part of the military corps. The public faced a scandal when 300 military officers signed an open letter in the Greater Romania Party's weekly in June 1995 expressing extreme anti-Hungarian views and attacking the President and the government for undermining the Army and for treason.[16] The media understood the message as a potential threat of a coup by the extremists and discontented military officers. The affair culminated in October 1995 when Gen. Cheler, the commander of the Fourth Transsylvanian Army, was dismissed and placed on reserve.[17] He did not leave the political scene quietly, but responded furiously through the media. If it was an attempt to provoke a mass support among the officers, it obviously failed.

The turnabout brought to the fore many challenges for the military. Having actively participated in the overthrow of the old regime, it remained satisfied with the revolutionary legitimacy it (believed to have) gained from it. Given the anguish of the Romanian transition, the path towards democracy encountered many obstacles under the autocratic regime of President Iliescu.[18] It conditioned the extent of political and economic reforms as well as the mutation of civil-military relations in Romania.

4.4. Constitutional Reforms and Civilian Control of the Military

Romania and Bulgaria were the first Balkan states to adopt new constitutions after the fall of the *ancient regime.* Constitutional reform was at the top of the political agenda right after the 1991 elections.

The new constitution was first passed in the Parliament (in November 1991) and then ratified by a national referendum in December. Opinions differ on the itinerary of democratisation and constitutional reform. In the Romanian case, one opinionis that the drafting and adoption of the new constitution coincided with the period when

> some reasons for optimism were beginning to emerge about the prospects for democracy in Romania (Fischer 1996: 193).

Another is that at that time there was no hurry to "constitutionalise" the newly acquired liberties, because democracy had not fared very well (Craiutu 1997).

Given the political constellation, the Constitution could not have been a coherent document. Although imperfect in many aspects, it was considered as an indispensable endeavour, which could have secured a swift shift of attention to the pending problems of post-Communism. It soon turned out that starting democratic institution at the macro-level, i.e. to transform the major institutions, was far easier than altering the political culture so as to enable these institutions to work properly.

The Constitution has established the legal and institutional framework of the new civil-military relations. The two basic determinants are a republican form of governing and a semi-presidential system. In accordance with the separation of power principle, the respective institutions are charged with certain aspects of democratic supervision over the military, but the constitutional arrangement of the so-called Big Power Triangle (Parliament—President of the republic—Government) has manifested some deficiencies which often cause frictions in the everyday functioning of the political system.

The constitution emphasises the position of Parliament with its basic normative function as well as budgetary and control functions. The two chambers (the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate) have joint sessions to decide on the important defence-related matters. The crucial issues, such as the national defence system, the organisation and functioning of the army, the status of military staff, the states of siege and emergency, the organisation of the Government and the Supreme Council of National Defence etc. are to be regulated by organic laws. The control function is supposed to be exercised through the parliamentary committees on defence, public order and national security of the two Chambers. Formally, the Parliament examines the

annual report of the Supreme Council of National Defence and determines consequent tasks. It assesses governmental law proposals and controls governmental bodies and officials. The budgetary function provides oversight over military expenditures and how they are used. Parliament is further authorised to declare general and partial mobilisation, declare a state of war and suspend or terminate armed hostilities.

In spite of all this, the role of Parliament has been very limited. Romania's constitutionally strong presidency has overshadowed the elements of the parliamentarian system. Parliament has been the weakest actor in the "triangle" and quite submissive. It mirrors the deeply polarised society and its indefinite political configuration, and the party system, on which it depends, is extremely diverse with a pervasive *us versus them* mentality. So-called "parliamentary migration" has made the political balance in Parliament even more uncertain. The confrontational atmosphere it normally suffers from has had a major impact on decision-making and the passing of significant laws. Every legislative issue has been over-politicised, including those on national security. Understandably, Parliament's institutional and cultural deficit cannot be overcome overnight: it lacks an experienced membership in general, and civilian expertise in national security matters in particular.

The role of the President of Romania in the military sphere derives from the strong presidency model. S/he embodies the Romanian state, i.e. is the guarantor of the country's national independence, unity and territorial integrity. Although constitutionally emphasised, the relationship between the President and the government contains some ambiguities. The President selects a candidate for prime minister, appoints the government with the approval of Parliament, and appoints and removes ministers on the recommendation of the prime minister. Although the Constitution does not empower the President to do so, Constantinescu set a legal precedent in March 1998 when he dismissed Prime Minister Ciorbea. After 18 months, the next Prime Minister Vasile was removed under similar circumstances. Constitutionally, these two executive institutions may establish relations at different levels and on different issues, and are presumed to co-operate over important issues, e.g. by *ad hoc* consultations about important and urgent matters. More importantly, the President may take part in the meetings of the government debating upon matters of national interest (foreign policy, defence and maintenance of public order). President Constantinescu's dismissal of prime ministers was

seen by many constitutional experts as illegal. The only constitutional way to remove the prime minister from office is by a parliamentary vote of no confidence. The President thus showed disrespect both for Parliament's competencies and the constitutional position of the prime minister by violating the constitution and rule of law principle.

The President holds the office of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He may declare partial or general mobilisation of the army with prior approval of Parliament. In exceptional cases this decision may be subsequently submitted for approval to Parliament within five days. In case of an aggression, the President is empowered to take measures to repel it. He is obliged to bring them to the cognisance of Parliament by a prompt message. The constitutional provisions do not clarify the relation between the presidential control of the military and that undertaken by Parliament. The President's prerogatives are to be carried out subject to the prior or subsequent approval of Parliament, which implies the more significant position of the latter. The President may also declare a state of siege or emergency in the whole or part of the country, but must then ask for Parliament's approval within five days. However, the *de facto* relationship between Parliament and the President leaves little grounds for belief that the constitutional balance will be respected. With the authority the president holds in peacetime it is likely that he may influence the parliament even more in emergency situations.

The Supreme Council for National Defence is supposed to enhance the decision-making web of bodies in the defence sphere. As in the other post-Communist countries, the President is its chairman and the Council's role seems to be closely determined by this fact. The Council's membership is rather broad: the President, the Prime Minister, the Chairman of the Council for Co-ordination of Economic Strategy and Reform, the Defence Minister, the Minster of the Interior, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Head of Political Analysis Department of the Presidency, the Director of the Romanian Intelligence Service, the Chief of General Staff, and the Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service. There is a belief that its constituent parts have bigger importance than the Council itself (Nelson 2002: 357).

The role of the Government in implementing democratic control of the military, as determined by its constitutional position, includes initiation of legislation processes and submitting the draft defence budget to the Parliament as well as co-ordinating the activities of the Defence Ministry. In practice, the Government has often behaved in a

manner that usurped Parliament's legislative function. At the same time, the strong President has undermined the Government's position. According to a domestic analyst, after the Madrid Summit failure in 1997 Romania became ungovernable at the parliamentary level,

> forcing the prime minister to take over more executive powers and to govern by emergency ordinances (Baleanu: 1).

The opposition has accused the government of substituting itself for the parliament by assuming the legislative function in the state.

Government competency in the defence realm is highlighted by analysing the position the Defence Ministry. The accountability of the Defence Minister is particularly important, but also one the most ambiguous issues. Formally, he is responsible simultaneously to Parliament, the President, the Supreme Council for National Defence and the Government. The unclear relationship between the Government and the Defence Minister is further burdened by internal frictions, especially between the Defence Minister and the Chief of General Staff.

Romania was the last post-Communist state to appoint a civilian to the office of defence minister, in 1994. The replacement of the former minister (Gen. Spiru) with a civilian was not originally a move to strengthen civilian control and civilianise the Ministry of Defence.[19] Only later was the old legislation modified in as much as the Chief of the General Staff, who had held the position of State Secretary in the Ministry of Defence, was limited to purely professional responsibilities. These steps were supposed to strengthen the peacetime government's supervision of the General Staff and military commanders through a civilian defence minister. The first civilian minister was Gheorghe Tincă; his having had a close relationship with the Chief of General Staff (Gen. Cioflina) secured quite a smooth transition to civil ministerial control. Formally subordinate to the minister, the General Staff enjoyed full freedom by his delegating control of the military to Cioflina. The government elected in November 1996 undertook urgent measures to wrest control from the General Staff, but at a personal, rather than institutional and legal, level. Gen. Cioflina was rapidly fired and replaced with Gen. Degeratu, who was, according to some domestic observers, preferred before candidates with higher military qualities in order to strengthen the authority of Minister Babiuc. The military officers perceived this as disregarding the merit principle and military professionalism.

Despite his good intentions, Babiuc could not be effective, being incompetent in defence matters and more preoccupied with substantial political responsibilities within his party (Nelson 1998: 152-53). Getting a civilian minister, how ever, provided a significant impetus to the civilianisation process, as is now shown by the appointment of civilians to the top positions.

The analysis of the legal framework of the democratic control of the military undeniably represents a formal approach to the issue, but already at this level certain deficiencies of the constitutional text can be noted. During the process of adoption of the Constitution there was vigorous public criticism of its failure to secure a true separation of powers, and especially of the elevated presidential power. Many pointed out that some civil liberties could be severely limited under ill-defined circumstances.[20] They include national security, public order, public morals and so forth. The President has special powers in the areas of defence and public order, particularly in declaring a state of siege or a state of emergency. Analysts agree that the presidency has enjoyed considerable tutelary powers and exercised broad authority over all major political decisions, while invalidating in practice some of the principles of constitutionalism. The limits of presidential powers were sometimes ill-defined and this ambiguity created legal and political confusions, as was the case with Iliescu's supervision over the security services.

Iliescu's government and the leaders of the Romanian Information Service (RIS) displayed an unusual degree of partnership.[21] The impression was that the RIS was serving the interests of a single man and his circle of protegés rather than national interests, and it was soon depicted as President Iliescu's "personal security service". It was *de facto* politically unaccountable to Parliament. The security services commanded great financial resources, while the political mechanisms were ineffective and the nascent civil society has been incapable of monitoring the budget of the RIS. The appointment of the first civilian minister was soon followed by public speculations on his alleged close ties with the *Securitate.* The military has faced the same old functional rival once more, under a new name and led by another strong man. The accusations were promptly denied, but army officers became aware that they would remain under strict control by the military counter-intelligence department of the RIS, introduced into the military through the back door.

Democratic control exercised by the civil society is supposed to be a central element of the new type of civil-military relations. It looks as

if the political establishment in Romania has invested much effort to revive civil society, and especially public opinion in regard to politico-military issues. According to official sources, the government paid special attention to the training of civilian experts on issues of security and defence, including NGOs, and intented to present the new national security and military doctrines as an outcome of wide consultation with competent non-governmental agencies. Yet, the main focus of the public debate was always on Romania's admission in NATO and the severe problems that the military faced were often intentionally overlooked. The debate was primarily a propaganda campaign for NATO membership.

Civil society in Romania is still extremely weak as a consequence of the historical legacy and post-Communist developments. The old-fashioned political culture traditionally stressed the gap between the political elites and the citizens and reinforced collectivist values, paternalism and civic apathy. The state has traditionally enjoyed a privileged status in the eyes of the Romanians, while collectivist egalitarianism and the absence of social trust have been fostered by the characteristics of the political culture and little confidence in and experience with democratic institutions (Goati 1997). In spite of that, the military in still among the most trusted institutions in the Romania.

4.5. Reforms in Romania's Armed Forces

The overall transformation of Romanian society means reform of the military as well. Officials believe that the most important transformation in its history has been underway, imposed by a new political reality and the geopolitical situation of the region. However, the *spiritus movens* of this reform has been achieving the main political goal, i.e. integrating the country into the European and NATO structures. It has strengthened internal social cohesion and some consensus over reforms to the national security system.

Having *de facto* left the WTO long ago, post-Communist Romania was the only member that did not have to start the process by defining its national military doctrine. The military has been transformed in accordance with a revised military doctrine and the new Constitution. During this process the national military traditions were only re-evaluated in terms of their adjustment to NATO values.

According to the constitutional definition of the military mission Romanian Armed Forces are to guarantee the sovereignty, independence and unity of the State, the country's territorial integrity and constitutional democracy. Two contradictions may be detected

here. First, the military seems to keep its internal function, constitutional democracy being a defence object. President Constantinescu once emphasised

> the special role which the military establishment plays as the main guarantor of internal stability, with positive effects on regional security.[22]

Its possible role in case of internal turmoil is therefore ambigious. Romanians still have a kind of paranoia regarding Transsylvania, the Hungarian-populated region. During the 1996 inter-ethnic tensions significant military troops were deployed there; this was seen as being solely due to the ethnic characteristic of the population. Ethnic Hungarians also reported that the army was building gigantic barracks on the outskirts of the town of Sfântu-Gheorghe, while the Air Force intensified training flights over Transsylvania. No matter whether the Army's moves were part of the state policy towards the Hungarian minority or not, a part of the population obviously felt uncomfortable by the military's presence and actions. The military has a long way ahead before it can qualify as a military for *all* citizens.

The second contradiction is related to the external mission. Romania is not famous for its obedience in alliance structures, and was particularly proud of its non-involvement in conflicts outside its borders (i.e. Czechoslovakia in 1968). NATO's intervention in Yugoslavia in spring 1999 was the first serious test for Romania's devotedness to the Alliance. With the new NATO Strategic Concept there may be many similar situations in the future where Romania will have to find a balance between its national interests and the Alliance demands.

Democratic requirements made the military go through a two-stage process of restructuring. The first period (1990-92) was characterised by corrective steps and theoretical underpinnings of specific reform measures, mainly transitory adjustments to prepare the ground for the radical restructuring. RCP structures were disbanded and the Communist indoctrination ceased, but the depoliticization of the military was initially cosmetic and many saw the top military officers as the old guard, too close to the president (Iliescu) and slow to adapt to newly established democratic principles.

The Romanian Army relies on conscription. Achieving a fully professional force is officially defined as an objective, closely connected with the downsizing of the military, which was also

required by Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE) signed in November 1990. By speedy retirements and leaving positions vacant, the active military personnel levels were reduced from 271,000 in 1990 to 229,000 in 1995, the 2002 target being 140,000, official intention being to establish smaller, efficient and highly mobile military forces. The changes have been drastic, both at the military leadership and top echelon levels. During the second phase of the reform (1993-96) major steps were undertaken: the border guards were transferred to the Interior Ministry and the Patriotic Guards were disbanded. The focus of the second phase, however, was on the army's re-organisation, mobility and modernisation. Radical downsizing called for intensificed professionalisation and modernising the military equipment, budgetary constraints being the biggest limitation.

The restructuring took place during a severe economic recession. The first two years after the Revolution were a period of major economic crisis, trauma and confusion to such a degree as never seen in Romania. For instance, in 1992 the GDP was only half that of 1989, itself a year of deep crisis which actually triggered the December Revolution. The first stage of transition in particular was characterised by great political and social instability. For the sake of the reform programmes, the 1995 defence budget was increased by some 30 per cent compared with the 1990 defence budget—which could at most secure the survival of the institution. Despite the major efforts put into these programmes, the establishment is simply not able to fund the military so as to guarantee the course of the acknowledged modernisation process.[23] Modernisation is supposed to be a significant part of the military reform, but is also to support the great hope of Romanian officials for NATO membership. As in many other post-Communist countries, the efforts to modernise military infrastructure and to enhance compatibility with NATO standards have often led to procurement frauds and corruption in the military and government establishment.[24]

In the last few years the Romanian military is believed to have gone through the process of adaptation to the new internal and external environment, the major problem being that neither has been finally determined. Military reform is not finished yet and faces major difficulties. The political elite appears to be quite sure about the final goals but not about how to achieve them. The military is caught between the harsh reality and fascinating dreams of the future, which might be a major source of frustrations. It has the remarkable role of

an institution that could bring the country into the family of Western democracies. This in itself indicates the rather odd trajectory of Romania's route to democracy.

4.6. Romania on its way towards NATO: Political and Military Consequences

At first glance, Romania's determination to join NATO resembles the policies of other candidate countries. It is seen as an essential political/security goal with no alternative, but also defines a kind of national obsession. Since joining PfP in January 1994, Romania has been one of the most active members, participating in virtually every activity. With about 90 per cent voicing approval in several opinion polls, the Romanians have been more united over this goal than any other objective on the national agenda. Nevertheless, several questions arise. How is it possible that a country which had been autonomous regarding the Warsaw Pact became so devoted to the Western Alliance literally overnight? Was the new security policy a result of a rational and comprehensive analysis or rather an instinctive move in accordance with the "follow the flock" maxim? Was the time ripe for decision-making on such an important issue, and was there any decision-making procedure at all over NATO admission?

As for the first question, the Romanian political elite exploited the myth of the country's *naturally belonging* to the Western cultural sphere, NATO membership being perceived as a matter of reaffirmation of this. This perception has been promoted with a twofold function. Bolstering the Western image may have a special meaning for the public, who badly need an identity reference radically different from the Ceauşescu period—and from the transitional period as well. The NATO "Promised Land" was easily sold to the impoverished citizens, who tend to perceive NATO membership as a solution to all their difficulties.

Joining NATO is also perceived as an identity issue from another point of view—as being in the club.[25] Recent interpretation of history fosters the image of "an isolated Latin island in a Slavonic sea", unprotected for centuries from the influence of its eastern neighbours. The elite advocates NATO membership as the only alternative and a historical chance that must be used despite the price to pay. According to the former President Constantinescu,

> Romanian society does not regard the accession to the NATO as a form of protection against a threat, but rather as a way to

regain an identity which had been unjustly denied to it for five decades.[26]

Unlike the Bulgarian version that NATO is a civilianisational *choice*, the Romanian one is based on the premise that the West is a geopolitical space where Romania *belongs* by culture and civilisation and from which it was severely cut off after the Second World War. The political elite claims that Romania's culture is European, sharing the same values: democracy, rule of law, human rights, free market economy, etc. This kind of lobbying made no influence on the decision-makers in Brussels, there being little real indications of democratisation of the country.

One of the main expectations from NATO membership has been an improved security position for a country usually described as a "no man's land" between NATO and Russia. Too close to the "near abroad" of Russia and too far from the core of Western Europe, Romania regards security guarantees from Euro-Atlantic structures as the best way of overcoming security threats. However, the most serious security challenges for the country come from its internal conflict potential related to social and inter-ethnic problems. The whole picture becomes more complex when the problems relating to the regional context are added, as was proved during the NATO war on Yugoslavia.

The demonstration of naturally belonging to the Western civilisation on the eve of the Madrid Summit was done in a bizarre way. Two competing myths forged by traditional adversaries (Hungary and Romania) confronted each other in applying for NATO membership. Against Hungarian claims that the nation's historic mission was to spread western civilisation eastwards, the Romanian official version is that

> Romania was founded as a Roman-type state and had represented the western-type culture at least a millennium before Hungarians (Tinca 1995).

The first wave of NATO enlargement was predominantly perceived through the prism of Romania's troublesome relationship with Hungary and its own population of Hungarian origin, rather than security reasons. The Defence Minister Tincă declared the Summit decisions to be unfair, since it was Romania's contribution that had improved neighbourly relations with Hungary. The side effects of the Madrid failure included a growth of national rhetoric and tensions in

ethnically mixed regions (Transsylvania). The government overreacted. For instance, the first military parade since the fall of Communism was held in Alba Iulia (central Transsylvania) in December 1997 under the auspices of President Constantinescu.

Romanians embraced the NATO idea easily, which does not necessarily mean that it had been previously debated in a serious way. The wide consensus among the political parties has not been a result of a national debate on security issues. NATO has been seen as a solution without any alternative. On the surface, such a consensus may look ideal, but the lack of discussion over other possibilities indicated that the pro-NATO policy arose in a rather autocratic way. The creativity of the public and social agents has been shown to be very limited or even restrained. A group of academics tried to provoke a debate over so-called active neutrality as an appropriate security alternative, but got very little publicity and failed to open any critical thinking on alternatives.

Before the Madrid Summit the government launched an intensive media campaign in order to create a different image of Romania both for external and internal use. The effects were rather meagre in international circles, but a major success in terms of domestic public support. The eagerness shown by the Romanians could be interpreted in several ways, but essentially it looked as if the NATO Promised Land has been promoted into a new dogma that merely replaced the old National Communism ideology. The situation was described as

> an unprecedented press campaign and political consensus (Sava 1999).

In September 1994, 83 per cent of the respondents were in favour of the idea, and the peak of 90 percent was reached on the eve of the Madrid Summit. During Communism, the citizens were deprived of open public debates on security affairs. Being in isolation from the two military blocs, they could have no realistic view of the domestic and/or international security problems. The information deficit on security matters could not have been overcome in a short period of time. NATO was simply taken as a synonym for the developed, rich and prosperous West. Very few have been willing to estimate the real costs of integration into NATO membership being seen as a path towards sharing the free-market affluence of developed countries.

The political elite plays a dual role. It supports the beliefs that joining NATO is a worthy task as the easiest and quickest way to

"sneak" into Europe by military efforts. Assuming that integration into the EU will take longer, the establishment prefers integration through the military sphere, which in its view depends on discipline and good organisation rather than on structural reforms. The efforts to improve the starting positions in the race for entering the NATO club has provided it with a good alibi for most of the economic and social failures. Many reforms have been sold to the citizens as necessary for NATO admission. The pains of economic hardships have been justified in the same way, hiding a lack of political will and mismanagement.

In this approach to European integration, the military has been awarded a crucial role. For Communist Romania, which had kept its "neutral" status between the blocs, admission to NATO was less perceived as joining the "winning side" of the Cold War than as a victory over the erratic dictatorship as a kind of moral reparation for its own "sins", which was especially significant for the military. Despite many affairs, the military's credibility remains high. The new "external mission", believed to have a leading role in the country's bright future within the NATO family, might become ambiguous: it overemphasises the significance of the institution, while creating many frustrations for military professionals.

In spite of all efforts, Romania was left out in Madrid. It initially seemed to be swallowing its disappointment and making an all-out effort to get on the second list of the expansion. The justification for the failure was found in the "historical handicap", "fate", etc.—i.e. in the

> bad hand dealt to Romania's democrats and reformers that from the start (December 1989) meant that the country's efforts and potential would be hindered and slowed (Nelson 2002: 359).

All Romanian governments were equally engaged in achieving NATO admission. Once in office, Constantinescu immediately reaffirmed the nation's strong desire to join NATO, calling for sweeping and speedy reforms (O'Rourke & Shafir 1997). He saw the major obstacle to membership in the country's incapacity to support the costs of modernising the armed forces. The economic hardships, however, remained. The meagre defence budget soon increased the fear that it might dash the NATO prospects and sap military morale. As Chief of Staff Gen. Degeratu explained, budget cuts compounded the

psychological blow to the military from the failed NATO bid. However, the Constantinescu presidency's major problem was its inability to restart structural reforms: 1998 appeared to be the worst year for Romania's economy and the country was burdened by crime and corruption.

Some analysts describe the period after the Madrid Summit as a time of moving from (ungrounded) enthusiasm to realism. Madrid's decisions were disappointing, but the Kosovo crisis had a sobering effect on the public. Opinion polls among military officers in October 1997 indicated a decline by 11 per cent in pro-NATO replies in only a couple of months. Between the Madrid and 1999 Washington Summits the issue of NATO integration entered a shadow zone, while the impact of the Kosovo crisis affected the relationship between the public and government. The Parliament's agreement with NATO's demand to use Romanian air space was not the result of a prior debate. President Constantinescu called openly for an intervention even before NATO itself made a decision on it. The Government's position was that Romania should take advantage of its position near the conflict region and also demonstrate its cooperation at a critical moment for NATO. Many citizens perceived this move as a declaration of war against a neighbouring country (Sava 1999: 7). According to the 1999 opinion polls, 76 per cent of the population disagreed with the NATO intervention, 78 per cent with deployment of NATO troops on Romanian territory, and 69 percent with putting air space at NATO's disposal. There was a 20 per cent decline in support for NATO membership in April 1999. For the first time the public came to think about the costs of the admission. The war had a detrimental effect on Romania's economy, and very soon the situation culminated in a government crisis.[27]

4.7. Prospects

After the 1996 elections, many analysts hurried to announce that it was a turning point in Romanian political history, the first peaceful change in government in more than fifty years. The formal test of democracy, i.e. regular elections followed by a peaceful rotation in power, was successfully passed. It soon turned out that this was not sufficient evidence of the democratic consolidation, even if it enhanced its prospects.

Democratic transition in Romania was initiated through the sudden collapse of the former regime, which had a strong impact and put significant constraints upon subsequent political developments. The

winner-takes-all mentality of the main political actors after 1989 has delayed the consolidation process. The so-called "electoral revolution" in 1996 implied a new way of conceptualising political change. Many believed that the 1996 elections brought the 1989 Revolution to an end, but soon the new government promoted another view: that the real revolution began with it. Still, it soon became clear that the election of the new Parliament and the President did not represent a clear break with the past.

The inefficiency of the Parliament and the Government in the running of the reform process, as well as the "habits" of the new President resembled those of the previous one. The severe economic situation was still one of the major problems that raised the fear that democracy would not survive in the absence of economic growth. The analyses showed that the disappointment with the structural changes and the problem-riddled social situation[28] may have led towards support for a more authoritarian regime in the 2000 elections. Opinion polls indicated that the majority of the population would give its support for a dominant party parliamentary structure as well as for a decisive president (Micu). Not surprisingly, the leading politicians in the polls were the former President Iliescu and the leader of România Mare's party, Tudor. Constantinescu withdrew from the elections, and Iliescu expectedly got back in office in the 2000 elections.

Even after two peaceful changes of power the administration is still in the hands of the former *nomenklatura*, who are not going to accept democratic reforms without reluctance. The high-ranking officers are still considered to be the old guard, slow to adapt to the democratic principles. Observers opine that there is no danger of a new Antonescu, which is taken to prove the military's compliance with democratic norms in the civil-military realm (Bacon 1999: 189). Despite enthusiastic official reports, the military is still badly equipped and demoralised. The most painful endeavour has not yet started—radical downsizing and social problems of the military officers. Only then will the military officers' attitude towards civil-military reforms be truly tested.

Civilian control over the military cannot be equated with democratic control. The real success of civil-military reforms in Romania is heavily dependent on the democratic prospects of the political system. The man on horseback would not necessarily be another Antonescu, because throughout Romanian political history civilian strong men have caused more turmoil than the military itself.

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[1] Another legend traces the roots of today's Romanians in the history of the so-called Carpatho-Danubian civilisation (6500-3500 BC), which preceded even the Sumerian one.

[2] There were two powerful Dacian kingdoms: King Burebista (82-*c*. 44 BC) succeeded in uniting the Geto-Dacian tribes for the first time. The kingdom of King Decebal was defeated by the Roman army led by Emperor Traianus, who turned it into the Roman province called Dacia.

[3] Ion Calafeteanu, *History of Romanians*, Government of Romania website (http://domino.kappa.ro/guvern/istoria-e.html).

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] There are several evaluations of Romania's democratic traditions prior to the Communist period. On the one hand, Huntington says in his influential book that "six [countries]—El Salvador, Nicaragua, Romania, Bulgaria, Mongolia, and Sudan—had no democratic experience at all before the third wave" (Huntington 1991: 217). Aurelian Crăiuțu argues that Huntington made a regrettable mistake. He suggests that the Romanian experience with democracy has been minimal, but it is not true that that it had none: a relatively stable—albeit imperfect—democratic system existed until 1938. (Craiutu 1997).

[6] A coalition government under Gen. Stănescu signed an armistice with the Allies under which it agreed to supply 12 infantry divisions to the struggle against Germany.

[7] In 1989, three general officers were full or alternate members of the HRCP Political Executive Committee; a general was one of three first deputy prime ministers; the minister of national defence (as a rule a military professional) was usually a full RCP Central Committee member when he occupied the post and received a promotion to the Polexco; a general was Central Committee secretary for military and security affairs; the chief of the Higher Political Council of the Army and the commanders of the armed services and army corps were also Central Committee members.

[8] The first plot was foiled in 1971, when forty general staff officers were purged and arrested. Three years later, another five senior commanders were purged. Gen. Ionita, a long-time Ceaușescu ally, was dismissed in 1976. In the 1980ies numerous rumours circulated on military conspiracies and attempted revolts; they culminated in 1983 when a military coup d'état was reportedly crushed and 12 officers executed.

[9] "What really happened in December 1989 is still a controversial topic on which not much light has been shed so far. I have addressed it elsewhere and do not intend to expand upon it here. Suffice it to say that many political analysts and journalists now believe that the Revolution was both a coup staged by intelligence officers and second-rank members of nomenclature and a genuine uprising that triggered and eventually changed the plans of the officers. Even though the most eccentric

scenarios cannot be entirely dismissed, Verdery and Kligman were right—I believe—to affirm that the revolution came from a fortuitous convergence of several elements: superpower interests, events in neighbouring countries, some sort of conspiracy at the top, and a long-incubated 'movement of rage' culminating in a genuine popular uprising. None of these elements alone would have been sufficient" (Craiutu 1997).

[10] From a speech of President Constantinescu (Lovatt 1999).

[11] *New York Times* reported that Gen. Militaru, a retired army general who once served as a commander of the Bucharest garrison and became Romania's new defence minister in 1990, was caught on videotape admitting that he and his military associates began planning the coup. Despite official denials, a "home video, taken just as power was changing hands" showed Militaru "saying that the ruling Council of National Salvation had been in existence for six months" (*New York Times*, 3 January 1990).

[12] Gen. Gheorghiu, the commander of the 4th Army in Transsylvania, declared that the army fired against the protesters at Cluj-Napoca on 21 December 1989. The retired Gen. Cheler also declared that the army fired against the rebels in December 1989 on the orders of the leaders of the Romanian Army at that time. ("MapN denies the culpability of the whole army", *Monitorul News*, Bucharest, 28 December 1996).

[13] Sam Marcy, "General admits long-term coup planning: reports of 'popular uprising' in Romania debunked", *Workers World Service*, 11 January 1990. *The Times* (London) also reported that "the real power clearly lies with the Army, but the soldiers are keeping in the background and so far have refrained from talking to journalists." (*The Times*, 29 December 1990).

[14] *New York Times*, 28 December 1989.

[15] "President Iliescu, like Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic, is a product of the Communist apparatus, now combining authoritarian rule with nationalism." ("Unfinished Peace: Report of the International Commission on the Balkans", *Balkan Forum*, vol. 4, no. 4, December 1996, p. 206).

[16] The daily *România Liberă* on 26 June quoted the chairman of the Senate's Defence Committee, Alexandru Radu Timofte, as saying that the letter had been written by just one person and the 300 signatories "do not exist". Thus, the officials tried to minimise the scandal, interpreting it as an act of an individual.

[17] Cheler has been a rather charismatic military leader who was usually perceived as a protector of Romania's national unity against alleged irredentist Hungarian aspirations.

[18] For more details of Iliescu's authoritarianism, see Baleanu (1996).

[19] Gen. Spiru was respected as a modest politically non-ambitious person and a respectable military officer. His removal from office was seen as a consequence of the constellation of forces in the ruling coalition, where the România Mare Party did not like him because of his pro-Western orientation. He was sacrificed in order to keep order in the house, but after a public scandal that badly harmed his reputation.

[20] Some provisions of the constitutional text—such as Articles 27 (on inviolability of domicile), 31 (on the right to information), and 49 (on restrictions of the exercise of certain rights or freedoms)—which leave much scope to statutory laws for limiting some provisions of the Constitution, were criticised for failing to protect individual rights.

[21] RIS has been seen as a mere continuation of *Securitate* under a new name. Many former *Securitate* officers are still within RIS ranks, which is the main obstacle to a complete overhaul of the intelligence system. Although no official figures are available and estimates differ widely, Magureanu, the controversial director of RIS, claimed in March 1994 that "only one third of the approximately 15,000 *Securitate* officers had been offered employment in the new organisation". As the real number of *Securitate* officers was estimated to be in the region of 50,000, it is easy to believe that the new RIS and the new intelligence services descend, in mentality and methods, from the old organisation.

[22] "Romanian president meets MOD leadership", *Romanian Military Newsletter*, vol. 2, 12 March 1997.

[23] The Defence Minister complained in January 1996 to the Prime Minister and the President that the defence budget made it impossible to purchase sufficient food for the army and to ensure normal provisions for servicemen and officers. He also assessed that this situation would jeopardise continuation of the army modernisation projects requested by NATO.

[24] The major scandals (Bell-Textron and Lockheed) occured on the eve of the Madrid Summit. These two American-based firms had made deals with the high defence and government figures, who were believed to have received personal benefits from the purchase of Lockheed radar and signed the deal with Bell-Textron.

[25] Statement of the Foreign Ministry NATO Department's head, quoted by Edward Cody, "Romania steps up efforts to secure spot in NATO", *Washington Post*, Tuesday, 26 August 1997.

[26] "NATO and Eastern Europe: security of Central Europe", address by Emil Constantinescu, NATO Workshop on Political-Military Decision-Making, Prague, 21-25 June 1997.

[27] See "Economic prospects for the countries of Southeast Europe in the aftermath of the Kosovo crisis", *IMF and World Bank Report*, 22 September 1999.

[28]The "mineriada crisis" (i.e. miners' revolt) in February 1999 contained a risk of the Army intervening, some officers complaining about grave leadership errors.

Chapter 5

From Corfu to Brioni: The First and Second Yugoslavia

The other states treated in this book exhibit a rich variety, both in terms of "real history" and perceptions of history. For instance, all have perceptions of ancient state traditions, where professional historians would agree in some cases and put big question marks in others. When states appeared by mergers of former principalities, clans etc., their histories nevertheless exhibit several common features. All of today's Albania, Bulgaria and Romania was under Turkish rule for several centuries and the histories of the components out of which they were formed or resurrected show minor variations only from a larger perspective, important as they may seem from the local ones. In all three states, ethnonational minorities, whether defined by language, religion or both, are rather small, totaling 15 per cent or less. In addition to being relatively culturally homogeneous, none of these states contain more than one emphasized state tradition.

The Yugoslav state created in 1918 differs radically in all these respects. It contained several perceived state traditions with a broad range in their relations to "real" history. In terms of demographical statistics, every ethnonational group was a minority. In geopolitical and historical terms, we may define a "Habsburg-Ottoman scale", ranging between Macedonia and Kosovo, which were parts of the Ottoman empire for half a millennium, and Slovenia with its millennium under German/Austrian overlords. There is little of common history, except in the sense that the area as a whole was always an arena of imperial rivalry, with the Ottoman and Habsburg empires as main competitors, a third party role shifting from Venice to Russia in the eighteenth century.

This makes it a problem how to balance generality and specificity in the historical sections in the chapters about our Yugoslav successor states so as to avoid tedious repetitions. We chose to use the present section for a brief presentation of "real" history as a common background before filling in specific details and adding (often strongly

differing) perceptions in the individual chapters. Writing such a "real" history is actually an impossible task so soon after the period described, especially when politicians and scholars alike are still in dispute on emphases, interpretations and for that matter many fact, so the present chapter should be taken for no more than it is: a first draft to give a background[1].

In some other parts of Europe, writing the history of the last millennium of a territory and that of a people largely coincides; the added complexity here is that both states and peoples sometimes moved considerably.

The coastal parts, and to a varying degree the interior, of Yugoslavia, were first under the Roman (its division in 395 A.D. went through Former Yugoslavia) and then the Byzantine empire, initially populated by speakers of Latin, Greek, Illyrian and other dialects. Huns, Goths and Avars invaded during the first half of the first millennium, followed by populations speaking South Slavonic languages. Some expelled the original populations, others established themselves as overlords and prevailed linguistically. The relative role of these processes is difficult to establish, making it an unrewarding task to try to establish the proportions of speakers of different languages in a given territory in the middle ages or the (genetic) ancestry of an ethnonational group of today. With some exceptions, such as the medieval Republica Ragusa (today's Dubrovnik)[2], the sources are too meagre to permit firm conclusions. This leaves the field open for greatly differing perceptions among various groups as to "who we really are", "who the others really are", "what was once ours", "what role we played", etc.

The political organisation of the arriving Slavs was largely tribal, eventually transforming into larger and more feudally organized units (principalities, duchies, kingdoms, empires) that succeeded or coexisted with the earlier forms. The oldest ones are the first Bulgarian kingdom and the Slovene duchies, followed by the kingdoms of various duration of Croatia, the second Bulgaria (with its centre in the present Macedonia), Serbia (with its centre in the present Kosovo) and Bosnia. In the early part of this period, these entities were somewhere between independence and Byzantine or German suzerainty or sovereignty. Later on, Hungary (and, after its collapse, the Habsburg empire) and the Ottoman empire define the main poles. Exactly where what entity was located in this respect when is a matter on which even professional historians sometimes differ—and national perceptions much more so. From the sixteenth through the early

nineteenth century, virtually all of the territory of the Former Yugoslavia was ruled by the Ottoman and Habsburg empires or Venice. From the late seventeenth century, the former was gradually pushed back by the two others, until Venice disappeared in 1797. Austria took its parts over and then returned to them (and some of its older lands) after the brief Napoleonic interlude called the Illyrian Kingdom.

There were two exceptions. The trade-based Republica Ragusa recovered its facto independence in 1358 after 150 years of Venetian domination and managed to retain it until its dissolution and integration into the Illyrian Kingdom in 1808, whatever combinations of (at least nominal) vassalage, suzerainty, alliances, etc. that its experienced diplomacy involved it in (it was sometimes called "The city of seven flags"). Some Serb tribes formed the principality of Montenegro, which was long under Turkish suzerainty and occasionally largely under de facto Turkish control, but never completely subdued.

If we transpose a map of the First (1918) Yugoslavia over the Vienna Congress map of Europe, we get the following picture of 1815 in terms of today's successor states: the Ottoman empire still ruled Macedonia, most of Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Montenegro was largely independent, although the Ottoman empire claimed suzerainty. Russia had been recognized in 1774 by the Ottoman empire as a (vaguely defined) protector of its (largely Orthodox) Christian minorities. The Habsburg empire included Slovenia, Croatia and Vojvodina. Large areas on the Habsburg side of the boundary (in Croatia and Vojvodina) were under direct military administration ("Militärgrenze" in German, "Vojna Krajina" in Serbo-Croat) and sizable parts of them mainly populated by Serbs that had fled the Ottoman empire during past centuries and enrolled in the Habsburg military forces. Other parts of Croatia and Vojvodina were under civilian Austrian administration. Both empires were in decay and eventually tried to reverse it by reforms, with short term successes at best. If there is any common factor among the causes of decay, it may be that the combinations of religious and dynastic legitimacy on which both empires were based proved unable to accommodate and survive the transition to national and/or democratic legitimacy, the speakers of Turkish and German being about a quarter of the imperial populations (similar problems were inherited by some successor states of the empires). National movements, based on shifting combinations of language, religion, culture and historical myths, emerged among

Slovenes, Croats and Serbs in the early nineteenth century, reaching Albanians and Macedonians towards its end.

Between 1815 and 1914, the Balkan map changed drastically as a result of many wars and several related processes. The Ottoman empire was pushed back by several territorial entities becoming increasingly autonomous and expanding territorially, and had painful internal transformations of its own: some of the uprisings and wars are related to the former process, some to the latter and some to both. The Habsburg empire also faced territorial losses, uprisings and internal transformation, but was able to expand a bit in 1878 (Bosnia-Herzegovina, however, was a gift at the Berlin Conference rather than a military conquest). Another important development started with the Serb uprisings during the Napoleonic wars eventually resulting in some degree of autonomy for the small pashalik Belgrade in 1815. Serbian autonomy was stepwise upgraded until all Turkish troops left in 1863; Serbia then appeared as a de facto international actor in the 1870ies and was formally recognized as an independent kingdom after the series of Balkan wars in 1875-78. This process also included Serbian expansion southwards, first to include increasing Serb-populated parts of the Ottoman empire and eventually—by the 1912-13 wars—also parts with large Macedonian and Albanian majorities. In these respects, Montenegrin history is largely parallel to that of Serbia.

The Ottoman empire faced several other uprisings in the territory that became Yugoslavia. Bosnia-Herzegovina exploded (for varying reasons) in almost every decade until it was definitely lost after the 1875-78 war. The variety of shifting coalitions and conflict aims of the warring parties is neither reducible to "liberation from Turkey", nor to "ancient ethnic hatreds", even if both aspects (at least in terms of fears or competition) may sometimes be relevant. Suppressed Albanian and Macedonian rebellions came later.

The major uprisings faced by the Habsburg empire were Italian and Hungarian, both with implications for Yugoslavia. The change of official language of the empire from Latin to German in 1840 was resented by Hungarian and Croatian elites disfavoured by it. The Hungarian rebellion in 1848-49 was the most dramatic expression, defeated by Russia and the Croat nobility (ban Jelačić) coming to the military assistance of Habsburg. Two decades of subsequent Hungarian civilian resistance were nevertheless eventually successful in achieving the Dual Monarchy in the Ausgleich of 1867: the Slovene duchies and Dalmatia remained under Austrian civilian rule and the military boundary under military rule from Vienna, whereas the rest of the Habsburg possessions fell under the Hungarian part of the empire. The abolition of the military boundary around 1880 left Croatia (in the narrow sense, not including Dalmatia and Slavonia), Slavonia and Vojvodina under Budapest. Subsequent attempts at linguistic Magyarization were strongly opposed by the Croats, among whom competing designs for the future included an independent (and often bigger) Croatia, an independent south Slavonic state (the Yugoslav idea in Strossmayer's version) and "trialism", whereby (expanded) south Slavonic areas were to form a third pole in the Habsburg empire on equal terms with the German and Hungarian ones.

The years 1875-78 meant drastic changes. After uprisings in Bulgaria and Bosnia in 1875, Serbia's attempt to benefit militarily from the situation was defeated by Turkey in 1876; the Russian intervention in favour of the Bulgarian rebellion was more successful, leading to the peace treaty of San Stefano in early 1878. This was to create a large independent Bulgaria (with most of Macedonia and even more) and an independent Bosnia-Herzegovina (where Serbs were the biggest group, perhaps even in absolute majority). Serbia and Montenegro would make some territorial gains and get a common boundary. This treaty was, however, seen as too favourable for Russia by other great powers, and the Berlin Congress in autumn 1878 revised it drastically. Turkey kept Macedonia, Kosovo, and Raška/Sandžak (where the presence of Habsburg troops made sure that Serbia and Montenegro remained separated from each other). It also retained some suzerainty over a small Bulgaria and East Rumelia, while Romanian autonomy (since 1856) was now upgraded to independence. This was still seen as benefiting Russia and calling for compensations to other great powers, at Ottoman expense. Great Britain got Cyprus; Bosnia-Herzegovina came under joint Austrian-Hungarian administration "in the name of the Turkish Sultan" (until unilaterally annexed by Habsburg in 1908). This made both Serbs and Bulgarians great losers in comparison with the first treaty. Rarely have so many long-time problems been created by a single deal between great powers. Nor did it end the rivalries between Habsburg, Germany and Russia about who was to have how much say in the new states. After its great frustrations in Berlin, Serbia was under Habsburg tutelage for some time, in part based on the strong control the empire could exert over Serbia's foreign trade as long as Serbia had no harbour and all railways went through the empire: Habsburg control over Bosnia-Herzegovina therefore also appeared safe. Serbia's

reorientation towards Russia, especially after the coup d'état in 1903, was thus seen as a threat to the entire south Slavonic part of the empire and Habsburg policies vis-a-vis Serbia became increasingly hostile.

Large European parts of the Ottoman empire remained there for a while. Greece continued to nibble away increasing parts and Bulgaria fought a successful war in 1885, incorporating East Rumelia into a de facto independent kingdom, simultaneously defeating Serbia's attempt at territorial expansion at its expense. Albanian and Macedonian uprisings were temporarily defeated. A grand coalition of Greece, Serbia, Montenegro and Bulgaria against Turkey gave them all territorial gains (and thereby Serbia and Montenegro a common boundary) in 1912; another grand coalition against Bulgaria in 1913 led to a partial redistribution of the spoils, Macedonia ("South Serbia") and Kosovo ("Old Serbia") going to Serbia, whose claims to these territories were in terms of ancient history rather than actual demography. The fact that the great powers pulled in partly different directions resulted in an independent Albania under a German prince in order to block further expansion by Serbia and Montenegro.

After the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand (on the day of the 525th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo Polje), the European process of threats and counter-threats soon proved to be beyond the control of any major actor. Habsburg made ten non-negotiable demands in an ultimatum to Serbia, shown by later historical research to be intentionally designed to be unacceptable and provide a pretext for a war. The declaration of war was proclaimed to be intended to scare Serbia into accepting the demands after all, thus getting humiliated and put under renewed Habsburg tutelage. After some initial progress, the Austrian attack from west and north was thoroughly defeated by the battle-hardened Serbian army, which even made demonstrations into Hungary, but was defeated in late 1915, when Bulgaria entered the war to get Macedonia and some divisions from Germany arrived. In December 1915, the Serbian army with some 100,000 men was bagged in Kosovo, but managed to slip out, thanks to the Montenegrin army putting up a Thermopyle style defense in the Battle of Mojkovac in December. This permitted the Serbian leadership and army (minus some 20,000 men who died on the way) to get over the mountains to the Adriatic, shipped to Corfu by the entente and eventually transported to the Saloniki front, liberating Serbia in 1918. Montenegro then capitulated in January 1916, further resistance being meaningless.

During the war, plans for the future were discussed by Serb, Croat and Slovene politicians on Corfu, where the Serbian exile government now resided. One major problem was Italy, which had an alliance with Germany and Austria, but remained neutral in 1914 and joined the entente in 1915 after managing to exact a promise of large slices of the Habsburg empire. It was eventually agreed to create a joint state, but this neither meant agreement in motives, nor on what the state was to look like. Ideological Yugoslavism did play some role, but traditional Realpolitik seems to have weighed heavier. After their enormous military and civilian losses, the Serbs saw a bigger state as safer than a smaller—and Serbia as deserving compensations for its sacrifices. To Slovenes and Croats, the alternative was getting shared between Italy and Austria (and, probably, Serbia). Immediately after the Habsburg capitulation, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was proclaimed in November 1918 so as to preempt Italian demands. The new state took years to solidify and get definite boundaries. Italy did get some Slovene and Croat areas, eventually including Fiume/Rijeka, but most of them by far joined Yugoslavia[3], as did all of Vojvodina. The spoils also included Kosovo and getting Macedonia back from Bulgaria. The military front had gone through Albania, which was now resurrected by the great powers; Yugoslav attempts at further territorial gains there in the early 1920s were foiled by intense great power pressure, also through the League of Nations.

Nor was the proclamation of the state the end of the story. The Serbian army was seen as a liberator in some areas and rather as an occupation army in others. Attempts at Albanian resistance in Kosovo were crushed. Montenegro was already then deeply divided between protagonists of Serb unity (beljaši, the Whites) and those of restored independence (zelenaši, the Greens), which led to a couple of years of civil war. The population in Croatia was also divided between those in favour of the agreement made by (some of) their political leaders and others wanting an independent Croatia, or at least a different form of joint state; the Serbian army occasionally served as a police force.

From the very beginning, the Croat politicians had argued for a confederal state (in Swiss direction) and their Serb colleagues for a more centralist one (French style), the Slovenes maneuvering cautiously. The Serbs won in the Vidovdan constitution in 1921, assisted by a Croat boycot of the decisive parliament session. The party system was rapidly ethnified, however, with the Peasant Party as de facto Croat and the Radical Party as de facto Serb: the only party with considerable, although varying, following all over the state was

the Communist Party, soon declared illegal. Attempts to "de-nationalize" the state by dividing it into eight major provinces named after rivers etc. had little success. Other groups (as well as many Serbs) often saw the Kingdom as a Greater Serbia, in terms of dynasty (King Aleksandar was the son of the last Serbian King Petar), religion (the Orthodox church having a favoured position), language (attempts as Serbianization of Macedonia and Kosovo) or the control of force (Serb officers being much over-represented in the army and the police). The political process was blocked by increasing tensions, further accelerated by the assassination in Parliament of Stjepan Radić, the leader of the Peasant Party, in 1928; a royal dictatorship (with military backing) was proclaimed in 1929, the name of the state now changed to Yugoslavia (originally proposed by Croats but rejected by Serbs). Political stability failed to result; King Aleksandar was assassinated in Marseilles in 1934, apparently in collaboration between the Croat Ustaša and the Macedonian VMRO, and succeeded by his son Petar II. Aleksandar's brother, Prince Pavle, was regent during Petar's minority, having to cope with a whole set of threats. The seriousness of Italy's territorial claims was underlined by its annexation of Ethiopia in 1935-36 and Albania in April 1939—and its hosting the Croat exile organization Ustaša. Germany was expanding in different directions: the Anschluss of Austria in 1938, dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1938/39 and occupation of Poland in 1939. Its allies included Italy, but also Hungary and Bulgaria with their old scores to settle with Yugoslavia. Prince Pavle's policy of accommodation (or adaptive acquiescence[4]) was more dictated by perceived Realpolitik necessities than any pro-German disposition, all possible counterweight powers being unpalatable (the USSR), defeated (France), desperately busy elsewhere (Great Britain) or not yet engaged (the USA). Yet, his agreement in March 1941 to join the Tripartite Pact became too much for many political groups across the political spectrum, especially in Serbia, no matter the assurances and exceptions Pavle had received from Hitler. A coup on 27 March 1941, led by General Simović, deposed Pavle as regent, ended the minority of Petar to make him king and defied Hitler by declaring Yugoslavia neutral.

Parallel with his foreign policy maneuvres, Pavle tried to forge greater internal unity, especially through the sporazumen with Croat leaders in spring 1939, by which the map was to be redrawn, with a Croatian banovina including all of Dalmatia, a big slice of Bosnia-Herzegovina and a slice of Vojvodina down to the suburbs of Belgrade. When Hitler attacked on 6 April 1941, starting with a terror bombardment of Belgrad that killed many thousand people in one night, the unity turned out to be largely absent. It was primarily in Serbia that any organized resistance was offered, and the Yugoslav army was routed within eleven days.

Yugoslavia disappeared. Slovenia was incorporated into the German Reich. Italy took large slices of the coast and islands. The Independent State of Croatia (protected by German and Italian forces) was proclaimed by the Ustaša leader Ante Pavelić and included Bosnia-Herzegovina and the western part of Vojvodina. The central slice of Vojvodina was incorporated into Hungary; when Romania declined the eastern slice it was offered, this was put under German military administration together with most of Serbia. Montenegro was made the major part of an Italian principality, at the same time as Italy created a Greater Albania, also including Kosovo and western parts of Macedonia, of which Bulgaria got the rest.

Four years of hell followed: only Poland and the occupied parts of the Soviet Union had similar proportions of the population killed during the war, whether in battle, mass executions, systematic extermination or starvation. Apart from the armies of Italy, Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria, there were about fifteen armed forces of various sizes and in various and sometimes shifting clashes and coalitions: Tito's partisans, Slovene anti-Communist partisans, Croat Ustaše, the forces of the puppet government in Serbia under General Nedić as well as Serbian Fascists (under Liotić), Serbian monarchists (the Četniks under Dragoljub Mihajlović), Montenegrin indepence partisans, the Albanian Balli Kombetarë collaborating with Mussolini, forces in Macedonia loyal to Bulgaria or fighting for Macedonian independence, and so forth. The serious estimates of the total number of killed still range between 1.0 and 1.7 million (out of a pre-war population of some 17 million), the victims of foreign occupants being of the same magnitude as those killed in internecine conflict.

Every ethnonational group in Yugoslavia had great numbers of fallen to mourn in 1945. Who were the worst perpetrators and who were their primary victims varies from region to region, even if we go by as much consensus among professional historians and social scientists as has emerged during the subsequent half-century[5]. Not surprisingly, we find much larger differences between popular perceptions or official history writing in today's successor states. As we will show in subsequent chapters, each group tends to nurture selective memories, seeing itself as the innocent victims or "just

defending ourselves", and some other ethnonational group (or Tito's partisans) as the barbarian mass murderers.

The larger political context was complex. The attack on Yugoslavia came a couple of months before that on the Soviet Union, after which the Yugoslav Communists joined, or even led, the resistance against the occupation. To the Allies, there were eventually two main forces to bet on: Tito's multiethnic left-wing forces and the Serb right-wing monarchists under Mihajlović. Nor was it immediately predictable who would bet on whom. Great Britain eventually shifted its main support from Mihajlović to Tito, on the strength of intelligence reports that his forces killed more Germans. Stalin's "democratic front" policy included dissolving the Komintern and getting the French Communists to rally behind the conservative de Gaulle and their Italian comrades behind the former Fascist Marshal Badoglio. When he was met with Tito's refusal to undo the proclamation of republic on 29 November 1943 or cooperate with the pre-war political parties, he continued the contacts with Mihajlović for a long time. By the slip of paper brought back by Churchill in October 1944 from his meeting with Stalin in Moscow, Great Britain was to have predominant influence in Greece and the USSR in Bulgaria and Romania, whereas influence in Hungary and Yugoslavia was to be shared fifty-fifty.

Tito's partisans emerged victorious in several respects. Germany retreated from increasing parts of Yugoslavia even before the Soviet army swung through northeastern Serbia in October 1944 and was pushed ever further back: the partisan army eventually came close to clashing with the British army in the Slovene-Italian border area in May 1945. Large Ustaša forces and Slovene anti-Tito partisans (and many civilians) fled into areas of Austria with US or British troops, but were returned, many of them summarily executed (the Bleiberg massacre). The Serb monarchist forces were routed, remnants of them chased until Mihajlović was captured, summarily tried for war crimes and treason and executed in summer 1946. Lingering Albanian and Macedonian resistance was also crushed, mainly by predominantly Serb units of Tito's army.

The Second Yugoslavia, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, had been created, and immediately had to cope with a set of internal and external problems of the same magnitude or worse as those the First Yugoslavia began with. The international boundaries of the latter were restored, with the exception of that to Italy, where some gains (for Croatia and Slovenia) were made immediately (and formally confirmed in 1947), but the Trieste issue remained

controversial until the final agreement of boundaries in 1954. If the Italian boundary made for tense relations with western great powers in the early postwar years, there were several other reasons for worrying about security. The German retreat from Greece in 1944 was followed by five years of civil war between the proclaimed right-wing monarchist government and the—eventually defeated—left-wing opposition (ELAS). The former was supported by British military intervention (taken over by the USA in 1947), the latter was for a while assisted by Yugoslavia. A further bone of contention became the forced Hellenization of the slavophone population in Greek Macedonia.

Nor was this all. Tito was one of the few foreign Communist leaders to survive in Moscow in the late 1930s: exactly how his loyalty to Stalin was demonstrated is still largely unknown. The wartime disobedience to Stalin's policies seemed be forgotten together with them, and Yugoslavia was very loyal to the USSR in international fora while receiving support in the Trieste issue. The former German allies Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria were brought under total Soviet control in 1945-48, eventually including purges and show trials of Communist leaders suspected of "Titoism" (i.e. of putting national interests before those of the USSR). In 1948-49, Yugoslavia was expelled from the new Kominform and became the target of Soviet economic sanctions (which, however, had the usual effect, actually strengthening Tito's position in Yugoslavia). The Soviet party line was to brand Tito's regime fascist (together with Franco's Spain and Papandreou's Greece); if Stalinists in the Yugoslav party had plans to oust him, they were preempted by thousands of them being sent to the ill-famed prison island Goli Otok. Albania, whose Communist leadership had been assisted by Tito's partisans during the war years and remained close, underwent purges resulting in complete loyalty with Stalin's hostility to Yugoslavia. A reconciliation with the USSR came in 1955, almost immediately followed by a new period of bad relations after the Hungarian rebellion in late 1956. Later security threats in the immediate vicinity included the fascist coup in Greece in 1967, backed up by CIA, and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 with its legitimizing doctrine of "proletarian internationalism", imaginably also applicable to Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia saw great external security threats to the country, and tried to cope with them in several ways. One of them was to emphasize the difference between its own self-management brand of

socialism and the Soviet version. This became even more visible when the liberalization in 1965 was followed by a vast Yugoslav labour migration to Western Europe (about one million at the peak) and a large foreign tourism. Another way consisted in the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1955, with Tito, Nehru and Nasser appearing as founding fathers. This made it easier for Yugoslavia to balance carefully between East and West in Europe by being able to count on moral and political support from a much wider group of like-minded countries. It also balanced in the NAM, where it was among the most anti-imperialist members while opposing proposals for the NAM to get closer to the Soviet bloc.

Given its historical experiences and contemporary security situation, it is not surprising that Yugoslavia's military preparedness remained very high for decades, when the USSR was the only country in Europe to spend a larger part of its GDP on the military. The tasks according to the doctrine were vast, much greater than for other non-aligned states in Europe (Wiberg 1987). Whereas the others had doctrines asserting that they contained no targets of primary strategic and aimed at dissuading marginal attacks by their levels of military preparedness making such attacks seem unprofitable, Yugoslavia aimed at defeating a possible invader and throwing him out, at the same time as it ascribed to itself a high strategic significance, as illustrated by a former commander-in-chief:

> Territory of the SFRY is of exceptional strategic importance not only as a Balkan but also as a Mediterranean and Central European area.... it straddles the central part of the southeast subtheatre of war of the European theatre of war (Ljubicic 1977: 249).

The size of its standing army as well as some of the figures for military hardware were almost in the magnitude of great powers. During the WWII, leadership of the armed forces and the party had largely coincided, and the linkage remained very close even when the forces were transformed to a regular army (and navy and air force). The armed forces were important ot the regime in several ways. Their external mission was obvious in a doctrine of defence tous azimuts and called for a high degree of professionalism and competence and large economic resources. Their social prestige and popularity made them a valuable ally as one of the strong federal institutions—but also a potential competitor. The latter risk was coped with by a system of

rigorous indoctrination during military training, with the local version of Marxism-Leninism as one pillar and Yugoslavism as another.

The armed forces had a clear internal mission during and immediately after the war, defeating various competitors for political power in postwar Yugoslavia. Later on, domestic disorder and various kinds of political opposition were left to the police and security police (UDBA) to deal with. Whatever its doctrinal role, however, the YPA was there as a force in being, as demonstrated during the Croat rebellion in 1971, when the military leadership stated its firm support for Tito against the rebellion. Still later, it was actually used when tank and infantry units were set in to crush the Albanian rebellion in Kosovo in 1981.

One of the preconditions for a possible internal mission of the armed forces to be legitimizable was that they would be seen as precisely Yugoslav rather than being identified with any single national group. In order to avoid the mistakes in this respect from First Yugoslavia, the Yugoslavist indoctrination in Tito's version of Marxism-Leninism with its special emphasis on anti-nationalism, was supplemented by measures to insure at least some measure of proportionality, the so-called ethnic keys. At the bottom of the military organisation, ethnic proportionality followed from universal conscription, and at the top it was created by strict rules on how many generals there could be from each ethnonational group. Inbetween, there was less proportionality. Among officers, Montenegrins were much overrepresented, Serbs clearly overrepresented, Albanians and Slovenes clearly underrepresented (although for very different reasons) and the others approximately proportionally represented.

The major postwar change in the military organization came after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Yugoslavia kept a relatively large standing army based on conscription and mobilization, as did, e.g. Sweden[6] and Finland, but an important role in war-time planning was now given to the Territorial Defence units with previous military training and pre-stocked equipment, to be called up for local defence in possible crisis. The potentially available armed forces of Yugoslavia now numbered some two million. By the time this reorganisation was made, it was taken for granted that the "national question" was solved, so that there was no risk that it could be used to support separatism. That this was so seems evident from the very complex civil-military relations that were created by the new doctrine:

> one of the most controversial elements of the Yugoslav defence system as introduced in 1969 was its form of organisation....the army was not made the sole body responsible for organising defence forces in either peace-time or war-time. An equally important role was to be played by the "socio-political communities": i.e. by the communes, the two autonomous provinces and the six republics. The National Defence Law of 1969 attempted a complex division of responsibilities. Article 11 stated that the federation (i.e. the government in Belgrade) was responsible for arming, equipping and preparing the Yugoslav People's Army for the defence of the country. Article 14 stated that units of territorial defence, by contrast, 'are established by the commune, province and republic'. Articles 51 and 52 laid down that even in wartime territorial defence was the responsibility of the local civilian authorities, who were 'to direct the general prople's resistance on their territory' (Roberts 1986: 177).

Whether or not this underlying assumption had some credibility in 1969, it definitely was not true a couple of decades later, when TD sometimes played an important role for political leaders looking for armed forces to have at their disposal. This, however, depended strongly on local circumstances, as we will see in the subsequent chapters.

The role of the YPA must also be seen in relation to the changing character of Yugoslavia between 1945 and 1991. At the beginning of this period, the political reality was that the state was highly centralist, power residing with the multiethnic national party leadership, the party organisations in the republics (and, later, the autonomous provinces Vojvodina and Kosovo) serving as transmission belts for its instructions with little or no deviance tolerated. The following decades meant decentralisation in several respects, by reforms that were intended to solve some problems and usually created others. By the doctrine of self-management, many decisions were formally decentralized to republics, municipalities and enterprises. A major step in the economic area was taken with abolishing in 1965 the element of central planning that lay in the state-controlled banks deciding about loans for investments, etc.—but with nothing else put in its place in terms of national planning to supplement market mechanisms. The time-limited and modest unemployment that was expected to appear turned out to be permanent and ranging between low in Slovenia and very high in the poorer parts of the country. Further political decentralisation, to the level of republics and autonomous provinces, was brought about by the constitutional changes in 1971 and, primarily, 1974. While these were intended, inter alia, to defuse the potential for dangerous nationalism that had manifested itself in the rebellion in Kosovo in 1968 and in Croatia in 1971, they also had some effects in the opposite direction at republic and national level. They provided a breeding ground for Serb nationalism, seeing Serbia as the only republic from which autonomous provinces was cut out (with nothing similar for Serb-majority areas in Croatia or Bosnia-Herzegovina), as well as for Albanian nationalism, manifested in the 1981 rebellion. At the national level, they meant diminishing possibilities to handle increasingly critical economic problems by national action, since such action presupposed consensus between all eight territorial units. This was increasingly difficult to achieve, given their considerable and increasing differences in economic structures and levels—and the more so when the local party organisations became less of transmission belt for the Yugoslav party and became more of "ethnocracies" (Schierup 1990) in their ways of securing local support and behaving at national level. At the same time the need for action increased. The rapid economic growth during the first two decades had changed to stagnation, with repatriated incomes from Yugoslav workers as a first buffer, weakened by the "oil crisis" reducing the demand for labour force in Western Europe. The second buffer was to some extent another effect of this: a surplus of petrodollars in Western banks looked for borrowers and was attractive: little need for security or other conditions, and with real interest rates that inflation often even made negative. Some countries benefited by investing wisely and paying back relatively quickly. Decentralized Yugoslavia was not among them, accumulating a heavy debt burden to finance prestige projects and wage increases without coverage in increased productivity. The hangover came from the early 1980s, when Reagan-Thatcher monetarism meant a rapidly rising dollar that multiplied the debt while the real rate of interest soared. The draconic conditions imposed by the IMF when further loans were needed to service the debt and cover immediate needs pushed Yugoslavia, now unable to make and implement hard decision, deeper into recession by vast unemployment and eventually hyperinflation, with every republic fending for itself. During the 1980s, the average Yugoslav lost half his

real income and the process accelerated, at the same time as the economic gap between the poorest area (Kosovo) and the richest (Slovenia) grew greater than ever.

Several decay processes now reinforced each other to give Yugoslavia a horrible prognosis on many counts. The length and depth of the recession was unique in post-war Europe; political radicalisation could therefore be expected, whether right-wing, left-wing, populist or nationalist; in fact, several combinations appeared, depending on local circumstances, with further centrifugalism as effect. Where radicalism took nationalist forms (virtually everywhere), the horrible traumas from the 1940s (or even much older) between ethnonational groups, which had been latent or even apparently healed, came to the fore again, exploited and exaggerated by politicians to whip up threat images of the Others (in this respect, Milošević, Tudjman and Izetbegović were each other's best friends). As the previous rigorous taboo against any expression of nationalism gradually softened during the 1980s at the same time as the prospect of governments based on multiparty elections came closer, there was also a dilemma for politicians in the republics, initially those of the communist parties under their original or new names: "if we do not steal the nationalist thunder from our competitors, they may beat us with it". Milošević got into power in the party in 1986, stole the thunder in 1987, added anti-Croat rhetoric to anti-Albanian and won the elections in 1990, as did his partner Bulatović in Montenegro. The socialist parties that resisted the temptation had less success: in Slovenia and Macedonia, they could still form government coalitions, keeping the ultra-nationalist winner VMRO out in Macedonia; in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina they were virtually routed by nationalist parties.

In 1989-90, there was little "federal" left in Yugoslavia, and all of it under heavy attack. There was the Foreign Ministry, but Croatia and Slovenia demanded status as international personalities. There was the National Bank, but with insufficient control over the issuing of money, as all republics cheated (Serbia most) and Slovenia asking for having a currency of its own. There was the Communist Party—which the Slovenian party left in February 1990 and others afterwards. There was the federal budget, with Croatia, Slovenia and the IMF calling for drastic cuts in it. And there were the two institutions getting most of the federal budget: the Development Funds to support Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina, which the above

coalition wanted to abolish; and the YPA, where Croatia and Slovenia asked for drastic cuts.

The Yugoslavia that the YPA was there to defend was thus crumbling before its eyes, necessitating fatal choices. From an ideological aspect, it was Slovenia and Croatia that spearheaded the centrifugal movement to dissolve Yugoslavia, whereas Serbia and Montenegro tried to stop or even reverse it: at least that was what their political leaders said. From the point of view of institutional interests, the constellation was the same: Croatia and Slovenia wanted deep cuts and a diminished role for the YPA, whereas Serbia and Montenegro were its main supporters. The Yugoslavist military leadership was initially quite skeptical of Milošević with his nationalist rhetoric, but after a while the leaders of other republics were as little or less palatable to Yugoslavists. The result was that the YPA joined the Milošević coalition in the National Security Council and eventually in action. One of the first actions was to secretly collect the local depots of arms and munitions for the TD in Croatia and Slovenia into central depots under YPA control; the operation succeeded in Croatia (which then turned to vast illegal arms smuggling from Hungary), but was soon discovered and blocked by President Kučan in Slovenia. Another type of action in spring 1991 also appeared compatible with YPA's mandate: interposing itself in armed clashes between Serbs and Croats, e.g. when Tudjman attempted to fire the Serb policemen in Serb majority areas in Krajina and replace them with Croats; but this was seen in Zagreb as the YPA supporting Serb rebels.

The moment of truth came in late June 1991, when one of Slovenia's first actions after its (by the Yugoslav constitution illegal) proclamation of independence was to occupy the customs stations by force. The YPA in Slovenia, together with arriving reinforcements, took action to (as it was told) defend the constitution, fought some minor battles against determined and skilful Slovene units—and was then told to observe a cease-fire and eventually, when the Slovene units did not respect the agreement to get no more local capitulations, to pack up and go home.

In the meantime, politics had intervened and Slovenia had quickly turned from the apparent partnership with Croatia to making a deal with Milošević, having common interests with him in not maklng Slovenia a military ally of Croatia. The deal included a three month's suspension (but de facto recognition) of Slovenian independence and YPA being able to bring all its equipment back home, wherever "home" was now. It soon emerged that it had been a faked war, both

leaderships knowing what the others were doing, the skirmishes serving propaganda rather than military purposes: polish the "father-of-the-nation" image of the Slovenian leadership and permit Milošević to focus on the next battle in Croatia without the immediate loss of morale in the still to a large extent Yugoslavist YPA that a meek acceptance of Slovenian independence would have led to. The two leaders even agreed to invite the EC to "mediate" the deal already made (in Brioni on 7 July 1991), thus giving the EC leadership common interests with them in not letting Tudjman, who was finally starting to realise what Slovenia had maneuvered him into, block the "success" by insisting on either having Croatia in too or no deal at all.

This may be seen as the de facto end of the YPA in its role as the armed forces of Second Yugoslavia, no matter what constitutional fictions remained for some time. In the following chapters we will follow its transformation into the army of Third Yugoslavia, in particular Serbia, as well as the creation and development of the armed forces in Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia. Three cases may appear to be missing. Since Montenegro is still formally a part of Third Yugoslavia, we treat it in that chapter. Too little is known about the UÇK in Kosovo, which is anyhow not a state, and furthermore it was disarmed after the arrival in 1999, at least in theory. Bosnia-Herzegovina is a state from the perspective of international law, but hardly from the perspective of the present book. It has two recognised armies, those of the Republika Srpska and the Federation, the latter in reality consisting of one Moslem and one Croat army, no matter the theoretical joint command foreseen in the Moslem-Croat agreement from spring 1994 and the Dayton agreement in 1995. Going into all that would lead us too far.

[1] For this reason, we have also largely abstained from detailed documentation. Apart from the sources cited in the present chapter, we have used those cited in the four individual chapters.

[2] Its archives are indispensable for the study of Balkan history, cf. Carter 1972.

[3] One of the Slovene duchies, Carinthia, decided to remain in Austria in a referendum in November 1920.

[4] This is the term used by Mouritzen (1988) to denote a policy whereby some values are conceded to a threatening larger actor in an attempt to preserve more central ones.

[5] This consensus had reached an impressive level in the 1980s, when among professional scholars one could find Serbs giving a slightly higher figure for killed Croats than Croats did and vice versa. This is the more impressive, given the very different figures presented by what Ivo Banac called parahistorians among different nationalists, cf. Zerjavic 1992.

[6] For a comparison between Sweden and Yugoslavia in these respects, which includes an assessment of the new system in Yugoslavia, see Roberts 1986.

Chapter 6

Civil-Military Relations in Slovenia

6.1. Pre-Yugoslav State Traditions

Slovenia was a unique republic of former Yugoslavia in several respects, each essential to the nature of its make-up. It was one of the smallest federal units and the most developed one, its population was ethnically homogeneous and Slovenian is clearly distinct from the other Slavonic languages. Slovenia could start her independent "life" without the burdens typical of the other Yugoslav successor states and is the most successful case of state building among them. The question is how different Slovenia really is and what is the "secret" of its success, with special emphasis on civil-military reforms. Whether to count Slovenia as a Balkan country has been questioned not least by Slovenes, but it was indeed a part of (the first and second) Yugoslavia and Slovenes were affected by all the important developments in the region throughout the centuries.

For many, the appearance of Slovenia on the international scene was a surprise. Its small territory, population and resources suggest few grounds to be optimistic, so to some observers it was a case of something (a country, a nation) arising out of nothing (Fink-Hafner & Robbins 1997). Slovenes have a national history, but no real state traditions. The Balkan states are in the process of the "invention of traditions" (Puhovski 1998) and Slovenia is no exception. The Slovenes do not claim glorious military traditions,[1] but focus on proving their Western-ness and their non-Yugoslav identity, letting, as often before, pragmatic reasons prevail over ideological, ethnic or other affiliations.

It is generally accepted that the Slovenes descend from of the Slavs that settled in the region between Julian Alps and the Karst plateau in the sixth century AD. Some try to differentiate these tribes from the other Slavs by naming them proto-Slovenes or Alpine Slavs. However,

> almost certainly, wherever the general Slavic appellation survived into modernity, as in the national names of the Slovenes and Slovaks and in the name of the Croat province of Slavonia, the people or land in question did not have a strong state tradition in the early Middle Ages or thereafter (Banac 1988: 33).

The origin of the Slovenes has been treated in several theories lacking documentary or historical foundation and disseminated for nationalistic reasons by the history schools of Central Europe (Skerbinc 1997: 51-52). The standard assumption described above is seen as a device to prove that Slovenes had no indigenous rights of domicile in Central Europe and were intruders. According to the latest spectacular "findings" they are direct descendants of the Veneti, allegedly were a Proto-Slavic people who settled in Austria, Slovenia, northern Italy and eastern Switzerland around 1200 BC and were bearers of the so-called Urnfield culture to Central Europe.[2]

The Slovenes (and Macedonians) have much less of real state traditions than the other Slav peoples. The brief experience of the Carantania Principality in the seventh century is elevated to proto-state and a proof of the continuous nationhood. In the more exaggerated interpretations Carantania is praised as "the first democracy in Europe" with reference to the traditional enthronement of the Carantanian dukes.[3] In the mid ninth century the principality and the other Slovene-populated lands came under Bavarian rule and the Austrian Habsburgs ruled from 1278 through 1918.

For centuries the Slovenes were living in several regions, never united and maintaining only their provincial loyalties. The name Slovenia only emerged in the nineteenth century as a geographical and national designation. Throughout the centuries of Habsburg rule, the struggle for national rights was based on their linguistic individuality. Lacking

> administrative and political unity and national political autonomy (Prunk 1997: 22),

their main concern was always to retain cultural identity against threatening Germanisation.[4] The new versions of history claim that it was exactly during this period of preserving the cultural/national uniqueness that

> the Slovenes with their entirely Western European cultural identity were shaped in the framework of Central European civilisation process into a mature European nation in the 19th century (Prunk 1997: 22).

The Slovenes' discourse on statehood traditions largely resembles that of other Balkan peoples. They also blame their geopolitical location as the cause of their misfortunes. Thus, Slovenia's bad fortune was a result of its position somewhere between "Prussia and Russia" (i.e. between the Germanic and Slavonic domains) (Milanovic 1996: 26) or at the crossroads of very different interests (between the East and the West)[5]. A typical Slovenian view on the (lack of) political history reads:

> The Slovenes established an independent state relatively early. They were freely electing their dukes in their ancient state of Karantanija ("Civitas Carantania") in the last centuries of the first millennium. They were unable to preserve their independence, because of the location of their territory at the crossroads of very different interests, and their small number. There is no tradition left from that time, but the spirit of that state and of its democratic procedures has remained alive through history (Zajc 1997: 170).

At the same time there is a perception that the Slovenes were very lucky to avoid Ottoman rule and thus spared the social and cultural backwardness that affected the life of other South Slavs. This is a part of the conviction (and satisfaction) that the Slovenes have never belonged to the "Eastern civilisation". The other Balkan people believe that the Slovenes were "privileged" to be under the Habsburgs, unlike them who had to fight against harsh Ottoman rulers. In this view, the Slovenes' historical progress was not a result of their national qualities, but of favourable historical circumstances.

The inclusion of the Slovenian lands within the Napoleonic so-called Illyrian Kingdom brought new reforms, which intensified the national self-awareness. They were struck with new tax and conscription laws, but on the other hand the French built roads, reorganised the government, allowed Slovenes to be appointed to official posts and opened Slovenian-language schools. The propitious climate ended in 1813 when Austria reasserted its dominance and abolished the reforms. The revolutionary wave from 1848 induced a crisis within the Habsburg Empire, but Slovenes did not gain much.

The only result of the revolutionary atmosphere was the drafting of the first platform on an autonomous "Unified Slovenia" (within the Empire). In the 1850ies and 1860ies the elite's actions were again redirected towards cultural autonomy. Just defeated by Prussia, Austria gave in to Hungary by establishing the Dual Monarchy in an attempt to revive their declining powers. During the crisis that occurred in the late 1860ies the Slovenes, who were all in the Austrian part, resurrected the dream of a unified state, but soon adapted themselves to the political life within the Dual Monarchy.

As for military experiences, the Slovenes could acquire them individually, but not as a distinct collective. Compulsory military service was introduced in 1868 as a part of the overall military reform influenced by the military transformation throughout Europe. The most important issue, however, was opening the military to people of different social and ethnic origin, which could have let local and national identifications penetrate into the army (Jalušić 1995: 649-50). The Kaiser remained the supreme authority. Austria-Hungary was supposed to be a *constitutional monarchy*, but the military gave its oath to the Kaiser, so it was more a pillar of the monarch's personal power than a national (or constitutional) institution. The officer corps had a strong corporate spirit expressed through the motto "The military is our homeland".

The Slovenes were subjects of the Empire in political and military terms. Within the *Landeswehr* they had a right to be organised in homogeneous military units, where the Slovenian language was used for practical reasons. The legal regulations on military service were issued in Slovenian as well. This, however, did not imply any recognition of the national languages in the Empire. Official data from 1915 showed that the percentages of Slovenes in the Armed Forces was 0.5 for officers, 0.4 for candidates for officers, 0.8 for officers in reserve, 1.5 for candidates for officers in reserve and 2.5 per cent for soldiers (Jalušić 1995: 663). Slovenes were thus under-represented among high-ranking officers but were well assimilated. In 1917, when the Empire was in deep crisis, there were attempts to make the units more ethnically mixed, so as to affect the basis of military morale but with little results. At one stage almost 80 per cent soldiers of some military units were of Slovenian origin. During the First World War, draft dodging and even desertion from the army eventually grew to endemic proportions.

The Habsburg Empire collapse in autumn 1918 was a tragedy for some, a triumph for others. Slovenes saw a promise of a better future

in the new state of the South Slavs, but soon realised that the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later renamed Yugoslavia) could only partly satisfy their expectations. Fortunately, they were not directly involved in the core of the inter-ethnic problems, and being both different enough and remote enough they could go on with their own national (mostly cultural and economic) development, keeping their distance to the conflict between Serbs and Croats. Although disappointed with their political status, the Slovenes were too small and too weak to do anything more than shift alliances and manoeuvre between these main groups in an attempt to protect their own interests.

After Yugoslavia's dissolution, Slovenia's efforts to join Euro-Atlantic structures have favoured new interpretations of pre-Yugoslav history. Slovenia's affiliation with the Empire is no longer seen as enslavement but as a historical connection with Middle European civilisation, praised as a time when Slovenia was incorporated into the cultural, economic and political circles where it really belonged. Eventual EU/NATO membership is, therefore, perceived as going "back to the future".

6.2. Slovenia and the Yugoslav People's Army

Soon after the German invasion in 1941, First Yugoslavia fell apart. The war divided the Slovenes once more, between Italy, Germany and Hungary. A more fatal division occurred in terms of their political loyalties. The issue of what really happened in Slovenia and among the Slovenes during the war is still a matter of dispute.[6] Today's perspectives are ambiguous, inconsistent and sometimes constructed more for external than for internal use.

Conditions in the occupied territory depended on the occupier. Some Slovenes believed that it was necessary to collaborate with the authorities and saw themselves as patriots and realists. Collaborationist military structures were numerous, but not united: the National Guard (*Domobranci*), Slovene Četniks, Slovene Legion etc. (Singleton 1989: 185-87). For some Slovenes it was a critical moment that primarily called for an all-national struggle against Nazism, while for others it was the ripe moment for emancipation from Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. The former believed that their main enemy was the Nazi forces, while the latter eventually defined the enemy in terms of its communist ideology.

There was an authentic and well-organised Slovene guerrilla resistance, whose structure entirely differed from those in other parts of Yugoslavia. A political conglomeration of various left-wing groups

called the Liberation Front (*Osvobodilna Fronta*) was the leading force. It was supposed to bring together the anti-fascist groups and to constitute a united front on a wide socio-political basis, but soon the Communists occupied the leading position. However, the Partisan movement was never particularly strong. It operated primarily in Ljubljana and the other urban centres. Throughout 1941, the total number of individuals engaged in the Partisan detachments did not exceed 700-800 people. At the time of the Italian capitulation in September 1943 there were no more than 2,000 Slovene partisans under arms—whereas the collaborationist White Guard comprised 8,000 (Sirc 1989: 40). Some estimate that a

> more reasonable figure is 4,000-5,000 partisans; but this remains low and only grew significantly towards the end of the war (Gow 1992: 35).

Slovenian sources claim that at the end of the war the Slovenian Liberation Army had more than 30,000 combatants and a well-organised structure (Omerzu 1995: 695).

Regardless of what the real strength of the movement was, it is still highly esteemed. According to President Kučan,

> with the partisan army, which was created from nothing, and in their weaponry and motivation the Slovenes were direct allies of the anti-Fascist military and resistance forces.[7]

The emphasis is on the Slovene rather than Communist character of the movement. The often troublesome internal relationships among the constituents of the Liberation Front are today presented as an embryonic form of democratic pluralism among the Slovenes, even during the war years. The partisan units were mostly ethnically homogeneous and Slovene was the prevailing language. These two features were (and still are) considered vital for the success of the movement. It had been the only national military force the Slovenes had throughout their history. The Slovene Partisans wore the symbol of Triglav Mountain on their caps, while in other parts of Yugoslavia the symbol was a red star. In March 1945, the Yugoslav National Liberation Army was reorganised and renamed as the Yugoslav Army. Units from Slovenia were incorporated within the Federal army. Victory was soured by trauma for the Slovenes, when several thousand National Guardsmen were put to death by the Yugoslav Army without regular trial. The issue only became open to debate

when the process of Slovenian liberalisation began; it was then defined as a matter of national reconciliation between those who, in principle, fought for Slovenia, although with different methods and political ideas. Ethnically homogeneity gave the belated process of post-war reconciliation much better prospects than in other parts of former Yugoslavia.

Until 1991 Slovenia constituted one of six republics of the second Yugoslavia. Due to its advantageous background it was very the most developed republic, and increasingly so.[8] That made Slovenia increasingly dissatisfied with its lack of influence on economic decisions and with its position in the Federation. A deepening economic crisis in the 1970ies reopened issues about the troublesome federal relationships. The sharp differentiation of interests between "developed" and "undeveloped" republics and provinces looked as a problem of economic growth and of stagnation in the debate. While most of the republics called for more economic growth, Slovenia (and Croatia) complained about their economic stagnation, blaming their obligations to support less developed republics. The debate finally focused on *who was exploiting whom*, and Slovenia saw less and less of sound economic reasons for staying in the Federation. (On the other hand, Slovenian politicians had previously had a significant influence on the crucial reforms. Edvard Kardelj was considered as "second-in-command in the Yugoslav civilian political elite" (after President Tito) (Bebler 1996: 195). He was the chief ideologist and designer of the "socialist self-management" project and drafted the 1974 Constitution, which was the main accelerator for Yugoslavia's transformation into a loose federation or even a confederation.) Slovenia's role as one of the loudest critics of the system was based on a mixture of prevalent economic self-interests, re-born nationalism and a genuine democratic movement.

As for the Yugoslav military system, Slovene analysts unanimously claim that 1968 defence reform was their initiative (Bebler 1988: 1443). The Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in that year increased the perceived threat of a possible Soviet intervention and the new doctrine of General People's Defence (GPD) introduced the militia-type Territorial Defence (TD) as a component of the Yugoslav Armed Forces. It was also meant to diminish the military's unquestionable sovereignty and provide a significant civilian input into that sphere. However, it could not really take a form of civilianisation since the "civilians" were all prominent party "soldiers". The result of the reform was *de facto* internal division of a

previously united Yugoslav institution that was also a residuum of significant political power. Under the disguise of democratisation—or, in the terminology of that period, "penetration of self-management process and practice in the military sphere"—the republics acquired some control in the military sphere. Hence Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) lost its monopoly, while TD gave more room for expression of the national (republic) attributes. The change was particularly appreciated in Slovenia, since it could use Slovenian as a command language within the TD, which was *de facto* ethnically homogeneous. They evaluated TD as a form of liberalisation in the military domain, while the YPA's top brass perceived it as a danger for the military's unity. The scene for the future conflict between the Slovenes and the YPA was set.

The Slovenes' presence within the military ranks was relatively modest. Figures for the High Command showed that Slovenes with 8.3 per cent were represented proportionately to the share in the total population. The situation in the lower ranks was worrisome and some warnings indicated,

> if the number of Slovene officers continues to decline, Slovenes will soon have almost no cadres at the command level (Gow 1992: 55).

The Slovenes and the Albanians were the most under-represented groups (but for different reasons). While the "national key" worked in the upper levels, it was difficult to attract more Slovenes into the lower ranks, their share of the applications to military academies constantly decreasing. The official explanation referred to the unfavourable material position of the officers and the lack of attraction to the military profession among young Slovenes, who had fewer problems than other groups in finding better employment. While basically true, this rationale did not fit the reality completely. A more serious factor was the increasing anti-military (or anti-Yugoslav army) attitude. Public polls showed that the majority of Slovenes showed no interest in a military career and saw the military profession as a repressive one. Yet, Slovenes always played proportionally more important roles within the military hierarchy than the bare figures seemed to indicate.

> Although always a small minority among the high YPA officers and generals, the Slovenians played important roles in the development of the YPA, particularly in

technologically advanced arms and systems, such as the Yugoslav Air Forces. Individual generals and admirals of Slovenian origin occupied from time to time the positions of Chief of the YPA General Staff (one), Commandant of the Yugoslav Air Force (one), head of the military intelligence (two), commandant of the military academy (one), etc. (Bebler 1996: 196).

The Youth Organisation was among the groups that took a lead in public attacks of the military leadership. Sharp criticism of the YPA was a main topic in its weekly *Mladina (Youth)*. The greatest number of articles—and the most vociferous—were attacks on the top brass; a general said that *Mladina* had almost become a "military magazine". In May 1988, after a series of articles, the federal defence minister was forced to resign. The stormy debate raised issues that had always been taboo. Topics such as defence spending, arms production and trade, national representation in the military corps, creation of national homogeneous military units, linguistic practices, depoliticisation of the YPA, etc. were publicly discussed for the first time. Some debates were inspired by sincere demands for genuine democratisation, while others contained nationalistic demands. Every important problem in Yugoslavia (economy, reforms, democratisation etc.) tended to be seen through a nationalistic lens. Serbian nationalism accelerated other nationalist movements, but Slovenian intellectuals tried to stress the difference between their nationalism and that of the Serbs by using a democratic rhetoric.[9]

Calls for the YPA to be "democratised" appeared in Slovenia. This was not just a matter of anti-militarism, as was shown by initiatives for so-called republicanisation of YPA, i.e. the creation of a separate military force in every federal unit. According to a RFE report (2 May 1988) a member of the Slovene Constitutional Commission had publicly advocated a republican army, to remain a part of the federal YPA (Gow 1992: 79).

The language issue was crucial in this debate, Slovenes always having considered language as a core of their cultural identity. It was linked to the old question of the use of languages in the YPA from 1969.[10] The Federal Assembly's special *Resolution on Consistent Respect of Equality of Languages and Alphabets of the Yugoslav Peoples and Nationalities* stressed the need to implement this principle within the YPA "in accordance with the traditions from the National Liberation War".[11] According to the 1974 Constitution, equality of languages in the army "shall be ensured", but in reality Serbo-Croat was the command language, used in almost all circumstances.

Civil-military relations in Slovenia deteriorated rapidly after 1988, not only because of the chasm between Slovenian society and the military, but also because of the appearance of a conflict between the Slovene political elite and the Federal army. This process, already underway, had its catalyst in the so-called "Trial of the Four".[12] The trial mobilised the society in the biggest public rally ever. Amid the noisy calls for protection of human rights and democracy, many rumours circulated in the absence of publicly available details. Foreign analysts gave different versions of the charge,[13] and today's Slovene observers have brought to light yet another version of the events (Mekina 1998). The revisited story stresses several important points. First, for the majority the central issue raised by the trial was neither the choice of a military (rather than civilian) court, nor the call for the process to be conducted in the Slovenian language, but the demand for independence. Second, the Slovenian media never published the truth that a criminal act had actually been committed. The case was highly politicised, while the legal side was intentionally neglected. Third, the issue raised today is why Janša and his colleagues kept the document and did not alert the public about the possible danger.[14]

The first demands for democratic control over YPA arose from civil society, and *vice versa*: civil society was born through the critical observation of the military-related issues. The appeals were genuine but initially without political substance until, about one year before independence, the societal impetus was turned into a political instrument (Gazdić 1995: 736). The debate primarily focused on the need for demilitarisation of Yugoslavia and, later, the search for a security solution for Slovenia, which many wanted to be a demilitarised state. Yet, when the time came for political articulation of these demands, a new defence system and a new army were created instead. The "Janša case" is illustrative: he began his career as a Marxist, then turned into a pacifist and a co-founder of the peace movement and finally became the first defence minister and a "Ten-Day War" hero.

> Compatibility of pacifism and militarism was achieved at the moment when the idea of nation-state was promoted and won at the election. Through the establishment of the nexus

> nation-state, whose indivisible elements are the concepts of "one's own military" and "national security", a distinction was introduced between "our" and "their" military, between the good (Slovenes) and bad (the others) boys, between justified and unjustified militarisation, and at the end of the day all these led toward revolutionary (Leninist) logic of differentiation between "just" and "unjust" wars ... (Kuzmanič 1991: 182).

The concept of *Demilitarised Slovenia* remained at the level of a cultural notion, a kind of reaction and antithesis of the YPA's social and political position. However, when society and politics agreed on the thesis that "in order to truly be a nation, we need our own state to protect us", the creation of a separate Slovenian Army (SA) became a necessity. The success of the "Slovenian Spring" over civil-military issues was neither a coincidence, nor a proof of a mature political culture. The "Yugoslavism" was pragmatic and caused by an economic need for the Yugoslav market and by the old fear of Austria and Italy (Mønnesland 1993: 4). "Brotherhood and unity" and "Yugoslavness" were the most emphasised features of the military, the way Yugoslav patriotism was vaguely defined. These conflicting attitudes led to a crisis when the YPA *de facto* lost its supranational characteristic and aligned itself with centralist politics.

> Particularly in the eyes of Slovenian public opinion, the YPA became the symbol of primitive Balkan "real-socialism" communist style, of intolerant atheism, militarism and Serbian assimilationism, of the arrogant disregard for human rights and for the Slovenians' national feelings (Bebler 1996: 198).

The military was supposed to be a part of Yugoslav community and to correspond with the political identity of the citizens. For Slovenes the "unity" had more practical value than the "brotherhood" component. Given the low level of attachment to Yugoslavia, the attachment to YPA as a symbol of Yugoslavness was equally weak. That Slovenes prepared for military resistance while calling for a negotiated confederalisation of Yugoslavia indicates that they were not anti-militarists *per se*. Yugoslavia was already in deep crisis when criticism against YPA emerged, it just happened to coincide with yet another of the Slovenes' "national awakenings" and the wish to obtain full independence. Slovenia had been aware of the deteriorating conflictual situation in the rest of Yugoslavia. With the end of the Cold War the need for security guarantees within the (militarily) strong federation ceased to have priority. And finally, the Western market seemed more attractive than the Yugoslav one.

6.3. Towards Independence: The Slovenian Army's Baptism by Fire

With emerging Serbian nationalism, the situation in Slovenia also became radicalised during the 1980ies, though independence was not initially seen as a realistic opportunity. When it turned out to be impossible to manage the deepening conflict, Slovenia started to prepare itself for the final step—secession from Yugoslavia. Ideas of liberal democracy mixed with the national-cultural grievances. Slovenia strove for uniting its (old) cultural identity with a new political identity in an independent state with all the necessary attributes. Secession became an option in 1987, when Slovenia and Serbia clashed over the Kosovo conflict, but only in 1989 did Slovenia make a decisive step by proclaiming that the federal laws were valid only if they conformed to Slovenian laws. That was a direct attack on the federal state principle and legal system. Step-by-step the political borders between Yugoslavia and Slovenia emerged. There was a process of differentiation within Slovenia's societal and political subsystems. The military as an institution was the focal point of both processes.

After the 1990 multiparty elections, a new political elite took power and proclaiming full sovereignty in July, after which a referendum on it on 23 December 1990 (turn-out 93.2 per cent) gave 88.2 per cent support for independence. The Slovenes formally committed themselves to a negotiated separation by June 25, 1991, being ready to stay within Yugoslavia only in case the other republics agreed on a confederalization within the six months until then.

The new power had set up a national military organisation, both *de facto* and *de jure*, before gaining formal independence. These steps were clearly unconstitutional from the federal point of view. Slovenian government started preparing the legislative basis for the independent national security system. As a response the YPA tried to bring all weapons and equipment of the TD into the depots. Unlike in Croatia, the action was discovered and halted. In September 1990 the Slovene Parliament adopted some constitutional amendments: the Slovene Presidency took over supreme command over the TD; the Assembly would decide on cadre completion of the YPA on Slovene

territory; and, military service was to be done only on Slovenian territory, in TD units and the police. Soon, the Presidency dismissed the Commander of the TD, Gen. Hočevar, who was unreliable because of his commitment to the federal regulations. The TD became the focal institution both of political system and civil society. The former used it to distinguish itself from Yugoslavia, initially by some symbolic steps: military exercises were held; the vehicles were re-coloured and given civilian registration plates[15]; the staff got new uniforms[16] and arms (bought illegally).[17] Civil society was still divided between two basic options—creation of a Slovenian Army and a demilitarised Slovenia. At that time Slovenia had not yet decided on the military strategy of its secession. Demands formulated within civil society were used to legitimize the democratic substance of the further steps. Civil society and politicians agreed on the necessity for the YPA to leave Slovenia but a conflict emerged over how. Finally, civil society split over this issue and in early 1991 Slovenia was preparing to gain its independence by force, if necessary.

In spring 1991 Slovenia stopped sending recruits to the YPA. The legal basis of the new security system was carefully created, allegedly with "full respect of the rule of law principle" when Slovenia was concerned. The leadership did everything to create a democratic and peaceful image of the would-be state. The parallel existence of two armed forces, however, meant the possibility of military conflict. On 8 May 1991 the Assembly adopted the Constitutional Law, whose provisions annulled the relevance of the federal laws on defence, military service, compulsory military conscription etc. The parallel existence of two different political systems, legal regulations and military forces was the prelude to a military option to "resolve" federal-republic relationships.

The process of establishing the new military differed from that in Croatia, by using more political tact and a steprwise approach. This did not necessarily mean that the Slovenian elite was less resolute or wiser in achieving state independence, but was related to the radically different circumstances in the two republics. Slovenia had a great advantage in not having any relation to the Serb-Croat conflict, so the leadership had sound grounds to believe that it would be able to leave without any major confrontation and even with the "blessings" of the Serbs. Domestic scholars proudly stress the constitutional path of independence and its significance in terms of obtaining

legitimacy of the process itself in the eyes of the world (Grad 1997: 83-93).

Following the Declaration on Sovereignty and the constitutional changes, the new Law on Defence established the basis of the defence system. Some of its provisions were a compromise with the federal defence regulations. Legally and actually, the Territorial Defence Forces (TDF) represented the nucleus of the emerging Slovenian Army (SA). The republic took over all responsibilities, thus cutting off the organisational and institutional ties with the YPA, except those envisaged in case of direct military threat.[18] All the other features of the TD confirmed it to be an autochthonous state military institution.[19] Despite the old name, it ceased to be a militia-type organisation. Responsibilities for its organisation, training, equipment, finance and usage were transferred to the Government. It was under control of the Ministry of Defence and the Presidency of the Republic. The Assembly was granted significant responsibilities regarding formulation of national security policy, control over its realisation, the defence plan etc.

Before the legal framing of the TD, Slovenia had undertaken large steps towards its systematic training and equipment (mostly imported from abroad). Slovenia was not allowed to provide weapons and ammunition from the domestic sources and it turned towards the arms dealers abroad, mostly in Hungary and Austria (Milivojevic 1995: 78-79), while resolutely denying the federal reports on illegal armament and paramilitary formations. When the war broke out, it was *de jure* a clash between the two components of the Yugoslav Armed Forces, but *de facto* between two independent military forces on behalf of two different (competing) state powers. The so-called *Ten Day War* was the final and most spectacular manifestation of a long-lasting process. The Declaration of Independence of 25 June 1991 meant *de jure* and *de facto* annulation of Slovenia's affiliation with the federation. The war started when the Slovenes removed federal signs along the border and occupied the border outposts and customs offices. The armed phase ended on the 7 July with the Brioni Accord, allegedly brokered by the European Community, which stipulated that YPA would withdraw its forces in exchange for a three months moratorium of the Declaration of Independence. The negotiation process with third party intervention was essentially window-dressing: all the basic things had already been agreed between the Slovenian and Yugoslav/Serb leaderships.

Domestic experts have given the image that Slovenia won a war against a superior adversary (Grizold 1997: 46-55). Several details of the *Operetta-war* may call this into question; but the more important aspect is that it was used equally and successfully as a face saver for all the involved conflict parties. The Yugoslav/Serbian leadership had no serious intentions to keep Slovenia by force, but the military action served a dual purpose: it symbolised that Yugoslavia was a serious state that would not allow any secession and that the YPA was ready to fulfil its constitutional duty, and it sent a message to the Croatian leadership in order to make it abort its secessionist agenda. The involvement of the EC was of a more decorative nature, but provided it with a conflict-manager role. In October 1991 Slovenia was free to go, which contributed to its sense of victory and awareness about the international support.

Slovenes saw it as a heroic war of David against Goliath, although the death toll was lower than could be expected in a plane crash.[20] Three months later, Slovenia had both its own defence and its own currency, essential symbolic features in a state building-project. (Hansen 1996) The war definitely helped Slovenia to become a nation-state—it intensified the sense of community and provided a huge amount of symbols, heroic stories and traditions. A domestic scholar rightly observes that

> the war in Slovenia thrust deeply into the cultural and civilisational essence of the nation, and in this respect represents a historical discontinuity. Therefore, Slovenia experienced attempts of mythologisation of war, building of a Slovenian-soldier image, redo of military history and selective exaggeration about some events in the history of the Slovenian nation (Malesic 1999: 188).

The post-war period was marked by the euphoria of victory. The civilian and military authorities showed equal interest in its maintenance since the benefit was mutual. The elite used the Independence War records in order to preserve its governing position, targeting the opposition and the part of the public that strove to re-focus interest on peacetime problems.

Some would ascribe the victory only to the newly created structures and even to some individuals (i.e. the controversial Minister Janša), disregarding the contribution of the civilian resistance. The emerging Army and its leadership had the opportunity to obtain high prestige

and a privileged position. The ongoing Yugoslav wars in Croatia and in Bosnia were factors in creating the syndrome of "living on the alert", but in general Slovenia resisted deeper militarisation. It used the tragic events that followed to emphasise the relation of otherness between Slovenia and the Balkans (Hansen 1996: 485). Doing that, the leadership then suitably forgot that Slovenia itself contributed to some extent to their bloody outcome, especially by pushing Croatia directly into a military conflict.

6.4. Post-Yugoslav Civil-Military Relations

The legal prerequisites of the emerging liberal order were accomplished in the course of 1990/91. The 1991 Constitution represented the summit of this process that provided a general legal basis for the statehood. The idea of Slovenia as a state without an army was definitively forgotten by some of its once most ardent advocates. Before the war the officials used the threat symbolised by YPA as a justification for the creation of the new military. After October 1991, when the last YPA unit left, it was suggested that the military would be *sine qua non* until gaining full international recognition and the elimination of the war threats. Thus, even before the constitutional reform started, the essentials of a national security system debate had been resolved.[21]

The new constitutional framework is a foundation for the model of democratic control of the military. The separation of power and rule of law principles are taken as major guidelines. More importantly, it opts for a parliamentary democracy, which is the main point in which the Slovenian case differs from the other Yugoslav-successor states, which opted for semi-presidential systems. The State Assembly is the only legislative authority and the main national security decision-making body. It determines the principles and basic orientation of the national security policy. It supervises the preparation and implementation of defence, controls the budget, decides on war and peace and proclaims general mobilisation. The parliament relies on its own working bodies and committees, in this particular case on the Parliamentary Committee on Defence. Interestingly, a representative from an opposition party heads the Committee as a rule. The Government is the highest executive body, independent within the framework of its competence and responsible to the Assembly. Regarding national security, it is responsible for the preparation of the security system. There is also a National Security Council which, by contrast to other Balkan countries, is appointed by the Government as

its consultative and co-ordinative body. It was established only in 1998; and, according to some opinions, its role has not been substantial since it is more a consultative than advisory body.

The President of the Republic holds all traditional competencies of the chief-of-state, but in practice this function is comprehended more as a titular duty than a function of power. He is the Commander-in-Chief of the Slovenian Army (SA). His functions within the defence realm are exercised only in some specific constitutionally defined situations, and then at the proposal of the government and if the parliament is unable to meet. He may then act as a substitute of the Assembly. In peacetime he is also empowered to give consent to the plans of defence preparedness, on the recommendation of the government. With an essentially non-executive President and a Prime Minister with no specific powers in the defence domain, the Defence Minister seems in effect to be the key defence politician. Constitutionally, the government coordinates, organises and leads defence matters through the ministry, but in reality the latter seems to be the central defence actor entrusted with all executive responsibilities. Its actions are to be subject to control exercised by the Prime Minister and the parliamentary Committee. The ministry is responsible for directing all defence activities. The General Staff is located within the Ministry and the Chief-of-staff is directly answerable to the minister. Thus the SA has been placed under strict control, which can be seen as one of the formal criteria of genuine democracy.

There are, however some ambiguities in the relationship between the defence minister and the supreme commander, partly explained by in the fact that

> the new Slovene Constitution defined executive responsibility for defence matters in a vague and generalised way (Grizold 1997: 108).

In an ambiguous situation where, on the one hand, the President is only a titular supreme commander and, on the other, the government (and/or Prime Minister) is not entrusted with clear competencies, the defence minister may obviously get the upper hand and has arisen into *de facto* commander-in-chief of the Army. The situation was especially problematic while Janša headed the Ministry. For many anti-Communists Janša personified the struggle for independence, whereas President Kučan and Prime Minister Drnovšek were once

prominent figures in the Communist regime. The constitutional void, accompanied by the absence of relevant legislation, provided enough space for the Minister to make himself an omnipotent figure, trying to marginalise the President and even to usurp his authority. He deprived the President of getting relevant official information, issued a number of important orders and made top appointments in the TD without proper authorisation and without even *ex post facto* informing the President. Moreover, Janša established a special commando unit (*Moris*) as his personal guard, bypassing the TD structure. The operations carried out by this unit were often very dubious. He protected suspected military personnel from criminal police investigations, thus setting them above the rule of law. These acts brought numerous conflicts not only between the President and the Defence Minister, but also between him and the Minister of the Interior.

Quarrels among civilian politicians had a negative impact on the military attitude with regard to the civilian politics and the discipline. Some officers, supported (and perhaps manipulated) by the Defence Minister publicy attacked the President with impunity. Janša had changed his political persuasion four times before finally becoming president of a political party of his own. There was presumably also a certain degree of politicisation of the military staff; his political relations with a part of the officer staff remained even after his removal from office in 1994.[22] The process of civilianisation in Slovenia both resembled and differed from that in other post-Communist countries. Most of the top positions in the Defence Ministry, including that of the Minister, as well as in the Headquarters of the TD were filled by civilians. However, after Janša's departure it was confirmed that some officers and officials had been expressly promoted on political grounds.

The frequent changes of Defence Minister—and the personnel changes that usually followed the removal of every minister—have been a main problem (Malesic 2000). There were five ministers in office during the course of nine years, and a common pattern—every new minister perceived his personal knowledge as sufficient for running the ministry. Only a narrow circle of the closest aides was included in the decision-making process and very rarely was external expertise sought. In all cases the top positions of the Ministry were objects of bargaining among the coalition partners. Every change at the top created a chain reaction in the administrative hierarchy, mainly according to political loyalty criteria rather than professionalism and

merit. An attitude like that could hardly contribute to real depoliticisation. According to domestic scholars, genuine depoliticisation has penetrated only certain levels of the administration hierarchy (Pecar 1997: 99).

Some analysts stressed the "shady side of the transition", which affected the Defence Ministry and TD, the top layer of defence officials and the professional military:

> According to an internal report prepared for the Slovenian government by the Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Ministry of Interior, some individuals, small groups of uniformed military personnel and civilians employed by the Ministry of Defence were suspected to have committed or participated in the following offences: brawls with civilians, smuggling and trafficking in arms, armed burglaries and robberies, terrorist acts (including the planting of a bomb under a car belonging to a member of Parliament highly critical of the Defence Minister), unlawful searches and arrests of civilians, stopping civilian vehicles without warrants and authorisation, evictions of tenants from "military" apartments without court orders, unlawful interference with criminal police investigation, collecting information on and waging smear campaigns against prominent civilian politicians (political opponents of the Defence Minister) in which materials collected by the military intelligence were also used, misinforming the government, and setting up an illegal organisation with political intentions within the elite unit of the Slovenian army (Bebler 1996: 206).

Civil-military relations defined a focal set of issues in the conflict between the Yugoslav military and the Slovenian civil society. Yet, although the social and political milieu and the actors themselves are new, some of the old problems seem to remain. The military authorities' interference in civilian society is again stirring interest. Several journalists were constrained by the military intelligence services and there were even attempts at accusing them of disclosing military secrets. The cases of the journalists Jadran Vatovec and Bojan Budja induced a sense of *déjà vu*. Now having their own state, Slovenes are not as shocked as they once were in the famous "Trial of Four". Vatovec discovered some doubtful arms trade contracts with Israel and expressed open suspicion that the weapons bought were

faulty or even second-hand. Budja published data concerning arms sales to Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, indicating that some top officials from the Defence Ministry were involved in illegal deeds and corruption.[23]

Two first civilian ministers (Janša and Kačin) introduced a new form of re-centralisation and personification of political power. Civil-military relations have been ambiguous. The new system has allowed considerable democratisation and the national security system has become more transparent and accessible to political observation, to mass media, and public criticism. Still, the political and civil societies have faced a number of inherited problems and new challenges since 1991 and the mutation of civil-military relations has achieved less than desired.

Independent Slovenia faced the challenge of re-shaping its socio-political, legal and cultural outlines. During the final years in Yugoslavia its political scene was pluralistic, but also united over some issues of national interest. After independence the political sphere has become fragmented and sometimes even antagonistic. The apparent bitterness that divides the left and right wings in the political spectrum has its roots in the role that groups and individuals played during the years of Communist rule and the struggle for independence. Many have come to power and become influential thanks to the role they played in the "war". Despite the undeniable positive achievements, certain political problems have slowed down further democratisation of civil-military relations.

6.5. Raising the Slovenian Army

In October 1991 the TD became the only regular military force in the newly sovereign republic. Slovenia did not have to build its armed forces from scratch—unlike Macedonia, at least it had something to inherit from the YPA. In accordance with the Brioni Accord it kept the weaponry and the military facilities. Some arms had been procured prior to Yugoslavia's dissolution. Nevertheless, during the first three years after independence defence activities were more improvised than organised, even though the building up of the defence structures was significantly intensified despite the UN arms embargo. Given the "economic determinism" of the Slovenes (Malesic 2000: 46), issues on military spending soon began to stir public debates. At the beginning, there was a wide public consensus on the policy of defence budgeting. The first objections were more focused on illegal affairs. *Mladina* published an article in 1992 about purchasing of arms abroad

without formal approval and another in the following year about illegal appropriation of the former YPA's property (apartments, real estate etc.) the TD officials. Once more, the society found itself discussing the same problems, the only difference being that this time the debate was on "defence tolar" instead of "defence dinar". Faced with public criticism, the officials replied:

> Few years ago, in a referendum, we, the Slovenes, declared a will to create independent state. Therefore now we have to stand the consequences.[24]

The general opinion is that a small military force fits Slovenia's needs and potentials. Slovenian analysts proudly point out that the SA represents roughly half of the former YPA's strength deployed on Slovenian territory. The downsizing of the military forces was influenced by two factors. First, Slovenia's territory lost its geo-strategic importance. The international environment of Yugoslavia called for greater military concentration and Slovenia was considered as the most exposed part of the country, between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Second, the quantitative side of the Slovenian Army (SA) is not as important as its qualitative aspects. A domestic evaluation is that SA is much lighter in terms of armament, but more motivated and efficient than was the YPA (Grizold 1995: 502). The conclusion on military motivation and efficiency, however, can be made only on the basis of roundabout evaluations. According to recent public opinion polls, the prestige of the military profession is still very low. A mere 3.8 per cent of the respondents would be happy to see their children as military officers and Slovenes are much more ready to participate in the civilian defence than the military forces (Grizold 1995: 173-206). Motivation among the recruits also shows that the independent state faces similar problems with its population as the Yugoslav Federation used to do.

The premise of the increased efficiency of the SA is even weaker. It is based on previous "experience", i.e. on the false belief that Slovenian forces defeated the mighty YPA as if it were a real war. Some reports about the situation in the SA show a different picture. According to the critical statement of President Kučan from 1998, the situation in the Army was "barely satisfactory" (Mekina 1998: 3). One of the weakest features is the "heterogeneity" of the military corps. The current officer corps consists of three distinct groups in terms of their educational, professional and political background. First, there

are some former YPA officers. The second group consists of officers who were trained in military academies, schools for reserve officers and university programmes of defence studies and served in the former TD. The third group consists of the officers with no previous military training, recruited by the Ministry of Defence since 1991 and put through brief officer courses; it has given rise to issues on the comprehension of military professionalism. Due to their under-representation in the Yugoslav officer corps, competent professionals were scarce in Slovenia, especially in the lower ranks. The necessity of promoting a new generation of officers was urgent. The "quick and extraordinary victory" of the TD led to the delusion that this was a clash between successful civilian amateurs and military professionals.

> As a result, former lower civilian defence officials, lower-rank reserve officers and even reserve NCOs, mostly young people with very modest military education and experience, were quickly promoted to the highest positions and ranks within the military establishment. At the same time, a modest pool of available and competent former Yugoslav military professionals of Slovenian origin were largely ignored, side-tracked and retired (Bebler 1996: 209).

The promotion of officers has been depended on their "Slovene-ness", i.e. their loyalty to the idea of an independent state. A domestic scholar perceptively stresses that under the influence of war a specific kind of meritocratic mentality was created among the elites (Malesic 2000). Their view on "merit" was that those who carried out the main roles in the independence process were to keep the dominant positions in the aftermath of the war.

Slovenia's failure to enter NATO in 1997 revealed many unknown aspects of the reform, with many allegations concerning the military's depoliticisation. Legally, officers must not join political parties, nor have links to the parties and organised influence within the military ranks. However, the SA found itself in the crossfire of several political parties (the minister's party affiliation carrying particular weight). Diplomatic circles talked about "the weakness of the SA, not enough educated military officers and a lack of military skills". A domestic scholar argues that these rumours were close to the truth, and also suggests that

> the Slovenian army has undergone constant reform since its very existence with no tangible results" (Malesic 2000: 28).

Slovenia has accomplished some important achievements, but there are still problems the government is not always ready to discuss publicly. Cynics say that the SA is not able to safeguard its own military secrets. Officers object to their scant clothing, self-protection equipment etc. These small but sometimes funny protests reveal a more serious phenomenon—the acute lack of discipline (Mekina 1998). There is a real "legal vacuum" regarding the military staff's disciplinary accountability since Slovenia has no military courts.

Compared with the former YPA, the SA has made visible progress in several respects. It is far more socially representative in terms of religion, social origin and gender, and its ethnic homogeneity avoided many problems. An important aspect of the reform is the status of officers, NCOs and private and professional soldiers, now the same as that of civil servants. The SA is deprived of the possibility of regulating autonomously such issues as education, social security, health care, the legal system etc. Higher military schools do not exist. Professional soldiers are now recruited from high schools and universities before receiving their education at a military education centre, set up by the Defence Ministry. High-ranking officers acquire the appropriate specialisation in Western countries.

6.6. Slovenia and NATO: The Halfway House

The "Slovenian Spring" articulated a demand: "*Europa zdaj*!" (Europe Now!). It had less to do with Slovenes' European identity than their wish to be associated with a new political, economic and cultural environment, an urgent need for divorce from what they perceived as the primitive Balkans. Having gained independence, and in particular international recognition, the government has completely turned itself towards this goal.

For years Slovenia insisted on its identity as radically different from the rest of Yugoslavia. As an independent state it stresses its non-Balkan, Western identity even more, with largely the same myth pattern as in the other countries in transition. Slovenia always belonged to the Western cultural sphere, but a historical injustice barred it from developing within its "natural" environment.[25] It was relatively easy to distinguish Slovenian identity from the "others" in Yugoslavia, since the negative identification worked perfectly. The new identity discourse, however, has roots in Slovenes' unconscious fear to be equated with their former countrymen.

According to public opinion surveys, citizens perceive no significant military threats. Politicians also claim that Slovenia is

outside the "grey zone" of insecurity. Slovenia seems to have two basic motivations for its urge to the West: economy and identity. Yet, they are also the major limiting factors in Slovenes' devotedness to NATO and their relative weight is hard to assess. Slovenes see themselves, first of all, economically and only then emotionally as a part of Western Europe. That is why EU membership was always given priority before NATO. Slovenia is often cited as one of the CEE economic success stories (Percival 1996). The public expectations on EU/NATO are also very much focused on the economic, political and cultural benefits from membership. The high living standard makes the citizens very sensitive over possible gains and, in particular, losses in economic terms.

Before and after the Madrid Summit the Slovene government has proclaimed that the integration into NATO would involve no expenses—or only negligible ones. The official standpoint is:

> we are able to pay, we are ready to pay whatever it will cost, because any other variant of self-reliance defence will be more costly alternative (Malesic 2000: 43).

Behind this rather self-confident position, there is still a certain reluctance. Experts claim that full integration into NATO will be a task which Slovenia cannot afford or the citizens are not ready to pay for if really asked to make economic sacrifices.

NATO membership is also a matter of a status symbol and identity reference. However, the closer Slovenia gets to full NATO membership, the more sceptical the public gets in terms of identity. It is sometimes unable to reconcile the new European identity with its "Slovene-ness", so there is a certain threat perception in terms of Slovenian societal security. Despite the attractiveness of the West, there is a fear that the independence, statehood and international recognition recently gained might be limited again within the new international order. Sensitive issues for the military are the prospect of foreign officers in command positions and the (re)introduction of a foreign language as a command language, both of them once behind Slovenia's wish to emancipate itself from Yugoslavia. The new identity threat is that a part of the national security will be surrendered to collective bodies, on which Slovenia will have no significant influence. The main fear, however, concerns involvement of Slovene soldiers in far away conflict zones (Afganistan, Iraq, etc.)—another repetition of history.

The parliamentary consensus in April 1997 was given extraordinary publicity; the ruling and opposition parties had not agreed on a single question for a whole year. There was no substantial public debate, so the increasing public opinion in favour of NATO was simply following the official propaganda. Critical considerations, mostly from prominent intellectuals and civil society, appeared afterwards. The failure in Madrid created no backlash but the ruling and opposition parties opened a new debate over the reasons for the failure. While the former blamed it on the unfair attitude of external actors, the opposition had an excellent opportunity to attack the government for its inefficient and incompetent foreign policy. However, Slovenia was not particularly disappointed by the 1999 Washington Summit decision to postpone the enlargement process. During the NATO intervention in Yugoslavia, Slovenia passed the test by firm support for the action. Historical grievances provided a main reason for this attitude, especially as the intervention did not affect Slovenia in any regard (unlike Bulgaria or Romania), which contributed to its pursuing a pro-NATO policy without any hesitation.

Since the gates of the EU look more promising than ever, Slovenes now take a more realistic stand, beginning to question whether joining the Alliance is necessary, worthwhile and worth the money it will cost. The government has been using taxpayers' money for paying some US firms and individuals to lobby for Slovenia's inclusion in NATO. In addition, the purchase of expensive military equipment makes the public see NATO as a costly matter. Being in a halfway house sometimes also means having alternatives. The economically most successful country, which also has the most powerful and vivid civil society, is clearly divided about joining NATO. The gap between the government and civil society is getting deep, while the public support for NATO sometimes drops below 50 per cent. In a slightly bizarre development, politicians sometimes blame the NATO scepticism on the mature civil society and independent media, which are even labelled a "group of troublemakers".

6.7. Conclusion

The Slovenian case may look unique in many ways, but it also proves the basic assumptions that traditions are a very important determinant of the future. Slovenia's evidently weak state and military traditions are in a sharp contrast to its being the most prosperous Yugoslav successor state, which gives a hint on the relative significance of historical background when civil-military relations are shaped. Deeper analysis shows that the success of civil-military reforms depends on traditions, whether real or just imagined. In the absence of a glorious military history as well as very major traumatic experiences, Slovenia has focused on the age-old "democratic" traditions in its pre-state formation. This may be the best possible way of state building on democratic foundations, albeit imagined ones, to achieve a non-militaristic political life and culture.

Paradoxically, the major shortcoming in this sense comes from more recent history. Allegedly, Slovenia acquired independence through a war, which some others see as a farce. Thus, the basis of the Slovenian military's legitimacy is fragile and even faked. At the beginning of 1999 the public was shocked by the newspaper stories that during the "Ten Day War" Slovenians had committed a war crime. It was not only perceived as the first self-critical reconsideration of the events of 1991, but as an attempt to ruin the glory of the Slovenian liberators. The journalists that revealed the so-called "Holmec incident"[26] were harshly accused of treason and lack of patriotism. The public was not so much concerned about the accuracy of the information as about protecting of the myth that the Slovenes had been a war victim, and a victim only.

A lack of self-confidence, or awareness that their military and geo-strategic "weight" is not important enough to NATO, sometimes makes the Slovenian elite forget about the "democratic" traditions and veer towards open exaggeration. This was clearly evidenced in President Kučan's speech in which he declared that

> Slovenes are a military nation (Mekina 1998).

By contrast, the public is more inclined towards the so-called "peace syndrome" which tends to define the primary military mission of SA as disaster relief and humanitarian assistance. Sometimes the lack of glorious military traditions is the best recipe for a prosperous future. The Slovenes will have to decide of whether being a democratic nation also presupposes being a military nation.

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[1] Recent public opinion polls among the Slovenian high school population asked about the Slovenes' military traditions: 59 per cent saw weak or even non-existing traditions, while only 10 per cent believed in any glorious military traditions. (For more details see: "Slovenska mladina in

vojaški poklic" ("Slovenian Youth and the Military Profession), *Internal Survey Report* (Ljubljana: Fakultet za političke vede, 1997)).

[2] See more in Stavli, Bor & Tomazic 1996.

[3] It is stressed that the allegedly unique investiture ceremony (i.e. public election of the dukes) became a model for political theorists looking for alternative forms of government. In the sixteenth century Jean Bodin examined this "original example of the idea of sovereignty without comparison in the world" in his famous *Les six livres de la Republique* (1576), and Thomas Jefferson used this book while writing the American *Declaration of Independence*. These "facts" are considered enough to prove Slovenia's uniqueness in the heart of Europe (Vilfan 1961: 57); (Zajc 1997: 170). During his visit to Slovenia in 1999, US President Clinton also praised the Slovene hosts for their long democratic traditions since Carantania.

[4] "Considering the importance of language for national identity, it is not surprising that saving (or shaping) the national language is the first priority of nationalism." (Banac 1988: 23).

[5] "A country so thoroughly suspended between East and West, for so many centuries, that it actually disappeared. Or, to be more precise, it did not appear at all—until the spring 1991, that is. Slovenia's limbo within the East-West "twilight zone" —most recently, between the great Orwellian blocks of the century's second half—did nothing to lessen the struggles fought on her soil" (Benson 1995: 83).

[6] The perceptions of the high school population show this ambiguity. To the statement that "the partisans fought a just battle against the occupiers, while the domobrans erred by collaborating with the occupiers", 42.4% of the respondents agreed, 16.9% did not agree, and as many as 40.7% could not decide. The other statement was "although the domobrans rightly resisted the communist revolution during the WWII, they should not have collaborated with the occupiers". The results were as follows: agree 33.3%, do not agree 11.9%; a majority, 54.9% could not decide. ("Slovenska mladina in vojaški poklic" ("Slovenian Youth and the Military Profession), *op. cit.*).

[7] Speech by President Kučan at the Celebratory Academy on the 50th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War, Ljubljana, Cankarjev dom, 13 May 1995.

[8] In spite of attempts at interregional economic equalisation, the income per capita ratio between Slovenia and Kosovo grew from three in 1947 to five in 1965 and eight in 1989. "Transfers were sharply reduced after 1965, but all parties complained: Slovenia and Croatia about spending too much on the poor and inefficient south; Serbia about being a contributor rather than the receiver it should be according to statistics; the others about receiving too little and about falling behind more developed parts. Serbia was also

accused of siphoning off some of the aid on its way. Here, and in other issues, everybody felt cheated." (Wiberg 1993: 95-97).

[9] In a public debate on nationalism between the Serbian (Miha Kovač) and Slovenian (Tomaž Mastnak) intellectuals in the newspaper *Teleks* in 1988, the latter pointed out the following differences: "The platform for homogenisation of the Slovene nation has been the struggle for political democracy, the defence of fundamental human rights, the battle for rule of law. The starting point of Serb mobilisation has been *Blut and Boden:* Kosovo and the Serb blood spilled on that piece of land ... Serb nationalism wishes to set itself up as a state-dominated community, whereas Slovene nationalism organises as a society wishing to supervise the national state. This is why the former identifies easily with the Army, whereas the latter is anti-militarist." (Magas 1993: 148).

[10] The issue goes back to the Austria-Hungary period. During the Second World War the Slovene military units were ethnically homogeneous, and had Slovene as command language. The Commander of the General Staff of the Slovenian Liberation Army issued commands on Slovenian. (Avsić 1986: 1149).

[11] *Služben list na SFRJ (Official Gazette of SFRY)*, No. 20, 1969.

[12] Amid rumours of an impending military *putsch* in Slovenia, a Slovenian recruit (Ivan Borstner) took a military document without authorisation and passed it to the newspaper *Mladina*. In response, the military authorities arrested Borstner together with Franc Zavrl (the editor of *Mladina*) and two other journalists (Janez Janša and David Tasič). The trial was held before the Military court in Ljubljana in Serbo-Croat.

[13] Sabrina Petra Ramet claims that the incriminating military documents were published by *Mladina* (Ramet 1995: 191); on the other hand James Gow explains that there was only one document and the Four were arrested on suspicion of betraying a military secret (Gow 1992: 180).

[14] New details about the trial show the "heroes" in a different light. According to some evidence Janša's "heroic" behaviour in jail (alleged hunger strike) was largely a canard. For more details see Igor Mekina, *ibid.*

[15] *Delo*, Ljubljana, 20 October 1990.

[16] *Delo*, 17 January 1991.

[17] *Dnevnik*, 5 December 1990.

[18] The Law on Defence (Uradni list RS - Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 15/1991) postulated: that in circumstances of direct military threat, the TD would act together with the YPA; the plan for the usage of the TD as a component of the defence plan of the Republic must be co-ordinated with the plan for usage of the YPA; the TD Commandant is responsible both to the Presidency of the Republic and the Presidency of SFRY (only) in state of direct military threat or war, etc.

[19] In May 1991 Slovene TD brought together a new generation of recruits in two training centres in Ig and Pekre. The first generation of Slovene soldiers gave a new oath that they would defend "independence, sovereignty, freedom and territorial integrity of my homeland the Republic of Slovenia" (*Delo*, 1 June 1991).

[20] Figures for the war casualties vary, but none exceeds a few dozen people killed on each side (Cohen 1993: 224); (Silber & Little 1995: 183).

[21] Before the YPA's departure Janša stated that the concept of demilitarisation was naive and that Slovenia already had its own military (See *Jez - Delo*, Ljubljana, 17 August 1991).

[22] See *AIM Press*, Ljubljana, 30 October 1997. The article "Slovene Army Officers Do Not Like Paparazzi" reports an incident in which the main actors were Janša (then deputy in the Slovenian Parliament and president of the Social Democratic Party), a former high officer of TD and the first commander of the special brigade MORIS, and two superior army officers employed in the Defence Ministry. During working hours and in uniform the two officers met leaders of a political party despite the legal prohibition. In the incident a man was beaten up and the police intervened.

[23] *AIM Press*, Ljubljana, 20 July 1997.

[24] *Dnevnik*, Ljubljana, 6 November 1993.

[25] From the speech of President Kučan, presented at the International Conference "Central-Eastern Europe and Euro-Atlantic Security" (Bebler 1997: 3).

[26] The crime in Holmec happened when the Slovenian forces reportedly shot two YPA soldiers immediately after they had surrendered on 28 July 1991 (Mekina 1999).

Chapter 7

Civil-Military Relations in Croatia

7.1. Croatian State and Military Traditions

Balkan peoples tend to become hostages to their own historical myths in which glory and traumas are interwoven. The Croats have also been busy rewriting their history, with three periods under intensive revision during the past decade. The first is related to the early history; the second concerns Croatian history in the first and second Yugoslavia. The third one on post-1991 history seems to be the most problematic one and has had the great impact on future prospects of the civil-military relations.

Emancipation from the Yugoslav pattern of thinking history through the prism of "Brotherhood and Unity" opened the floodgates for "creative" re-evaluations of history and traditions. Debates centred on the traumas and injustices that Croats suffered under the Serb-dominated Yugoslavia(s). After independence historiography could start redesigning the past in a more systematic manner. National identity and statehood have been the focal points of an Orwellian rewriting of history. The history of the land and the people are certainly very complex and troublesome, yet the post-Yugoslav historiography has shed little new light and often rather obscured them for political reasons.

A domestic scholar once wrote,

> history of the Balkans is the history of migrations—not just of peoples, but of lands (Banac 1991: 33).

Two questions thus arise: the origin of the Croats and the geographical borders of what has been defined as Croatia. Until recently, there was no major dispute that Croats were descendants of some of the Slavic tribes that settled in the Balkans, but today's Croats tend to reject the claim that Croats and Serbs descend from the same Slavic stock, differentiated by settlement patterns rather than by racial and cultural differences (Friedman 1996). The opposite interpretation "reveals" that Croats are descendants of the nomadic Sarmatians from Central

Asia, who moved to the steppes around 200 BC and to Europe in the fourth century AD, conquering the Slavs in Northern Bohemia and Southern Poland and forming a small state near Krakow called *White Croatia*. A publication sanctioned by Tudjman's government claims that the first-known reference to Croats dates from Persian sources in about 500 BC and that they were therefore "Aryan" (Pavlicevic). An author perceptively stresses,

> this reference, which would be an obscure and silly piece of legend if it had not been for the atrocities of W.W.II, is hardly reassuring to those who know the history of the fable (Chirot 1995: 59).

It seems indisputable that the Croats settled in the Balkans in the seventh century; it is more difficult to identify the geographical extension of "Croatia" throughout the centuries. It has had several different locations, sometimes with ill-defined borders. In its most limited sense "Croatia" refers to the region around today's capital Zagreb, a wider sense also includes Slavonia and—in some periods—parts or all of Dalmatia. The picture gets even more complex if one includes the independent republic of Ragusa/Dubrovnik (an independent state until 1806 AD) and the so-called "Red Croatia" (including parts of Herzegovina and Montenegro), etc. These territories were never really united in social and political terms and some of them shifted owners repeatedly, so their history and identity often differed considerably. Some debate on the origins of Croatian statehood offers interesting variations in the significance that can be given to different rulers and principalities.

The most grandiose interpretation is that the principal attributes of statehood were brought by the Croats when arriving in the Balkans. In the view of the former Chief of General Staff, the settlers brought with them their

> highly developed cultural traditions, but also military organization, people's self-awareness and some forms of common law, which all together can be identified as statehood attributes (Tolj).

Another version is that

> the Croats were among the first peoples of Europe who established a state, and from the beginning of the tenth century they had their own kingdom, the first among the Slav peoples (Pavlicevic).

The "Golden Age" is associated with the name of King Tomislav (910-928), who is believed to have unified Croatia, although it is not clear whether this relates to the conquered territories or the population that were perceived as Croatian.[1] Maps of lands that were conquered and the legend of a mighty king are the basis for this "Greater Croatia" dream. King Tomislav's victory over the Bulgarians by the Drina River gets extra military glory, by describing the latter as "the strongest European power in the region".[2]

After the end of the native dynasty around 1100 AD, there was union with Hungary, permanent battles with the Ottomans and finally Habsburg rule. No matter what historicans abroad have concluded about the document *Pacta Conventa* from 1102, Croats tend to see it as a continuation of the statehood in the form of a *personal union* with Hungary. Some even claim that it was the Hungarians who, unable to defeat the Croats militarily, offered them a common state; less exaggerated versions see an equal partnership in the union. In any case, it marked the beginning of a long Croatian struggle for autonomy, first under the Hungarian crown and later under the Habsburg emperors, the Ottoman and Venetian conquests having their own effects.

The Croatian perception of history always insisted on the juridical foundation of their statehood. Croatian *de facto* autonomy varied, the real scope of sovereignty and boundaries mainly depending on shifting balances of power. The focus on the *de jure* aspect (Klemencic 1996) is to back the "thousand year statehood" myth by insisting on the legal continuity of the political community.

The heroic image of the Croatian soldier covers every historical period. In the period of settlement, the legend stresses Croatian military virtues that were recognised by the Avars. In the period of independent principalities or/and kingdom(s), the knights are seen as heroes of "Greater Croatia" state building. The union with Hungary made it more difficult to distinguish military achievements. The Croatian nobles got property rights and tax exemption in exchange for the obligation, in case of war, to join the Hungarian army with, at least, ten armoured cavaliers from each noble family at their own expense. Arguments for military independence are sought in the clause in the original agreement that it was not supposed to wage wars

out of its territory; yet historical developments soon brought Croatian soldiers to many fronts throughout Europe.

The Turks defeated the Croatian military, who proved incapable of protecting the territory, e.g. in the traumatic battles at Krbovo Field[3] (1493) and Mohacs (1526). When the Hungarian army was destroyed in the latter, Croatia became a minuscule "remnant of the remnants". The next year Ferdinand of Habsburg officially became the King of Hungary and Croatia. One of the significant sources of military glory was the victory at Sisak in 1593, where—so the story goes—300 soldiers were under siege by 12,000 Turks until the Croatian Ban Erdody led 5,000 soldiers to help the city's defenders, the Turks losing more than 8,000 troops, while on the Croatian side only 50 soldiers were killed.[4] This battle is perceived as initiating the period when Turkish power was permanently in decline (in reality it started a century later), and the Pope allegedly awarded the Croats the name *antemurale Christianitatis.*

A new mighty protector had arrived, but at a price: part of the territory was used for the Austrians' defènce purposes and the new division[5] had long-lasting effects for the entire region. There was an exodus of Croats from the new buffer zone, the so-called Military Frontier (*Vojna Krajina*), followed by an influx of Serbs[6] ready to defend it to get land and other benefits. The Military Frontier became a belt of Serb-settled territory along the border between the two Empires. Living under martial law, this small society developed into a fully militarised one with a degree of autonomy, and—what is more important—reported directly to Vienna rather than Zagreb. This defined disputes between Zagreb (trying to regain control over the Krajina territory) and the Krajina Serbs (attempting to maximize independence) until the control returned to Zagreb in the late nineteenth century. In the Croatian perception of history, Croatia was on the front-line of defence of the Christian world and European culture, while Serbs saw themselves as the defenders not only of Europe but also of the Croats.

Soon Croats faced a threat of centralisation and Germanisation, with Vienna and Budapest competing for overlordship. The political institutions (the Sabor or the Diet, headed by a Ban) that symbolize its interrupted state existence were limited to a narrow scope of less important competences. In short, Croatia was only a tiny region of the Empire with no sovereignty even over local affairs. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Croats had become conscious of their

national identity, the cultural renaissance eventually spreading into the political sphere.

During the 1848 revolutionary events, the Diet declared an independent state. The Baron Josip Jelačić was elected the Ban of Croatia and Slavonia, Governor of Dalmatia and Rijeka, Commander of the Military Frontier. Having regained Međimurje from the Hungarians, Croatia was briefly united. Jelačić tried to take advantage from the situation by supporting the Habsburgs against the Hungarian revolution in 1848-49. His army attacked the revolutionary forces, but soon withdrew. Today, Jelačić is pictured in Croatia as a saviour of the Habsburg Empire, whose military role was decisive in defeating the "Greater Hungarian idea" (Tolj: 7).[7] Yet, after the revolution the Diet was dissolved and the Croats received only abolition of serfdom. The emperor suspended the constitution and introduced absolutist rule and germanisation. The establishment of the Dual Monarchy divided Croat-inhabited lands even more: Istria and Dalmatia under Austria, Croatia (in the limited sense) and Slavonia under Hungary (when the Military Frontiers were abolished a decade later), which soon tried to magyarize them against strong resistance. Eventually, Croatia signed the so-called Hungarian-Croatian Compromise, which lasted until 1903, and gave the "Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia" (as it was called) a special status within the Hungarian half.

In the Dual Monarchy the Croats shared their military traditions with all the other constituencies.[8] The Croatian Homeguard (*Hrvatsko Domobranstvo*, HD), which was a part of the *Honved* (Hungarian Armed Forces), is, however, seen as a significant achievement in terms of gaining an independent military organisation. (In reality, the Homeguard was strictly subordinate to the Hungarian Defence Ministry). Like Slovenian historiography, the Croatian version stresses symbolic facts: ethnically homogeneous units, distinct insignia and uniforms, and Croatian as a command language—and emphasizes that Croatia was a constituent part of the Empire, while Slovenia never had a distinct legal status.

The Croats' participation in the Imperial Army is a source of great military pride, despite the very high death toll of the First World War. Heroic high-ranking officers exemplify "glory of the Croatian soldier". One of the great military legends is (the Serb) Svetozar Borojević,[9] who is proclaimed to be "the most glorious Croatian warrior" (Omrcanin 1993). He was an Austro-Hungarian field marshal who fought in Galicia and Socha. Some sources even claim that in

1914, just before his assassination in Sarajevo, Franz Ferdinand said to Borojević that

> Croats must be proud of their army and that it was one of the best armies in the world.[10]

In the Empire, 30 out of 315 generals were of Croatian origin, as were two admirals out of 17. The Empire did not pursue any policy of proportional ethnic representation, but promoted the military by the merit principle. Individual military careers are, however, taken as a solid ground for national military traditions. Yet, on the eve of the Empire's collapse desertion figures were very high precisely in Croatia (Zlobec 1981: 84). The conscripts were not ready to die for it.

The study of military traditions is deeply intertwined with the essential issues of the national and state identity problems. Both nation- and state-building faced great obstacles. Throughout the centuries Croats were frustrated both by limited sovereignty and/or autonomy and by territorial separation. The entire territory of today's Croatia was never a part of a unified state before the creation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918. Modern Croatia does not have any long tradition of its own military. Croats usually served as soldiers within the Hungarian or Austro-Hungarian military forces, sometimes deployed in other parts of Europe. The military experience gained within the first Yugoslavia was neither satisfying, nor perceived as a national one. In sum, the military traditions were predominantly within foreign and/or non-democratic states and, understandably, more often frustrating than satisfying.

7.2. Croats and the Communist Yugoslavia

The most controversial part of Croatian history is the period of the Second World War. The mixture of myths and re-interpretations of this period appeared to be functional for political needs. To support the thesis on "interrupted state continuity", it was necessary for the regime to revive the ghost of the Independent State of Croatia *(Nezavisna država Hrvatska*, NDH).

Following the partition of Yugoslavia among the Axis powers, NDH was proclaimed in August 1941. The puppet state—led by Dr. Ante Pavelić, the infamous head of the interwar Ustaša movement—was built along Nazi lines. The subordination of the state and the military structure to the Head (Poglavnik) was a pure imitation of the Führer's regime. However, the late President Tudjman in his first

public speech found a "formula" for reconciliation of the dark and glorious parts of the national history, stating that

> the NDH was not only a simple 'quisling state' and 'fascist crime', but also an expression of the historical desire of the Croatian people for an independent state (Quoted from: Gruden, Gabrić & Buljan 1997; Dikić 1999).

The pre-war frustrations of the Croats have sometimes been used as mitigating the deeds of NDH.

NDH had two armed formations. The Ustaša militia (UV) was the larger component, made up of party all-volunteer units whose main activity consisted of brutal actions against anti-fascists, Serbs, gypsies and Jews. In 1944 the UV consisted of 114,000 troops. The regular Armed Forces of the NDH consisted of conscripts and were perceived as a continuation of the Croatian-Hungarian Homeguards, bearing the same name (*Hrvatsko Domobranstvo*, HD), and served on the Croatian "fronts". Their combat value and morale varied, but was generally low. They numbered some 40,000 in 1944. In 1945 UV and HD units were united, forming 16 divisions and about 200,000 men.

The external military mission of these forces was supporting their allies' military operations. There are attempts to present this participation as forced, but documents show Pavelić's eagerness for "numerous Croats to take part in the struggle against the enemy of all freedom loving nations as soon as possible, in order to contribute to the new order in Europe" (Quoted from Košutić 1992). Even today, some domestic authors praise the soldierly virtues of the Domobrani units on the Eastern Front as alleged proof that NDH soldiers were forced to join the Nazi troops. We also find the NDH unit (500-1,000 troops) sent by force to France in spite of being designed to be a defensive formation exclusively on Croatian soil. In September 1943 the Croatian troops rebelled in Villefranche-de-Rouergue in order to approach the French Liberation Movement and Anglo-Americans, and then to come back to Croatia. The rebellion is highlighted as the first to occur within the Nazi forces and it is believed to be highly esteemed by the French.[11]

It is more difficult, however, to find justifications for the internal military mission of NDH forces. There are attempts to distinguish the Ustaša from the Domobrani forces, but the fact that both formations were under direct control of the Poglavnik makes them meaningless: they both served the Croatian state agenda loyally and most often in a

unjustifiable way, such as the "ethnic cleansing" to create an ethnically pure state. The infamous Jasenovac concentration camp became a symbol for the Serbian holocaust. A debate on the victims of the NDH regime during the entire civil war in Yugoslavia (1941-45) was only opened many years later. Unable to handle the war traumas, the Communist regime promoted "national reconciliation" suppressing any discussion over the painful issues threatening the myth of the all-Yugoslav (Partisan) heroism. Obviously, the perceptions of the traumatic events have been kept alive for decades, but have differed a lot.

> Most of these perceptions, originating in family traditions or political propaganda, have *some* historical background, sometimes much; they disagree on *how many* were killed, *to what extent* different peoples took part, and whether events were *typical or exceptional*. All groups see themselves as historical victims of brutal oppression, even genocide. After 1945, these feelings were suppressed in the name of national reconciliation (Brotherhood and Unity); but did not disappear and were passed on, for example, by oral family traditions. What one group sees as a genuine historical grievance is often dismissed by others as mythical or monstrously exaggerated; this exacerbates the traumatic relations, adding the extra trauma of *not being heard*. (Wiberg 1993: 97-98).

The "necrophiliac" issue of the war victims served as a nationalist platform both in Croatia and Serbia in the years that preceded Yugoslavia's disintegration. Depending on what "methodology" was employed for the counting of bones and graves as well as on whether the historians were moderate or hard-liners, one can find the most fantastic figures on both sides.[12] Serb sources estimated that 600,000-700,000 people (mostly Serbs) were exterminated by the NDH regime. The new Croatian historiography claimed that Jasenovac was not a "death camp" but simply a "labour camp" in which "only" 30,000-40,000 people died.[13] In Tudjman's words, "some individuals who had some special, hidden reasons" intentionally exaggerated the Ustaša crimes. Regardless of the accuracy of the figures, the re-examination of the casualties had a self-serving motive—to justify one's own crimes as well as the policy of ethnic revenge against others.

The harsh repression and ethnic cleansing pursued by Pavelić's regime made very many Croats join the Partisan Liberation Movement led by the Communist Party and the Croat, Josip Broz Tito. During the war years, the anti-fascist movement became the strongest group in Croatia.

> The communists' slogan of "Brotherhood and Unity" had appeal to those on all sides who were tired of the great bloodshed. They also offered Croats who opposed the Ustaše a framework in which to demonstrate their opposition. Most of all, the communists offered all those who had felt ethnic injustice in the first Yugoslavia the prospect of a second version of the country in which their aspirations would be accommodated by a federation. That federation would provide a constitutional embodiment of the equality of Yugoslavia's nations within the country. The communists were able to create a broad base of support for their movement because they identified their aims with those of most of the people. They were attractive because they fought, because their aims were socially progressive, but most of all because they were not the vengeful preserve of any one particular nationality or religious group. (Gow 1995: 22).

In contrast to the NDH's ignominious "war record", the honourable part is related to Croat contribution to the anti-fascist movement, which was particularly important in the light of the doctrine of "Brotherhood and Unity". It is sometimes still stressed that out of all the Yugoslav partisan units the majority was from Croatia. This, however, refers to NDH, which included Bosnia and Herzegovina and some parts of Serbia, and where the majority was non-Croat. It is thus compatible with the claim that the number of partisans of Serbian origin was the greatest. At the beginning of 1945, Croatian units were put under the direct command and control of the General Staff of the newly created Yugoslav Army (later the Yugoslav People's Army, YPA).

The debates on the war crimes have been often labelled Serb propaganda. Instead, Tudjman's regime insisted on the Croats' victim-role, especially the Bleiburg Death Marches.[14] The rather obscure episode has become symbolic: if the Serbs suffered great casualties in Jasenovac, so did the Croats at Bleiburg. Tudjman also started a wide public campaign to identifiy war and post-war victims.[15] This served

to hide certain parts of Croatian history and thus obtain a *tabula rasa* for the writing of neo-history. To reconcile the thesis of "1,000-year-old" Croatian statehood with the glorious anti-fascist struggle, Tudjman's regime stated:

> the army of NDH was not a fascist army and there were more anti-fascists among the Ustaše than among the Partisans (the former chair of the parliament, Dubravko Jelčić)

and

> Croats were the first anti-fascists in the world (Quoted by Gruden, Gabrić & Buljan 1997).

The First Yugoslavia failed to harmonise the contentious political cultures and identity policies of the Serbs and the Croats into any common vision of the country's political future. The two national identities had emerged in the nests of competing empires, where they had represented non-state nations, and depended heavily on myths of past glories, making ethno-nationalism essential to preserve the nation. In the inter-war period there were no shared historical myth to create a ground for common state building. The wartime partisan solidarity and heroic struggle eventually filled the historical vacuum and supported the federation's legitimacy when post-war revolutionary euphoria, for some time, submerged wartime traumas. The Yugoslav Communist Party created and shaped the military, which was guided and disciplined by the political objectives of military action. Communists came to power on the crest of a wave of legitimacy for their combined military-political organisation. Military legitimacy was bestowed on the new political structure that was, consequently, enhanced (Gow 1995: 39).

The Serb-Croatian relationship remained one of the core problems, making inter-ethnic compromise a very important precondition for the state foundation. In the early 1960ies the first debates over centralism versus decentralism highlighted the differences between two fundamental views of Yugoslavia's national purpose. Croatia (and Slovenia) advocated economic decentralisation, resisting the Party's periodic attempts to renew the idea of "Yugoslavism". Belonging to the more developed republics, they also spoke for the strategy of loosening and weakening the central role of the federation.[16]

Quarrels over federalism inevitably affected the military sphere. Like Slovenia, Croatia also stresses its influence on the 1968 defence

reform. The introduction of the Territorial Defence (TD) was praised as a form of decentralisation against the YPA's advocacy of centralism (and Yugoslavism). Moreover, the Croatian participation in this reform is seen as crucially important:

> In regard to the strategy, then republican party officials and generals from Croatia played a prominent role with their activities. In media the key-words of the new strategy were first used by the (civilian) politicians from Croatia as early as April 1968. (Tatalović 1997: 67).

Yet, the Croats were never satisfied with their influence and national representation in the YPA. The percentage of Croats among commissioned officers was lower than in Yugoslavia's population (Antic 1972), while in the High Command they were over-represented. Despite YPA's efforts to ensure proportional representation, the national imbalance was difficult to overcome. The Croats' under-representation and their consequent perception of the YPA as a Serb-dominated military is sometimes seen in a rather contradictory way:

> YPA was perceived as an instrument of Serbian hegemony, as hostile and unscrupulous toward Croats' and other peoples' interests in the Federation, which explains the deep mistrust with which the Croatian and Slovenian politicians were looking at it. It also explains their tendency toward advocating national and territorial military. The data about the Serbs domination in the military made it impossible to present YPA as a "smithy of the brotherhood and unity"... Constantly, but with minor success, there were attempts to resolve the problem—how to include more Croats and Slovenes in the military and to keep them as officers by the end of the career. These attempts were not successful given the wider alternatives in regard to a professional career in the economically developed republics, and especially in Croatia where the image of the YPA was related to the Serb domination as well as because of the historical associations about the Serb hegemony in the military. (Tatalović 1997: 74-5).

Josip Broz Tito, born in 1893, was the long-standing charismatic leader—the head of the Party, state and the army. It is believed that

the integrity of Yugoslavia rested on his autocratic and arbitrary power. This "glue" keeping the republics and nations together was gone with his death in 1980. In the last years of his life, the political elite relied mainly on his cult status and the symbolic meaning he represented for the peoples. Tito was rarely perceived as a Croat; both Serbs and Croats were dissatisfied with his Yugoslavism. The Croats' major complaint was that he never protected their national cause, but instead supported the Serbs' privileged position, referring to the Serb-dominated Army; nationalists in Serbia held him responsible for its unequal and non-sovereign status in comparison with other republics.

One of the most critical moments in the Second Yugoslavia was the 1971 legitimacy crisis in Croatia. The agenda of *Maspok* (the Mass Movement) was as vague and ambiguous as the movement itself.[17] Within a few months there was a rapid escalation of demands—from cultural autonomy to economic/political ones, eventually including a republic army and UN membership for Croatia. Tito was the only one able to stop it, and in April 1971 he publicly denounced the Croatian party's nationalism; the Communist leadership in the Republic was soon replaced. Tito hesitated until the YPA leadership expressed its unambiguous support. The League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) lacked the authority to act decisively, while the YPA had enough legitimacy as a supranational institution. It acted at a distance, but the message was clear—it was ready to "foot the bill for the party" (Remington 1974: 184). The military involvement during the "Croatian Spring" left a deep mark on the relationship between Croatia and Yugoslavia, and consequently on civil-military relations, worsening the gap between the Yugoslav state and military and the Croatian society when YPA was perceived as a support for the centralist/Serbian forces. In the following years Croatia was known as the "silent republic" under strict control and supervision by the security forces. Tito's personality cult got tremendous dimensions at the same time as the would-be political leadership of independent Croatia was born. Leading political figures like Franjo Tudjman, the first President of independent Croatia, and Stipe Mesić, the second President, were jailed for Maspok activities, and re-appeared on the political scene in the final stage of Yugoslavia's dissolution.

Croatia brought into SFR Yugoslavia all the previous frustrations from the First Yugoslavia compounded with the war traumas. Having gained independence through an armed conflict with the YPA, the military traditions as well as the entire experience in civil-military relations gained in the period 1945-91 became irrelevant. The

Croatian "back to the future" endeavour was returning to the old discourse on NDH/Partisan traditions, and even older ones.

7.3. Towards State Independence with a New Military Ahead

Next crisis spiral came in the early 1980ies, when nationalism was tried as a new source of legitimacy, eventually with a boomerang effect. The manifest discourse was over liberalisation versus centralisation, but it was ethnified from the very beginning and opposed ethnic claims *de facto* supported each other in the process of Yugoslavia's dismantling. Hence, in Croatia (as well as in Slovenia) Yugoslavia became a symbol of centralism which opposed the right of the republican nation-state(s) and was therefore doomed.

The quarrels over how to the re-shape the federation had an inevitable impact on the military sphere. While the Federation was eroding along national/ethnic lines, YPA was still expected to be a Yugoslav institution. For the first time, the military legitimacy was openly questioned. By the mid 1980ies the YPA structure decreasingly mirrored the society's ethnic composition, and even less so when a large number of Slovene and Croat officers quit the Army. The military was indoctrinated in Marxist-Leninist anti-nationalism, but came to a crossroad when facing Croat and Slovene demands for very radical cuts in its budget. YPA started providing security in an exclusivist manner by eventually taking the side of the Serbs in the conflict zones, and—later, and when suitably purged from "Yugoslavists"—becoming a military tool for Milošević's project of Greater Serbia. The Yugoslav security sector was an important "battle field" for nationalisms and absolutely crucial the Federation's survival.

This situation was eventually used as a justification for creating national guards as an ultimate expression of the self-proclaimed republican sovereignty. The dualism between federal and republican military power(s) prepared the scene for future conflicts. The rigid political stance assumed by the top brass (which still had many Yugoslavists), in particular its opposition to radical changes of the federation's set-up and the republics' sovereignty, was actually a boon for the secessionist elites. In public campaigns they blamed the YPA for the crisis and denounced it as a direct threat to the young national(ist) "democracy".

The first free elections in spring 1990 brought into power the Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*, HDZ) led by Franjo Tudjman. That was an indication of intensified ethno-

nationalism. He attacked the Yugoslav system for blocking the sovereignty of the Croatian people. The 1990 constitutional changes made Croatia *de jure* a nation-state, transforming the 600,000 Serbs into a national minority, who saw this nation-state—and in particular its symbols—as a rebirth of wartime fascism. The checkerboard flag of the ancient Kingdom of Croatia aroused strong emotions on both sides. For many Croats it symbolised their "one thousand-year-long statehood", for the Serbs Pavelić, both perceptions having a historical basis. Belgrade encouraged the discontented Serbs, fanning existing fears of a repetition of the Ustaša genocide. The collision between Croatian triumphant nationalism and exaggerated Serb fears pushed them closer to the precipice of war. A domestic scholar sees both conflict parties willing to fight:

> In the case of Croatia the strategic aims of the relevant political forces were from the very beginning—although not always publicly formulated—the following:
> a. to form an independent nation-state;
> b. to obtain formal and factual recognition from "Europe and the democratic world";
> c. to rid the state of the Serbian minority which was the only significant relevant ethnic minority in the country;
> d. to get control over at least some of the traditional Croat territories belonging to the other republics of former Yugoslavia.
> Both the leadership and quite a considerable number of the followers were ready to risk war to accomplish these goals. The other side—with Milosevic as the undisputed leader and the Yugoslav army as the principal force of execution—used mostly symbolic, but not only symbolic provocations as an excuse for the overreaction—the real war. (Puhovski 1998: 94).

The Serbian militants proclaimed a para-state with strong police (and, later, military) forces. The government met armed resistance when trying to change the ethnic composition of the police in predominantly Serbian areas by sending in "ethnically pure" Croatian police. The clashes started in Knin (Krajina's capital) in August 1990. YPA units tried to interpose themselves between the parties, but had no credibility, being perceived in opposite ways—i.e. Croats saw it as a *de facto* supporter of Serbs secessionist aspirations and the Serbs saw

it as a saviour from the re-born Ustaša regime. In the referendum in May 1991 around 94 per cent of the Croats voted for independence.

The process of constituting Croatian armed forces had started before Yugoslavia's dissolution.[18] The process was carried out under politically extreme conditions. Croatia, like Slovenia, set up its national guard in 1990, which was considered an unconstitutional act by the federal government. In response, the YPA secretly transferred all weapons of Croatia's TD into the central depots. It was not the would-be military, but constitutional changes as well as drastic cuts in the federal budget that made Croatia a *de facto* independent state long before the war started.

The Croatian leadership beefed up the police structures with a special military branch, the Assembly of the National Guard (*Zbor narodne garde*, ZNG) and ceased enlisting Croats in the YPA. ZNG was defined as a professional, uniformed-armed formation with a military structure and defence and police duties.[19] Its main function was dealing with defence against terrorist activities, armed rebellion, etc. It could also be used for public security affairs and the defence of the constitutional order of the Republic, at the request of the Minister of the Interior. Given the volatile internal situation, ZNG had a two-fold mission: police and/or military. The ambiguity was also visible in its belonging to the Ministry of the Interior while functionally responsible to the Ministry of Defence, that is the President of the Republic.

The Croatian authorities could not transform TD as the Slovenes did and this mode of military-police organisation was more suitable to the situation burdened by political and inter-ethnic tensions. However, the militarised police was shaped in accordance with ethnic (and political) criteria. The regime claimed that over 60 per cent of the police were Serbs from the Krajina region (a more likely figure is 20 per cent) and made it (Vego 1993) a priority to purge unreliable (Serb) policemen. A domestic author:

> In 1990, when the process of creation of Croatia as a democratic and nation state began, it happened to the Serbs that, after several centuries, they faced the fact that they lived in a state which was not interested in their military, professional, police or in general state-administrative services. Their rebellion against Croatia thus should be seen in this light. As a result of the rebellion, the Republic of Serb Krajina (RSK) finally transformed into an anachronistic

> parody of the Military Frontier, a renaissance of the non-modern and backward village-military life, behind which there was no state left: Turkey and Austria withdrew in the meantime, Serbia could not put these museum-like people in its service entirely, and Croatia, in the process of its transformation into a modern and nation state, did not want to accept them. Left without a state, they created their own, but being without any experience they sank into crime and defeat. (Žunec 1998: 141-2).

ZNG was further transformed twice before its final formation as a segment of the undivided Croatian army. The 1991 Defence Law defined the republican armed forces as composed of the Croatian military (*Hrvatska vojska*, HV) and the ZNG. The HV was established as a classical army, whereas the position of the ZNG remained bizarre, the Law on Internal Affairs still applying to its staff and the former reservists. A month later, the Law on Changes in and Amendments to the Defence Law defined the armed forces as "an undivided whole, composed of the Croatian military which comprises the ZNG and the Homeguard (Domobrani) as distinct parts".[20] ZNG was finally separated from the police to become the skeleton of the Croatian army. The name "Homeguard" was symbolically the same as under Habsburg and NDH.

The military's main stated purpose was to act primarily on the "inside" rather than as a defence against external aggression. Yet, "the bulk of Yugoslavia" and the YPA were officially considered as an external enemy and an occupation force. Croatian armed forces were quickly given the opportunity to prove themselves on the battlefield, with greater or smaller success but a sound claim to the attribute "defender of the mother country".

7.4. The Military and Croatian Wars

The shape of civil-military relations in post-Yugoslav Croatia has been determined by two basic factors—the conflict/war waged on its territory (and later in Bosnia) and the regime's features. During the first years after secession, there was interplay between the course of events on the political and military levels, which had a strong impact and moulded the contemporary model and dynamics of civil-military relations.

Whatever the official explanations, it seems that Croatia became independent more as a result of being pushed than because of any plan

(see Pusic 1998). Among the factors that caused Yugoslavia's breakdown, the complex endgame between Croatia and Slovenia had a significant influence. Neither wanted to secede alone, but they had different interests as to timing—and obviously Slovenia won, Croatia not having a clear strategy. The regime mainly stressed the symbolic features of the new armed forces, demonstrating resoluteness to defend the state by force, if necessary, through public parades, creating the President's Guard with traditional costumes, etc. At the outset of the war the strength of these forces was 40,000 men in the police units and 6-800 people in the newly created ZNG.

The declaration of independence of 25 June 1991 was deliberately timed to coincide with Slovenia's (in fact, it was adopted a few hours earlier). The process of state building interacted with the creation of the army, with the so-called Patriotic War as the main determinant of the state/army building process. It provided moral legitimisation of the regime and the military. International sources differ on exactly when the war/conflict should count as "inter-state" rather than domestic, but from Croatian point of view it was unquestionably an aggression, although the blurred definition of the aggressor included both internal rebels and the "external military force" (YPA). The thesis of a Yugoslav civil war is rejected, since it might imply equal guilt of the conflicting parties. Thus, the war is imposed, with Croatia as a victim that had to defend itself by any means. The motives of the war are defined as existential, Croats fighting for

> their own statehood (and psychical survival) as a fundamental form of historical positioning (Pavić 1997: 57).

Having revived its declaration of independence (frozen since the Brioni Agreement of 7 July 1991), Croatia quite predictably faced a rapid escalation and became a battle stage for various actors, with major operations around the rebellious areas in Srpska Krajina and Eastern Slavonia and in southern Dalmatia (Dubrovnik). Siege wars (Croatian forces surrounding the YPA bases) were waged in the urban centres and guerrilla wars behind the fronts. From the moment when Croatian forces blockaded and attacked the YPA garrisons, the character of the war changed. With 25,000 soldiers and their families hostage, the YPA imperatives were no longer those of the federal government or even Serbian political goals. This was a corporate military establishment whose primary mission had become to protect its own (Remington 1997: 270).

The first stage of the war brought military disaster when the majority backed independence and stood ready to fight for it. The suffering was terrible: the country underwent physical devastation and lost one-third of its territory. The priority goal for the regime (and its counterpart in Belgrade) was to keep claiming victory. Thus, the official version was that Croatia had heroically succeeded in gaining control over two-thirds of its territory. The "triumph" was crowned by the international recognition by the end of 1991. The horrible destruction of Vukovar has become a symbol of Croatia's martyrdom and a basis for the myth of the soldiers-defenders of the motherland.[21] The regime and the public reluctantly listened to reports on Croatian "death squads" operating there.[22]

The war parties were YPA units and Croatian armed forces as well as Croatian and Serbian paramilitary forces. Their respective roles varied, as did perceptions of their legitimacy. The least known aspect of the war was the mutual terrorisation of the civilian population by the worst militias. In the Serb-populated areas YPA embraced and even fused with various local militias and volunteers including infamous paramilitaries under "Duke" Šešelj, Arkan's Tigers, Captain Dragan, etc. that claimed to be defenders of their ethnic kin while engaging in ethnic cleansing harsh intimidation. At the same time the local Croat HDZ leaders built a similar politico-military symbiosis where small party chiefs, mostly local boys with often dubious records, got almost uncontrolled authority and created small armed groups on a local level. A year before the war started, there had been several party militias. In addition to the forces mainly raised by the Serbian Democratic Party (SDP) in Krajina, others were loyal to Vuk Drašković in Belgrade; in addition to the paramilitaries of HDZ, the HSP (Hrvatska Stranka Prava—Croatian Rightist Party), had their so-called HOS (Hrvatske Oružane Snage, Croatian Armed Forces). During the first and most chaotic phase of the war, all private security actors exercised military authority, often behaving like warlords promoting personal interests and profit. With little coordination from the central state bodies, the local bosses were the only protectors of "law and order". The most infamous actors were Tomislav Merčep's paramilitaries in the Vukovar region, known as "Autumn Rains". These groups committed mass executions of Serbian civilian population in the fall of 1991. The crimes from this stage of the war were simply forgotten and overshadowed by heroic war stories.[23]

Ethnically mixed villages and areas saw the weirdest "spontaneous forms" of self-protection. Out of fear, both sides organised so-called

village guards. They guarded their homes and suburbs during the night, and in the morning the people that had been guarding their homes from each other would go to the same factories, working places and offices tired and sleepless. Another weird form of war profiteering appeared in armed groups operating in the front line between the Croat and Serb areas.[24]

During this period, the regime created the legal framework of the defence system. The Law on Defence was enacted on 26 June 1991 and was considered the legal basis for creating the Croatian Army. In accordance with the decision of the Supreme State Council, volunteer formations of National Defence were created on 30 June. This was followed by the creation of a Crisis Headquarters until the General Staff was formally instituted in September. By the end of the year, the entire military structure was completed, and the Armed Forces consisted of 200,000 men organized into 63 brigades. All paramilitary groups were allegedly unified and put under the state military's control.

The ceasefire of January 1992 and the arrival of UN peacekeeping troops in March ended the first phase of the war. The short break brought by UNPROFOR enabled the military to take a breath and stabilise itself after its disastrous experiences when getting modernised and equipped (in spite of the arms embargo imposed by the UN Security Council in September 1991). The result of these efforts was seen during the "Maslenica Bridge" offensive in January 1993. After this first major military success, Tudjman asked the UN forces to withdraw in March. The Army's self-confidence had obviously increased significantly.

The year 1993 is a turning point for the Croatian Army and opened a new phase in the wars. When a military victory seemed impossible, a partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina was seen as a solution both in Zagreb and Belgrade. The Croatian army and Croat irregulars who fought in Bosnia-Herzegovina secured a significant military presence, primarily in territories considered as traditionally Croatian. This ruined Croatia's victim-image in the eyes of the international community and damaged the national consensus among the political parties in Croatia:

> Many Croats were stunned. Their country, which had so recently been the victim of aggression, was now acting as an aggressor in neighbouring Bosnia. Croats were committing atrocities not unlike those that had been committed against

> their compatriots only a few months earlier. (Pusic 1998: 113).

Croatia fought two wars where losses exceded gains. In 1995 the war entered its third phase, with a Croatian Army that had now become well trained and better equipped. In "Operation Flash" and "Operation Storm", launched in May and August 1995, it amazingly quickly re-conquered Western Slavonia and Krajina. For Tudjman's regime the latter represented the apotheosis of the war, in particular the fall of Knin, which prefigured the end of the Serbs' 400-year-old presence in the area. The—apparently—splendid military success has been questioned by only a few in Croatia[25], who dared to explore the background of the military operation:

> the Croatian army was able to conquer almost 100 square miles (of mostly mountainous terrain) per hour in the last action. This shows indirectly that all the leaders of the warring sides communicate with each other much better than they can show in front of their public. So, sometimes they have to fake military actions in order to achieve results already agreed upon in previous contacts. (Puhovski 1998: 95).

The victory was besmirched by atrocities committed during the operation and in its aftermath. The offensive caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Serbs and a myriad of human rights violations. The scope and time frame of the abuses indicate that the Croatian government was aware of the crimes and allowed them to continue with impunity.[26] The people who committed or engineered the crimes (see Dorić 1995) have, with few exceptions, enjoyed complete impunity. The regime rejected the allegations as "most improbable claims" (Interview of the President of the Republic with the media editors held at the Presidential Palace on 22 October 1996, Web edition.).

"Storm" made Croatia ethnically homogeneous by reducing the Serbian share of the population from 12 per cent to less than 5 per cent. The forced exodus of whole populations—both Serb and Croat—was no accident, but clearly a central objective of the war:

> Euphemistic rhetoric about "exchange of populations" or (Tudjman's favourite) "humane resettlement" cloaked the monstrous notion that people from various ethnic groups could be moved around in order to create ethnically homogenous territories for their leaders to rule. Despite the immense suffering it caused, this strategy did not ultimately produce the desired results. The international community applied heavy pressure all around in order to enforce the signed conventions that guaranteed all displaced persons the "right of return". (Pusic 1998: 115).

The war essentially determined the future of the country and the region. Democracy had to wait for some time in Croatia. After the "splendid military victory", numerous interior problems were marginalised overnight. The war influenced the political destiny and the shape of civil-military relations. The regime and the military identified themselves with the nation and its freedom, thus becoming immune from public control or criticism in the years to come.

7.5. Civil-Military Relations in the Fog of War: Democracy Swept away by the "Storm"

The Patriotic War (with great support from the Serbian side) gave a collective moral legitimisation to the political and military endeavours. It helped Croatia become a nation-state, but in a completely different way from Slovenia. The symbolic Operetta War in Slovenia intensified the sense of community, while in Croatia the nation-state was built during a real war. "Croatisation" was carried out by, among other means, ethnic cleansing of a part of the territory. The ethnic war left deep scars and profoundly influenced political, economic and cultural developments.

From 1990/91 Croatia focused on two parallel processes: liberation from the federal constraints and defence against the federal army; and state building in a rather chaotic manner in the fog of war. The latter must to a certain extent rely on pre-existing (political and security) structures, while creating "sovereign" republican structures undermined the power of the federal state. Croatia did not have any firm state traditions, and even less democratic ones, to build its renewed institutional structure upon. The war psychosis and inter-ethnic tensions provided a politically and socially favourable atmosphere for setting a state-building agenda where the security sector got unquestioned primacy before any debate on democracy, human rights, transparency and/or accountability. All resources were needed for an effective defence of the state territory. Regime propaganda aimed at total ethno-mobilisation while providing little

accurate and complete information on security matters. After the HDZ came into power, Tudjman embarked on a purge of the key instruments of power—the police, media and the big economic apparatchiks. National and military imperatives relegated democracy to a back seat. The ruling elite thought itself capable of repressenting the entire political spectrum, leaving no need for political opposition.[27]

Tudjman designed the Constitution according to his and his party's needs in the shadow of the war, but seeing the core problem in Tudjman's personal rule oversimplifies it. HDZ made a good political use of the war and the military in many ways. First, national security threats were a good excuse ignoring democratic principles and procedures, in particular transparent and accountable decision-making. Second, the military operations and "successes" were orchestrated so as to convince the electorate that only HDZ could protect the country. Third, the high prestige of the Army provided vast political capital. Fourth, the veil of military secrets blocked any questioning and transparency building, especially in regard to the security sector; nor were these strong demands from the society or the political opposition. Undemocratic practices were tolerated as long as they were seen as justifiable and necessary.

The military victory was—and apparently remains—the main political capital of HDZ. For long, the state security structures were "privatised" under the direct influence—or even at the disposal of the "father of the nation", with little or no oversight from any other state institution. Constitutionally, the political system was semi-presidential, but in practice a strong presidential one. For years, the Parliament was marginalised and the consequences are still visible when it is trying to re-define its position and re-gain influence on the political developments. The gap between President Mesić and Prime Minister Račan as well as the quarrels within the latter's coalition Government make the situation harder for the Parliament. Depoliticising the military structures has fallen short of the expectations on the new government in 2000.

The HDZ established a special relationship with the military when the wartime situation called for the unity of the regime, the military and the public.Limited offensives were often undertaken on the eve of elections, to have a political impact rather than for military reasons. The war and its political pressures strengthened the HDZ while weakening the opposition. During this slow-down in the political process, democratisation had no chance to gain general momentum.

Civil-military relations in Croatia have mirrored the development of democracy since 1991. Both the state and the military sought legitimacy foundations, often in a grotesque manner. The old Partisan/Ustaša rivalry coloured the Croatian Army. Units of Croatian Army were suddenly renamed after Second World War criminals (Maks Luburić, Rafael Boban and Jure Frančetić). Some tanks with pictures of Pavelić were seen publicly. TV showed how the president of the HDZ of Herzeg-Bosna (the Croatian self-proclaimed state in Bosnia-Herzegovina) was greeted with the fascist raised arm salute at the meeting of the Croatian Army in Herzegovina (see Erceg 1995). The former Minister of Defence Gojko Šušak sent the same "message" at a public event (Sinjska Alka) in 1994 by using the Nazi salute. The Commander-in-Chief, Tudjman, was a convert from communism to nationalism. A World War II partisan, he rose rapidly through the ranks, largely by commitment to communism, until, at 40, he was the youngest general and one of the main commissars in the YPA. Croatia endowed his military career with a myth on his military genius.[28]

The Croatian military was one of the most politicised militaries in the post-communist world. Shaped in wartime, civil-military relations had some symbiotic features. The leading military positions were filled by HDZ activists with almost no military education. Direct party control was strengthened by the leader of the ruling party being the Commander-in-Chief and securing total loyalty from the officer corps. Non-loyal high-ranking officers (especially with YPA background) were objects of suspicion or even purged as politically unreliable.

Conversely, the key military officers often figured on HDZ election lists. A public opinion survey showed 82 per cent to have confidence in the military as an institution and 19 per cent to favour a military response to the current problems in the society (Žunec 1997). The opposition complained about political abuse of the military, with little success. The law banned military officers from having offices in the ministries or becoming judges or representatives, but not explicitly from standing election. Thus, if a military officer won a seat, another party activist would take office. When amending the Law on Defence in 1993, the HDZ parliamentary majority rejected the opposition's demands for a consistent depoliticisation of the military and the police, with arguments on "violation of human rights of military men" and "unequal status as citizens". The next attempt in spring 1995, during the adoption of the Law on Armed Forces, had no more success.

Some officers unofficially confirmed that the majority of the top brass was affiliated to HDZ (Modrić 1997). Those who resisted the pressure to join the party remained at lower posts, while members of another party were discretely dismissed. According to some claims, the military was not very favoured by Tudjman and was often unaware of its instrumental role in the political life.[29] The allegations lead to the conclusion that the Army was never a compact structure, some parts being differently treated by the political elite than others and different Army members having different motives for politicisation. If so, the de-politicisation process gets more complex and difficult. First, it is very hard to make an ideological differentiation within the ranks, which is also harmful to corporate institutional integrity. After the fall of dictatorial regimes their supporters usually tend to wash their hands by their own "biographical laundry". The weakness of the new coalition government makes the really tough nuts hard to crack, while Croatia's wish to join NATO also makes it difficult to wash dirty linen publicly.

HDZ was more of a movement than a political party, bringing together a range of political orientations, including the powerful ultra-nationalist wing (Irvine 1997: 30-43). In order to maintain unity, the leader was the ultimate decision-making authority, exercising power through his closest aides, especially in the security realm. His son was the chief of all the security services for some time. Šušak, his long-serving defence minister and the second most powerful man (until his death in May 1998) was an émigré until the HDZ victory and belonged to one of the two ultra-nationalist factions. He was the leading figure of the "Herzegovina lobby",[30] which acquired enormous political and business influence. Tudjman delegated a fair amount of competencies to him, reportedly because of his key role in contacts with émigrés essential for the flow of money from abroad into HDZ coffers and also the supply of arms during the embargo.

Prior to Tudjman's departure, during the deepening legitimacy crisis of HDZ rule, there were speculations on a pending military coup d'état. However, the military had also lost legitimacy, the public support for the regime was questionable and the military brass was aware that a coup would bring more risks than benefits. The new government faces the tremendous task of de-Tudjmanising the society and the state. The security sector reform is supposed to be a priority, but is very likely be a long and painful process. Former YPA staff is less discriminated against at military promotion than during the old regime (Snyder 2002: 299-324). The de-politicisation process will

need to encompass both factions: former YPA officers may be more professional but are burdened by their ideological past, while the problem of the newly raised military elite is lack of education and professionalism and traces of their loyalty to Tudjman's regime. There is a strong generational difference: former communist officers will soon retire, while the pro-HDZ ones are rather young. Many analysts, however, tend to see the split in the Croatian army as common to all countries in transition—the "old guard" and "the new officers". This overlooks that during the war years there was enough "national glue" to weld the ranks together. The inter-ethnic conflict made ideological differences less important than ethnic belonging. There is no reason to believe that pro-Tudjman officers have been more democratic than former YPA ones.

The security sector was built from scratch during the war, while its reform has become a concrete objective only in early 2000. Ethno-nationalist fever rarely objects to security privatisation as long as the security concerns "our" ethnic kin and/or political group. Ethno-mobilisation calls for engagement of all available human resources, while imminent war threats counteract transparency.

7.6. The Croatian Military Metamorphosis: A View from Inside

The epic of the Homeland War is supposed to be an endless source of moral and professional legitimisation of the Croatian military; it is the most important determinant of its birth, growth, glory and ignominy. The official version emphasises the creation of the military as a pure expression of Croats' patriotism and of their firm will to defend the country. Its rise is seen as a form of "*levée en masse*". Having been created in wartime, the most essential issue for the military is the definition of the Patriotic War. Its glorification as unquestionably non-offensive excludes any war crimes committed by Croatian soldiers. The Hague Tribunal trials made independent intellectuals question the real nature of the conflict. While for the population it was really a war for freedom and independence, its meaning for the HDZ elite was revealed during the Bosnian War. For a decade there was an apparent symbiosis between HDZ and the military, the war being their common basis for legitimisation. Even the new government looks unable to liberate itself from the Tudjmanian interpretation of the recent past. There is a latent fear that trials of the Croatian generals in the Hague might entail a political re-evaluation of the Patriotic War and the state-building project.

After the war and the Dayton agreement on Bosnia-Herzegovina two painful issues face the military and state legitimacy: war crimes in Croatia, and involvement in the Bosnian war. HDZ deliberately disregarded the fact that the military was built out of the paramilitary forces in the first stage of the war, while ZNG formations were established in a less than legal manner. This initial structure was "colourful", consisting of many HDZ activists, policemen, ZNG, HOS and freelancers—with all kind of uniforms and weapons free from any civilian or military control (Svarm 1993: 21-2).

One of the war myths sees the army as built out of nothing, as if the Croatian people fought with bare hands against the mighty YPA. The Croatian armed forces were indeed inferior to the YPA, but far from helpless. In the opinion of some generals, the political leadership's main mistake was not to order the Croatian army to disarm the YPA's troops while it was still possible (From the interview with the retired General of the Croatian Army, Anton Tus for *Feral Tribune On Line*). This professional view implies that even at that stage Croatia had the military strength to resist the YPA troops deployed there.

The involvement in Bosnia was justified as "defence of the Bosnian Croats". However, parts of Bosnia were included in Tudjman's project of Greater Croatia. At the time of the worst clashes between Croats and Muslims in Central Bosnia, there was a book entitled *Bosnia and Herzegovina, a Croatian Land* (Đodan 1994). Authored by the former defence minister Šime Đodan, who claims that historically Bosnia had always been a Croatian land and that the majority of the Bosnian population used to be, or still are, Croats. Even if this explanation were accepted, it could not justify the war crimes against the Muslim population.[31] There were strong links between Croatia and HVO (*Hrvatska vojska obrane*), i.e. the Croatian military component in the Muslim-Croat Federation. For years, HVO was financed through the Croatian defence budget. Reduction of the HVO to 16,000 people left many soldiers employed, the Croatian government taking care of them by retirement pensions or incorporation into the armed forces. This so-called "Herzegovina military lobby" is believed to be a big financial and social burden to the state.

Since 1995, the Croatian Army is officially considered a consolidated and modern military. Yet, behind the formal structure there were units, such as the First Guard Squad and some units of the military police, that were not under the control or command of the General Staff. In spring 1994 a brigadier from the President's Military Cabinet was appointed commander of a unit. It was believed that these

units were under Tudjman's personal command. One of the first changes in the security sector, introduced by the new President Mesić, was exactly dismantling this guard as contradicting the principle of democratic control of the security sector.

The size of Croatian Armed Forces (the official name since 1996) has varied. At the peak of the war it consisted of 200,000 troops; in mid 1993 it had approximately 120,000 troops, and by the end of 1993 this number decreased to 52,000 men. In The Dayton Agreement obliged, Croatia was to reduce its armed forces significantly. Most domestic analysts agree that they are still oversized and a financial and social burden to the state. Like other post-war states, Croatia faces the immense problem of demobilising yesterday's war heroes. It is seen to be a very important issue that may jeopardize the democratic transformation of civil-military relations and social-military relations in Croatia (Žunec 1999).

The apotheosis of the Homeland War and the army has a less known aspect. The government has given no precise number, but escape from the military units was massive. The tragic developments in Bosnia confused many soldiers and made desertion even more massive: entire units refused to carry out orders and were then disbanded. After the "Flash" operation in western Slavonia in 1995 it became obvious that a major operation was being prepared and many conscripts made themselves inaccessible to call-up. Filling up the ranks of the army preparing for Operation Storm was therefore a difficult task for the military authorities, especially in the cities (Djilas 1998). The Defence Law allows conscientious objection and refusal to carry arms, then replacing military with civilian service, but the battlefields all over Croatia and then Bosnia saw a different practice. Kept ignorant about conscientious objection, some soldiers simply left the units on their arrival at the battlegrounds and emigrated. Abandoning units and refusal to respond to call-up are treated as desertion, punishable in the case of "essentially threatened combat readiness of the unit" with twenty years' imprisonment. Still, this did not happen. Only one case is known, which was changed to five years' imprisonment following an appeal, and after the 1996 Law on General Amnesty was passed the prisoner was released. The number of those who remained in Croatia and were convicted—if some institution has such data—was not made public, nor does the government intend to do so.

Calling-up Serbs to the Croatian army was a big problem; even when it was possible to submit requests on the grounds of

conscientious objection, few processed that correctly. Retroactive application for conscientious objection was recognised in some cases, but since the Law on Defence is not specific on this, court practice varied and they were resolved in different ways, depending on each individual case and the judgement of each individual judge. Post-war Croatia still faces the problem of integrating Serbs into the Croatian Armed Forces. The agreed moratorium on recruitment ended in early 2000, and the new Croatian government is still searching for a solution.

7.7. The Croatian Army in Peacetime: A New Challenge Ahead

The Croatian Army as well as the state is at a crossroad. Two crucial events were the peaceful reintegration of the region of Eastern Slavonia in early 1998 and the changes of government in Zagreb and Belgrade in 2000. The external threat that supported political *status quo* suddenly vanished. The alibi of war and of the so-called Serbian question lost, the regime now faced the challenge to function in peace, as did the Army. The two processes have been inter dependent to a high degree.

The military threat and war psychosis had a unifying effect on society. With the conflict over, Croats who had supported the government during wartime became more critical and focused on domestic problems. HDZ has long been facing internal divisions since the first major quarrel in 1993 over the military involvement in Bosnia. The 1995 city council elections in Zagreb were lost by the HDZ, but it would not step down. The price was a further decline in support and internal fragmentation.

Tudjman remained a formidable figure despite his ailing condition, holding the party together until the very end. He won the 1997 presidential elections in the first round, even though he clearly would not remain on the scene for long. During the last months of his life there were many speculations on the country's political future, the worst-case scenario being a *coup d'état* with basic democratic institutions suspended and a military-style government imposed to keep HDZ in power. The core issue was the questionable loyalty of the army, police and security services. This scenario assumed that since the HDZ hard-liners were mostly of émigré origins and many officers from Herzegovina, their only chance would be by suspending the electoral process and assuming dictatorial powers.

Croatia successfully passed the test of peaceful political transfer of power through elections. That Tudjman remained makes it harder to

overcome his legacy. The future shape of civil-military relations will very likely depend on this endeavour. It is debatable whether the penetration model of control applied to Croatia. HDZ did not develop a full profile as a political party, lacking any other shared ideology than ethno-nationalism. This situation in the ruling party is reflected in the military as well. The source of its military traditions, its real military mission and constitutional position are not yet clear.

Today, the military faces the challenge of shifting the bases of its legitimisation. The public myth of the Indomitable Croatian Knight was nourished for long[32] and the "independent" judiciary seemed to protect it by *de facto* legal immunity. Indicted members of elite units were acquitted due to alleged lack of evidence or on false alibis. In the early debate in the Croatian parliament, the Hague Tribunal was seen as a tool of the international community to establish an artificial balance of guilt for the war in the former Yugoslavia. The spiritual climate made it possible that "a crime is treated as a shameful detail or "necessary evil" and becomes a part of the "Greater National Interest" and it was not questioned by the ruling party and by the political elite" (Ivanćić 1996). The political scene was, for a long time, a willing prisoner of the Greater National Interest. In such a climate, the Army very often and easily identified with the Greater National Interest and thus became "untouchable" by any political and legal control. The separation of power principle lost its meaning when power was concentrated in the hands of one man. The predominant ethno-nationalist ideology favoured the building of a nationalistic "patriotic soldier" over a professional one. The whole institution is likely to be more national(ist) than constitutional by its nature. The new Government, and in particular President Mesić, were squeezed to cooperate with the Hague Tribunal, and now face the more difficult part of the job: to explain to the public that some of the renewed "war heroes" are charged with war crimes. This is likely to strengthen right-wing political groups and the HDZ.

A combination of internal and external demands might be necessary to push the Croatian Army towards the path of a deep and genuine liberal transformation in the near future. It still seems too early to be ultimately optimistic. Tudjman's departure did not necessarily mean a rapid end of Tudjmanism. While must other post-communist countries focus on getting rid of the communist fraction of its soldiers, Croatia has problems with its recent past.

Radical changes are expected from the new six-party coalition. Some observers claim, however, that during Tudjman's era the

opposition advocated nothing more radical than reformed Tudjmanism, being no less interested than the HDZ in preserving some of the national achievements of this era. Even after his death, Tudjman is still a symbolic figure as father of the Croatian state, having become the Croat Bismarck or Washington. After his death, Ivica Račan, the leader of the then most powerful opposition party and now Prime Minister, said that Tudjman's contribution to the creation of Croatia would remain of lasting merit and that it was "our duty to preserve that" (Lovric 1999).

The post-Tudjman "battle" over the shape of the political system by-passed the Parliament, because the crucial conflict is still in the relations between the actors in the executive branch. The quarrels are not only institutional, but also coloured by uneasy personal relationships among the main players in the security sector. Using the same arguments as against the previous regime, the Prime Minister strives to undermine the role of the President. The defence minister belongs to the party of Budiša, Mesić's main opponent in the presidential elections, and is used in inter-personal and inter-institutional disputes—at the expense of the national security issues and reforms.

In contrast to their pre-election programmes, today's ruling coalition parties seem to avoid any major discourse on security sector reform, which is seen as a potential flash point of a deep political crisis. While security sector problems *per se* are avoided, political quarrels seem to centre on competences in the security sector. The consistent implementation of the separation of power principle, to heal the political system from the syndrome of a dictatorial president, was the main motivation for the latest constitutional changes. Yet, the 2001 constitutional reform seems less than consistent. In spite of the attempt to move the seat of power from the strong President into the Government, the President still holds important competences (supreme commander, foreign policy and secret services) and there is no clear vision how to re-establish normal relations with the strengthened Government. The core issue is whether the Minister of Defence is in the chain of command or not, and the draft Law on Defence does not offer a clear solution. By the current version (autumn 2001), the President may in case of conflict suspend the Defence Minister, who then stays in the Government and remains responsible for managing the Ministry, Parliament being the final arbiter on the dispute.

The security sector seeems a hostage of the political stalemate. A Defence Law is a necessary precondition and has been proposed by the Government. Yet, the Defence Minister is believed to want to postpone the reform process. In any case, he will not let the President sign the main documents to promote new reforms. In the law that is to be revised the relationship between the President and the Minister of Defence was equally unclear, but Tudjman was strong enough to control the actors in the security sector. Today's reformist President is not allowed to open the reforms due to the reformist Government's opposition, the two institutions quarrelling over who is the bigger democrat and reformist.

Security sector reform is still pending, while the strategic community remains immature. It has the intellectual potential, but lacks self-reliance. There is a dependency syndrome that blocks open debates; it may even inspire a subconscious self-censorship on security-related issues. There is a lack of political will and knowledge on how to deal with many painful issues, such as size reduction of the armed forces and police, demobilisation and social rehabilitation of those who took active part in the war years, etc. As is often the case, it is easier to be a critical opposion than to sit in office with responsibility for coordinated and somewhat painful cuts and reforms. The government does not have the internal coherence and common vision to re-define security strategy. There is an inertial and counter-productive clash between the Government and President Mesić, who in many regards shows bigger readiness to open security reform and a reconciliation processes. After the initial euphoria, there is an obvious disappointment and reluctance to tackle the sensitive issues that may endanger the popular standing of the members of the governing coalition.

Post-conflict reconstruction is likely to be a challenge for the Croatian state and society in the years to come.

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[1] Nineteenth-century nationalist ideology saw the issue of sovereignty over the territories as central and resolved by the conqueror having been the Croatian military. As for the population of "Greater Croatia", the category of "political people" was to eliminate all concerns about the population diversity (see Banac 1991: 85-88).

[2] It is claimed that in the tenth century Croatia had an infantry of 100,000 and a cavalry of 60,000, plus 80 larger and 100 smaller ships. These obviously

vastly exaggerated figures are designed to present the medieval Croatian kingdom as one of the most powerful states in Europe.

[3] Ban Emerik Derencin (5,000 soldiers) was heavily defeated by the Turks (8,000 troops), which is seen as one of the reasons for the further political and military decay of Croatia.

[4] The Slovenian version of this battle lets Christian forces, including Slovenes, defeat the Turks. The 400th anniversary (on 22 June 1993) was celebrated with an exhibition in Slovenia. In reality, the major military force capable of resisting the Turkish army was that of Habsburg.

[5] "At the end of the 17th century, when the Habsburgs armies finally drove the Turks out of Central Europe, Civil Croatia meant the old Slavonian environs of Zagreb and its narrow extension toward the Adriatic. Civil Slavonia consisted of territories farther to the east, ending close to the confluence of the Sava and the Danube. The expanded Military Frontier, embracing the whole of Lika, lands immediately south of the Kupa (Kordun, Banija), and extending along the frontiers of the Ottoman pasaliks of Bosnia and Belgrade, separated Croatia from Slavonia in a vertical prong north of Una-Sava confluence." (Banac 1991: 37).

[6] See Remington (1997: 262). According to a Croat version "the military authorities settled a new population from the Balkan interior there, among whom were significant numbers of Vlachs of Orthodox religion. Later, in the ethnogenetic process under the influence of the Serbian Orthodox Church and propaganda, they became a part of the Serbian nation" (Klemencic 1996: 100). Another author also dissents: "During the Turkish wars, Croats served as soldiers on the Military Frontier" (Zunec 1996: 214).

[7] In reality, however, the Hungarians capitulated to the Commander of the intervening Russian army.

[8] See more details in the chapter on Slovenia.

[9] Historical data show that Borojević was a son of Orthodox Serb parents, born in the village Umetica near the town of Kostajnica in Croatia in 1856. He died in poverty in Klagenfurt in 1920, forgotten and abandoned by the Austrian state.

[10] See more on Croatian Home Defence Army in its History web site (http://thunder.crolink.net/domobrani/engl/index.htm).

[11] When the city was liberated in 1944, the French paid tribute to these tragic victims by naming an *Avenue des Croates* to commemorate *la révolte des Croates*. In 1952 participants would build a memorial there, but this was prevented by the Yugoslav government under the pretext that that revolt occurred within NDH fascist troops and that in this way the "quislings" would be honoured.

[12] As one example see Zerjavic 1993.

[13] Tudjman wrote: "All this indicates the need to investigate in an objective way all the 'collection' and 'labour camps' and Jasenovac above all. The promoters of the Jasenovac myth have since the very outset to the present day been insisting that the Jasenovac camp was organized with the express purpose of liquidating all the inmates so that there were daily massacres of hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews, gypsies and Communists. The truth is that the camp was organized as a 'labour camp' with many field and factory units. To the camp individually and mostly in small groups of tens or one hundred persons, tens of thousands of unfortunate persons were brought but also released and shipped to labour camps in Germany. The inmates during their stay in the camp were worked hard and maltreated under exceptionally difficult and unhygienic conditions at work and they were also tortured and killed for the least disobedience especially the aged and the feeble, and from time to time on the pretext of reprisals for killed Ustaša or attempted escape they were brutally killed in smaller or bigger groups (in tens end even hundreds)." (Tudjman 1989: 316).

[14] In May 1945, the remaining parts of the NDH Army together with many civilians, fearing revenge from the Partisans, fled to Austria to surrender to the British forces. The British commander refused them protection and sent them back. The symbol of the Croatian tragedy is the slaughter of Croats near the city of Bleiburg in Austria. Those who were not killed immediately were forced to walk up to 700-800 km. with mass executions on the way. Tudjman's regime has established a memorial ceremony every year in Bleiburg in commemoration of the victims of the partisans' crimes. There are still many open questions, such as the exact number and composition of the victims: among them there were many non-Croats (like Serbian *četniks* and Slovene units) who had also been running from the Partisan troops. An especially controversial issue is the number and the treatment of the civilians, who sometimes may have been used as a live shield by the soldiers fighting the Partisans.

[15] In 1991, the regime established the Committee for Identification of War and Post-war Victims, consisting of 25 members of the parliament and 40 academic and other public persons. It established a network of regional centres tasked with digging up pits and marking mass and minor graves from the Second World War to prepare a ceremonial underground "reconciliation" (by burying the bones of Domobrani and Partisans in common graves). The most spectacular "discovery" of this Committee was that in Jasenovac only 2,238 people were killed.

[16] See more in the chapter on Slovenia.

[17] *Maspok* brought together an influential part of the Croatian League of Communists leadership and the nationalist cultural organization *Matica Hrvatska* as well as a number of extremist Croatian nationalists who tried

to take advantage of the situation in order to promote their political goals (see Glenny 1990: 126).

[18] According to then Minister of Defence, Gen. Špegelj, Croatia started its armament in 1990, mostly from Hungary, Germany and from the Middle and Far East. By the end of the year 30,000 pieces of various weapons were imported. Špegelj testifies: "Those were the beginnings of the creation of the Croatian Army. Since at that time we were still negotiating on possible confederation with Belgrade, the creation of the Croatian army was illegal, secret." (Interview with Gen. Martin Špegelj, "HVO i dijelovi Hrvatske vojske su izvrsili agresiju na BiH" (HVO and parts of the Croatian Army committed aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina), (http://www.bosona.com/spegelj.html (11 March 2002).

[19] See Law on Internal Affairs, *Narodne novine RH* (Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia) of 17 June 1991, No. 29/91.

[20] See Article 3 of the Law on Changes in and Amendments to the Defence Law, *Narodne novine RH* 1991, No. 53/91.

[21] There are claims that President Tudjman intentionally kept the forces in Vukovar in spite of a hopeless military situation (sending no reinforcements) in order to provoke a huge catastrophe that would unite the population behind the war option.

[22] In August 1991, Marin Vidić, the envoy of the Croatian Government for Vukovar, sent a dramatic appeal to the President Tudjman, the Ministers of Defence and the Interior and the opposition leaders about the atrocities committed by the Croatian forces in the city. In the letter he testified: "Surrounded by individuals of doubtful moral and professional quality, mostly former criminals, Tomislav Merčep has assumed total control of everything taking place in the Vukovar municipality. He does not refrain from repressive and violent measures against the local citizens: illegal break-ins into apartments, robberies, confiscation of private vehicles, violent arrests and interrogations, even executions ..."

[23] From time to time, even several years after the war, the Croatian public has been shocked by "news" of war crimes committed by "our boys" (the best known being Tomislav Merčep's special unit, "Croatian Knights"). Some independent media were reporting on the crimes against Serb civilians in Pakračka Poljana, Vukovar, Gospić or Šibenik, in the early stages of the war. The authorities and the public turned a deaf ear to them and the journalists were attacked as traitors (for more details see Erceg 1999).

[24] The good example is the so-called Operational Group "Rašić" in the region of Kupa River, which divided the two warring parties in the beginning of the conflict. The main "weapons" they had at disposal were trucks and several mortars. Their tactics was to intentionally provoke harsh Serbian reactions from the vicinity of a Croatian village. Under heavy Serb fire, the villagers would leave in panic, allowing the Rašić Group to plunder the village thoroughly.

[25] Some external observers believe that the "Operation Storm" was faked, i.e. had been previously agreed by Tudjman and Milošević. Paddy Ashdown referred to his talk to President Tudjman, who had anticipated the quick and bloodless outcome of the final military operation several months in advance, in his testimony at the Blaskić Trial before The Hague Tribunal (see Tribunal Update 68, March 16-21, 1998 http://www.bosnet.org/archive/bosnet.w3archive/9803/msg00152.html).

[26] Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has documented these abuses, including the summary executions of elderly and infirm Serbs who remained behind and the wholesale burning and destruction of Serbian villages and property by Croatian government forces. In the months following the August offensive, at least 150 Serb civilians were summarily executed and another 110 persons forcibly disappeared. As many as 80 Serb civilians were executed in the months from November 1995 to April 1996.

[27] Tudjman poured contempt on the opposition, calling it a herd of "grazing cattle" in a 1995 speech.

[28] Most of Tudjman's military career was as a bureaucrat in the Personal Department of the republican and federal Ministry of Defence with no purely military position in the Yugoslav army. Having taken up historical study in 1961, he came to the conclusion that the sins of the Ustaša had been greatly exaggerated and that Croatia was the victim of a communist and Serbian plot against its cultural and political identity and freedom.

[29] Gen. Špegelj, for example, stresses that the professional military corps was always a politically monitored object of distrust, Tudjman prefering his guard and the other semi-legal military structures directly responsible to him. These allegations imply that the members of the armed forces were patriotic defenders of the country and thus innocent of war crimes. According to Gen. Špegelj, professional officers with YPA background were vastly politically used but not politicised—and were often sacrificed in hidden political games of their own civilian leadership. The biggest betrayal for the professional army was exactly what was supposed to be its biggest military success, i.e. the Operation Storm (which is seen as faked). (Špegelj 2001).

[30] Gojko Sušak was born in Široki Brijeg (in Herzegovina today, known as Lištica), which used to be an Ustaša' strongholds and later remained a hotbed of Croatian nationalism (see Horvatić & Šešelj 1996).

[31] The Hague Tribunal verdict to the Croatian general Boskić revealed that military operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina were commanded by the top political and military officials in Zagreb. Some sources, available only after Tudjman's death, state that there was a double chain of command of

the Croatian Defence Forces in B&H, one chain leading directly to Zagreb Headquarters.

[32] "Although the international community and media have focused on the evil of Serbian aggression in the name of 'greater Serbia', memories of past glories mingle with present aspirations in Croatia as well. In his interview with Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, Steve Coll describes the picture of King Tomislav in battle armor above Tudjman's desk and the picture in the lobby of decapitated Turkish Muslims, as Croatian knights ride through a conquered village beneath angels carrying a banner that reads 'Glory and Victory'; both conjure up images of past glories." (Remington 1997: 262).

Chapter 8

Civil-Military Relations in the Third Yugoslavia

8.1. Military Traditions of the Serbs

The "boundaries between myth and history are not clear" (Overing 1997: 1), as the Serbian case illustrates. A study of the Serbs' military traditions has to include both the real and mythical aspects of history and collate them with care. Two opposed and equally exaggerated perceptions are dominant: they are perceived as either "heavenly people" or the "devil's seed". The "richness" of a history (usually seen as one of wars and pogroms) as well as the persistency of the myths may lead to a false determinism in regard to the modern history of Serbia/Yugoslavia, making their military virtues—or, rather, belligerency—an easy explanation for the current developments.

Today's Yugoslav military ethos is influenced by the interpretations its role given by international and domestic factors. More importantly, its identity and legitimacy are being created in the confusing interplay of old and recently created myths. It is almost impossible to define precisely the historical background of the Army of the so-called Third Yugoslavia, which consists of two republics with two titular nations with very close but also different historical backgrounds. The history of the Serbian nation, is also extremely complex since different parts of it were living in different territories under different rulers, not to speak of the mass migrations. FR Yugoslavia still claims its statehood continuity not only from the First and Second Yugoslavia, but also from the pre decessors of its constituents.

Despite Serb efforts to prove that they are "the world's most ancient people", our knowledge of early South Slav history (before the sixth century) is quite poor until their invasions of the Balkans became reflected in Byzantine sources. Serbs may also be ambivalent about their distinctiveness from the other Slavs in the Balkans. Based on Vuk Karadzic's "linguistic" Serbianism, the modern national ideology relied on the assumption that regardless of religious affiliation (of the

Catholic Croats and Bosnian Muslims) they all belonged to the same people, Serbia being seen as the Piedmont in their process of unification. Throughout the centuries the Serb-populated areas were changing due to the extraordinary historical developments that caused mass migrations. As for the Serbian state, its size as well as its location has always been shaped by military power, although it was the Serbian church, rather than the military, that was always the most focal point of statehood and nationhood. Whenever the territory was scattered or the state discontinued, the memories of the statehood survived thanks to the religion, which was the focus of the hopes for resurrection of the lost state and freedom.

The historical continuum of Serbian history may be "divided" into two long periods, at least for purpose of analysing civil-military relations. The first period includes the settlement and the medieval state, while the second one begins with the re-establishment of the state and the army in the nineteenth century. The first period is of critical importance although filled with legends and mysticism. The second one resembles a self-propelling prophecy. Myths are not purely abstract notions but evolve as a result of real social processes, but the converse may also be true: social developments are sometimes influenced by the practical use of the old myths as a justification for political mobilisation.

The Serbs are often referred to as the only people in the world who build self-glorifying myths around defeats. This theme includes the apotheosis of the Serbs' migrations and tremendous sufferings, the only bright memory being the "Golden Age", i.e. the period of the rise of the medieval state and the Church. The state-building process was finally completed in the twelfth century under the Nemanja dynasty on the territory that would later be known as Old Serbia (occupying Raška, Kosovo, Metohija and northern Macedonia). In the fourteenth century Emperor Dušan made Serbia a major power, stretching "from the Danube to the Peloponnese". This was the only period of greatness from which Serbs could draw inspiration. Stefan Nemanja and his son, known as St Sava, were canonised, making the royal Nemanja family immortalised. The sanctification of the rulers, but also of the State, was to proclaim their divine right over the territory. The cradle of the Serbian statehood was in Kosovo.

The glory of the Nemanja rule is overshadowed by its downfall. Although in reality it was a gradual process, the turning point is identified with the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. The loss of statehood has been pictured in the legend that King Lazar sacrificed the Empire on

Earth for the Empire in Heaven. Having fought bravely against the overpowering military of the infidels (Turks), Serbs lost the battle but not their dignity. The best illustration is the record of King Lazar's speech to his men made by the Patriarch Danilo in the aftermath of the Battle of Kosovo:

> You, oh comrades and brothers, lords and nobles, soldiers and vojvodas—great and small. You yourselves are witnesses and observers of the great goodness God has given us in this life … But if the sword, if wounds, or if darkness of death comes to us, we accept them sweetly for Christ and for the godliness of our homeland. It is better to die in battle than to live in shame. Better it is for us to accept death from the sword in battle than to offer our shoulders to the enemy. We have lived a long time for the world; in the end we seek to accept the martyr's struggle and to live forever in heaven… Suffering begets glory and labors lead to peace (Judah 1997: 29-30).

The Kosovo myth relativises Defeat through the relativisation of Death itself. In this belief, Defeat might bring terrible losses but it does not mean The End; even after Death there is Hope—in resurrection. In the following "dark centuries" under Ottoman occupation Serbs were hoping and struggling for the resurrection of their Old State. The concept of Victory arising out of Defeat could provide meaning to slavery, misery and calamities suffered by the Serbs.

In reality the Battle of Kosovo was not that decisive: the final downfall happened 70 years later at the Battle of Smederevo in 1459. King Lazar's glory was a result of the Church eulogies and the epic poetry created preserved the memories of statehood. In fact, Lazar's 14-year-old daughter was sent to the Sultan's harem while her brother Stefan was fighting along with the Sultan's troops (Judah 1997: 32-33). The Kosovo myth is crucial for the understanding of the Serbs' "historical mission", one central element being the picture of Serbia as *antemurale christianitatis* (which, as revious chapters show, is also claimed by other Balkan nations). It also includes the belief that one's nation can claim a special moral superiority for having suffered.

To add complexity, there is also another aspect of defeat and victory that we may call a *David and Goliath* attitude, where Serbia has always been fighting military superior powers (Ottomans, Austria-Hungary, Germany, NATO), but in the end, after tremendous

sacrifices, always victoriously. The concept of the *people-victim* is embedded in picture of Serbia-Phoenix. In this doctrine, collective martyrdom to preserve the state is the highest value and self-sacrifice behavioural stereotype. The legends of sufferings include the mass migrations that followed every defeat, the most famous led by the Patriarch Arsenije in 1690.[1] Since then the Serbs have deserved the name of *Arsenije's children* several times before the 1995 exodus from Croatia and that from Kosovo in 1999.

Like in Romania and elsewhere, we also see outlaws (here *hajduci*) glorified as freedom fighters, while it is forgotten that for many of them the banditry was mainly a source of living. Two of the most glorified events in Serbian national history are the First and the Second Serbian Uprising. The leader of the First Uprising from 1804, Djordje Petrović (better known under his Turkish nick-name Kara-Djordje) was in reality a prototype of an anti-hero and his successor Miloš Obrenović even worse, but both figure significantly appear in the "hall of fame". The rebellion had no plan to overthrow the sultan's rule, but merely to prevent its further deterioration in the so-called *dahias*' terror, and its failure was much due to the internal dissension between Karadjordje and the Council.[2] He demanded a hereditary supreme authority, while his rivals wanted a leader appointed by a "senate". Karadjordje eventually got his way, but the whole affair diverted energy from the war. He also removed the best military commanders, appointing others loyal to him. The quarrels also set a pattern for a century of Serbian politics.

A symbol of the national history is the coat of arms: a cross surrounded by four C signs. Originally depicting fire-lighting flints, they were later read as letters (S in Latin alphabet) and eventually as short for "*Samo Sloga Srbe Spašava*"—"Only Unity Saves the Serbs". The disunity syndrome is old, seen already in the Battle of Kosovo. Treachery was often used to explain defeats, but always secondary to superior adversaries. Internal weaknesses would be mentioned only in the (rare) moments of self-criticism, whereas the sufferings and terrifying traumas were never forgotten. The morbid Skull Tower near Niš[3] is still a symbol and a lesson for the young generations of the value of independence.

Miloš Obrenović is glorified as a leader of the Second Uprising which led limited autonomy (also thanks to the international constellation. He had Karadjordje murdered and his head sent to the sultan to signal Serbian loyalty, thus opening a long and bloody rivalry between the two dynasties in which the military was usually

deeply involved; Miloš's rule actually began the modern military institution building. In the Serbs' perception the military has always been a defender of the nation and the homeland, while Serbia never waged offensive war. Since its birth, however, the military was a very useful tool for the autocratic rule to crush popular protests and political opponents. Only later, during the era of national awakening, did the military acquire the (external) national liberation function.

It was Miloš's son, Prince Mihajlo Obrenović, who organised a regular army (and aimed at a South Slav federation), the first ruler to incite the idea of a national liberation war against the Turks,[4] which goal, however, was seen to exclude any political opposition, so he subordinated to himself the legislative, executive and judicial powers. After Mihailo's assassination the throne went to the minor Milan Obrenović in the first series of praetorian actions and direct military interference in politics. The rulers established themselves by naked force through military coups or with military support—and usually ended the same way. The coup of 1903 had a lasting influence, making the army a powerful political force and making its rivals fear for their lives.[5] That it was made by junior officers also demonstrated a weakness in the army hierarchy.

By a selective collation of events, history is perceived as a series of wars imposed on the peace-loving and proud Serbs. Even the First Balkan War (generally seen as a liberation war) is perceived as forced on the Serbs by Turkey refusing to implement reforms demanded by the Great Powers. The dark side of the Balkan wars are absent in Serbian (and Bulgarian) history, including Serbia's expansive moves towards northern Albania and Macedonia.[6] In the former case, Serbian army was allegedly only helping the Montenegrins, and in the latter protecting Macedonia from the Bulgarians (Stojanović 1999).

The First World War story contains all the important elements of the old myths: indomitable spirit against superior power(s); heroic resistance and catastrophic defeat; national martyrdom; and resurrection and glory. Their resistance also provided a fertile basis for international stereotypes of Serbs that prevail until today: as at the same time heroic and noble (the Eutente)—and barbarous and bellicose savages[7] (the Central Powers). Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia under the ominous slogan of "*Serbien muss Sterbien*" (Serbia must die).

The Serbian perception of the war is mixes "earthly" and "heavenly" elements while locating Serbia in the centre of world history. Retreat and exile are not the same as defeat—they are

temporary but unavoidable elements in the circle of life and death; war is seen as a collective fate and the sufferings inevitable. For different reasons (military actions, reprisals, epidemics, poverty etc.) Serbia lost a quarter of its pre-war population (as did Montenegro) and half of its pre-war resources. Serbia resembled a collective Medea sacrificing her own children. This is illustrated by a letter from a Serbian mother to her peasant son, a prisoner in Austria:

> I suppose that if they took you prisoner, it was because you were wounded and not able to defend yourself. But if you surrendered without being wounded, my son, never return home. You would defile the village, which has sacrificed on the altar of our Fatherland 83 heroes out of the 120 who were called up. Your brother Milan fell at Rudnik. He must have been happy to see his old king firing a rifle in the front line (Laffan 1989: 265).

The end of the war brought a reward—the resurrected Serbian (and by its name, Croat and Slovene) state was bigger than ever. Since then the military has always been identified with the people and its self-image as unconquerable and just. Serbian history may make the notion of civilian control appear incompatible with the virtuous nature of the military. On the other hand, the militant policy of civilian politicians prepares mythical roles for the military. This symbiosis appears to be a long-term facet of Serbian politics.

8.2. Military Traditions of the Montenegrins

The ongoing debate shows that the issue of Montenegrin identity is still open while the process of formation of national identity is underway. They are traditionally seen as descendants of the Serb tribes who retreated to the "Black Mountains" after the Ottoman invasion, as the "freedom-loving mountain Serbs" (Treadway 1997: 22; Remington 1996: 154) or the "Serb Sparta" (Banac 1988: 44). Related views see Montenegrins as "refugee area warriors" or "risk-takers" who chose independence to subjugation by Turks (Boehm 1983: 130-41).

Yet, Montenegrins are as anxious as others to differentiate themselves from neighbouring populations, e.g. by insisting on different origin and state traditions. A recent theory claims that the Montenegrins arrived with the first wave of Slav migration, while the Croats and the Serbs came a century later. They are unique by being an ethnic mix of native Illyrians, Romans and Slavs, the so-called

Dukljan's Slavs (Živković 1989: 134). Religious specificity is achieved by having belonged to the Catholic Church before being forced into Orthodoxy by the Serbs (Nemanjas). A racial theory of a separate nationhood was defined by Montenegrin federalists in the 1920s: they could not be Serbs because their origin was not even Slavic (Drljevic 1944: 290).

The first Montenegrin state was created in the ninth century under the name of Duklja (Dolcea).[8] One thousand years of state tradition and having the longest history of freedom among all the Balkan peoples are arguments from the protagonists of independence from FR Yugoslavia, who feel that their history has often been falsified and stolen by the Serbs. The ongoing process of "invention of traditions" has a different course than in the other Balkan states since there is an approximal equilibrium between the "pro-Serb" and "non-Serb" wings.

While seeing themselves as belonging to the same ethnicity, Montenegrins combined a "little-brother complex" with a self-perception as the spiritual driving force of the Serbs, as not just belonging to but indeed leading the Serbian people. It is then important to portray a Montenegrin state and an autocephalous church as antedating the Serbian ones.

Much is also made of all prominent Serbian leaders being of Montenegrin origin: the founder of the medieval kingdom Stefan I Nemanja, the leaders of the two Serbian Uprisings, Milošević. The most prominent Montenegrin, Petar Petrović Njegoš, considered himself a Serb and whole-heartedly accepted the Serbian national programme *Načertanije*. The last Montenegrin king Nikola had a vision of his state as a Piedmont in Pan-Serbianism.

The myths of identity, military glory and tradition of independence have developed separate national awareness (whether "intra-Serb" or "non-Serb") and specific political institutions. Montenegrins' perception of their national and military history resembles that of the Serbs:

> It is the product of a unique history that has contributed to the formation of a national psyche where past and present merge in an often boastful and self congratulatory mélange of fact and mythology. Centuries of dogged resistance to Ottoman domination have given birth to a culture permeated by a heroic ethos constructed from the sometimes fictionalized, and frequently embellished, accounts of a prolonged struggle

for autonomy, a struggle immortalized in the epic poetry with which every Montenegrin is familiar (Simic 1997: 113).

Montenegrins shared historical myths and traumas with Serbia. The influence of the Kosovo myth has been persistent, including the "heavenly" and "earthly" aspects King Nikola declared in 1910:

> Deep are the foundations of this renewed kingdom of ours. They descend to the old Zetan kings Vojislav, Mihailo and Bodin. Time had been destroying only what had been on this earth, but not what had been built into it, what had been planted in the hearts of the freedom-loving mountaineers of these mountains. And this no strong man could destroy. We started building on those deep foundations. And today, here is our old kingdom glistening under the heavenly sun![9]

Three factors that have been given various relative weights supported the long independence of Montenegro: the inhospitable character of the terrain, the obdurate resistance and the skilful use of diplomatic ties with Venice. Montenegro has a terrain where "a small army is beaten, a large one dies of starvation":

> Montenegro is a wild tangle of barren hills with very few fertile valleys, a country that owed its liberty to the harshness of its psychical features. In fact, a popular story has it that when God was creating the world He brought the mountains along in a sack. By some accident the sack burst, and the mountains poured out higgledy-piggledy on to Montenegro (Laffan 1989: 45).

Montenegro was indeed an object of several attacks but never had such a geo-strategic importance that Turks would invest major efforts in conquering it. As for the obdurate resistance of the Montenegrins for more than 400 years, the heroic fighting was sometimes against the Turks, but often used more profitably, banditry was almost a national industry. The specific environment with its isolation and remoteness contributed to the creation of a militarised society, a special code of honour and heroic values, blood feuds etc., where clan and religious loyalties were imperative. In their external relations, the Montenegrins were occasionally allied with Turkey against Venice, but usually the other way around fighting against Islam.

After the demise of the Crnojević dynasty in 1516, Montenegro became a theocratic state ruled by prince/bishops called *vladike*. This shift in the constitution of the state enchanced its chances as an independent state by giving it increased cohesion. Since the loyalty of minor chieftains and of the peasantry to their rulers had been unstable, the position of *vladika* brought stability, the tight link between church and state defining an institutionalised form of succession, while excluding compromising alliances with the Turks.

The most common image of "small Montenegro" is as a victim state, whose survival is seen as a miracle. This underestimates its close relationship to different allies. The correspondence of Montenegrin rulers with Turks, Venetians or Russians shows that this "small, proud and independent" country behaved similarly to other client states. Protection and financial support from a powerful ally was seen as crucial, while its geographic remoteness guaranteed against internal interference.

Prince Danilo II established compulsory military service by the mid-nineteenth century. The decline of the Ottoman state was increasing while Montenegro had found in Russia a powerful new patron to replace the extinct Venice. Its military ambitions increased towards state independence combined with territorial ambitions, in particular access to the Adriatic Sea. After its joining the Serbs in the war against Turkey in 1876 the Congress of Berlin in 1878 virtually doubled its area and, for the first time, defined its borders in an international treaty which gave it access to the sea at Antivari (modern Bar) and Dulcigno (Ulcinj). It became far more open to Western Europe and internal pressures for modernisation of the constitution rapidly increased. A parliamentary system was introduced in 1905, but Prince (from 1910: King) Nikola's autocratic disposition engendered frequent conflict between parliament and the crown.

On the eve of the Balkan wars the Montenegrin military saw a deep gap between the military staff educated in Italy and that educated in Russia. The top brass consisted of incompetent, badly educated officers, King Nikola promoting his own relatives or politically loyal people to the top military posts. Nevertheless, Montenegro had been preparing for the final clash and joined the Balkan League with the hidden agenda to make territorial gains. The heroic and honourable army ethos was sullied by the crimes against the civilian Muslim and Albanian population, never publicly admitted. By the Treaty of Bucharest in 1913, Montenegro expanded to get a common frontier with Serbia, while doubling its population.

Montenegro took Serbia's side in the First World War and suffered the greatest proportionate loss of life among all states. In the last war waged by the army of independent Montenegro, it played a Thermopyle role: its ferocious stand at Mojkovac in December 1915 prevented the Austrians from closing the bag around the Serbian army, which could escape to the Adratic and Entente ships and eventually roll back the Austrians at the Saloniki front. Montenegro then capitulated in January 1916 and King Nikola escaped. In November 1918 the Assembly in Cetinje deposed the king and announced the union of the Serbian and Montenegrin states, which immediately joined the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. Although defeated, Montenegro thus found itself on the victorious side. Paradoxically, the price of victory was the loss of state and national identity. Formally it was the end of the existence of Montenegro's military but it was not the end of the military traditions. There was one civil war about independence in the years after the union and another was a component of the Yugoslav Armageddon of 1941-45.

8.3. First Yugoslavia and the Army: Different Perspectives

The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was born out of war in 1918. Members of "victorious" and "defeated" nations together, the creation was burdened with comparisons of casualties and sacrifices for a long time. Some commentators (Čavoški 1989) see the eventual Serbian military victory in the First World War as necessary for the unification, but the sacrifice contributions were unequally distributed.[10] It was a tragic experience for all nations of would-be Yugoslavia but the heritages they brought into it were different.

The constitution was a crucial conflict issue in the state-building agenda (Remington 1997: 263). The Serbs wanted a centralised state, while the Slovenes and Croats preferred a confederation, or at least equal status. Serb ideology about national separation was the *spiritus movens* for many aspects of the unification, and saw the Yugoslav framework as the best solution. The new state could be seen as a "Greater Serbia", but the Serbs genuinely believed that they had liberated the Croats and Slovenes from the Habsburg yoke (Zametica 1992: 7).

> The Serbian Radicals and much of the political elite in Serbia, citing Serbia's enormous sacrifices during the war (including the loss of one-fourth of its population and 40 percent of its army) treated the new lands as conquered provinces annexed to Serbia. The Serbian regime's attitude also undoubtedly derived from the demographics of the new state, 65 percent of whose population was located in the Austro-Hungarian lands. A fear of being swamped by the more populous and economically developed Habsburg lands was thus not without foundation. The conquérant attitude was reinforced by the fact that the empire's South Slavs had fought in the Austro-Hungarian army against Serbia and the Allies during the war. Thus, for example, most officials and officers who had served Austria-Hungary were barred from serving the new state, and those who were allowed were accepted in a humiliating way (Gagnon).

"Serbian Yugoslavness" eventually provoked anti-Yugoslavness and anti-Serb sentiments. Even among the Serbs truth and fallacy were mixed. The truth was that finally Serbs could live in one state, fallacy that they had liberated the other peoples.[11] As they had sacrificed themselves once in Kosovo to the greater good of Christianity, they were now sacrificing their statehood to the greater idea of Yugoslavism. To some extent Yugoslavia was seen as a loss for Serbdom: the Serbs invested two states (Serbia and Montenegro) and laid the national martyrdom in its foundations, while the others had not invested anything. In reality, the Yugoslav Committee had discussed creating units where the Habsburg Slavs could fight for the new state (Banac 1988: 119-23), but Pašić's government was afraid that these units might have been a nucleus for a Croatian army. The central figure in this myth is King Aleksander (called "the Unifier King" and "the Martyr King"[12]), said to have sacrificed Serbian identity by inventing a new one—Yugoslav; to preserve Yugoslavia he also sacrificed the "Serbian democratic tradition" and introduced royal dictatorship with overt military support in 1929.

The military had a privileged position both in professional and in political terms but the legitimacy problems were immense. While the military's (Serbian) core was officers with a distinguished war record, the army met significant obstruction from Serbs and non-Serbs alike. Serbs were proud of their army, which had fulfilled its historical mission and expected it to guard these achievements in peacetime. The fragile Yugoslav construction had to be protected from both external and internal enemies.[13] The latter were not difficult to identify since Yugoslavia faced, with harsh opposition and even violent

upheavals.[14] The army used to domestic intervention from the pre-war period, now had a simpler task with the "enemies" identified through national and alleged political criteria. The harsh reprisals against civilian populations undermined the new state-building as well as the institutional legitimacy of the "new" military:

> This was a blatant misappropriation of authority, quite contrary to the realities that led to the unification, and endangered great discomfiture, especially since the army applied brutal, coercive, and, as one historian dubbed them, Milos-style punishments, frequently even without the formality of a military court-martial. The most infamous of these was the practice of meeting out corporal punishment by blows with clubs or truncheons (Banac 1988: 148).

While other institutions were created from scratch, the military was seen by the non-Serbs as a continuation of the Serbian army with the command language, insignia etc. directly transferred from their Kingdom. The "open-door policy" regarding the non-Serb officers in reality involved a test of loyalty. Officers of Slovene, Croat and Montenegrin origin had to apply for admission and faced huge obstacles in terms of promotion, subordination, the question of rank etc. therefore often resigning from the army. There was a huge gap between the officers brought up in different military environments and having a different military ethos, ethnic origin and, most importantly, war experience. The Croat and Slovene officers felt superior in educational and professional terms, while Serbs with less formal education had glorious war records from their horrible orderals and would not give up the important posts they had already occupied. Serbs perceived the inclusion of the officers from the (former) enemy army either as an insult or as a sign of generosity and forgiveness for the enemy's sins. A veteran from the Saloniki Front and president of the Association of the 1912-1918 Volunteers said:

> When the war was over we were equalised with the 'gentlemen'. They got power, one could not touch them. They were and still are princes. Policy of forgiveness. Also our priests called from the altars: To forgive is Christian! Thus nobody was persecuted. It was wrong and brought a lot of harm to our Yugoslav politics (Vasiljević 1998).

The permanent political crisis was just a segment of an overall societal crisis. Consensus was as impossible on ethnic as on legal-ethic state foundations. The Western-type parliamentary system moved the quarrels between Serbs and Croats from the streets into the parliament building, culminating in the assassination of the Croat parliamentarian Stjepan Radić in 1928. By the 1921 Vidovdan Constitution, the parliament and the government were subordinate to the king. Even before introducing royal dictatorship in1929 King Alexandar had made himself an extra-parliamentarian force with a direct impact on the mechanisms of decision-making. The leader of the tiny opposition Republican party wrote in 1922:

> The defence ministry is entirely removed from the government and belongs only to the crown. The minister of defence is not a responsible member of the government, but is some sort of royal plenipotentiary ... But this is not all. The ministry of foreign affairs has also been removed from the authority and control of the government. It has been established that during the war the monarch communicated with our envoys abroad without the agreement, nay without the knowledge, of the government (Prodanović 1922: 144).

The decision on dictatorship was allegedly made by the King himself but the role of the top brass was far more significant than it appeared. Prior to 1929, the military clique had acted more discreetly within the governmental structures. For years the main problem had been the internal strife of two competing and (also politically) influential factions within the military elite—*Black Hand* and *White Hand*, the King opportunistically wavering between them. The 1929 political setting made it easier for the military open to intervene. Gen. Petar Živković, one of the White Hand leaders and the King's most influential adviser (Karadjordjević 1969: 423), held the office of Prime Minister and Supreme Commander of the Royal Guard. Military promotions were made on political (and/or ethnic) criteria, ignoring competency and skills. The military engaged in nepotism, corruption and open violation of human rights, seeing itself as having acquired full rights to lucrative privileges by heroic war record. The King himself did not hesitate to use the services of the military circles.

After Aleksandar's assassination, a Regency under Prince Pavle came to power in 1934. Yugoslavia was gradually drawn closer to Germany and the pressure on the government from the Axis powers

grew after the Anschluss in 1938. Convinced that the country's situation was hopeless, Prince Pavle agreed to sign the Tripartite Pact in March 1941 against a promise from Hitler that Germany would not press for military assistance or violate Yugoslav sovereignty. The public demonstrations from 27 March 1941 and the bloodless coup d'état led by several air force officers had an immense importance for the Serbian perception of pre-war Yugoslavia. Whatever forces organised the protests and planned the coup,[15] the dominant view is that on 27 March the brave, innocent Serbia had once more to defend itself all alone against a superior power. Yugoslavs who dared say "No!" to Hitler were predominantly Serbs, other "Yugoslavs" being less eager to defend a country they had never felt to be their own. The Croat version is that the overthrow of the government really aimed at obstructing the *Sporazum* (Agreement) of March 1939 to establish a *Hrvatska banovina* (i.e. wider autonomy for Croatia).

The slogans at the protests of 27 March ("Better a grave than a slave" and "Better war than a pact") were supposed to show the world that a small nation had again decided to die rather than surrender. It was the only nation of Europe to side openly with the Allies before it was attacked. Faithful to their myth the Serbs chose war and death, i.e. the Heavenly Kingdom.

8.4. Civil-Military Relations in the Second Yugoslavia: Serbian Perspectives

By Serbs' perception, they were once more a focal point of tragic events. The myth says that the uprising of 27 March provoked Hitler's sudden decision (eventually disastrous by delaying Operation Barbarossa) to crush Yugoslavia mercilessly. For Serbs it had a *déjà vu* effect, as in the previous war the slogan was "*Serbien muss Sterbien*". On 6 April 1941, in the Operation Punishment, much of Belgrade was razed to the ground and suffered several thousand civilian casualties. Serbs saw a special "message" in the war starting on Orthodox Easter—they were to be punished because of their moral and religious beliefs. Within two weeks the resistance was crushed, and King Petar and his ministers had fled. Rebellious Belgrade saw the first provisional government formed by the Germans on 30 April. The mainstream of Serbia's political, intellectual and religious leadership collaborated extensively. Intensificed resistance in the countryside during summer 1941 called for a change and Gen. Milan Nedić, former minister of war, took up the office of Minister President of the so-called Government of National Salvation on 29 August

1941. The communists condemned the puppet government as collaborationist, while others saw Nedić as trying to protect his people.

Resistance soon reappeared, led by the Četnik and Partisan movements. The communists later one-sidedly stressed the heroism of the Partisans and claimed credit as the first and strongest resistance movement in occupied Europe. Calls for re-writing the war history and rehabiliting the Četnik leader Draža Mihajlović was one of the issues that anticipated the rebirth of Serbian nationalism in 1985. Caught in the same trap as the Croats, Serbian nationalists insist on an equivalence between the Partisans and Četniks that is often made in a schizophrenic manner.

The nucleus of the Četnik movement was formed by groups of officers who had gone into hiding with their weapons. The Četniks became presented either as heroes or villains and their commander-in-chief as a war criminal or one of the greatest fighters for Serbdom. Mihajlović was a firm nationalist with a vision of the future Yugoslavia as a "homogenised" country in which all Serbs would live together with their royal dynasty in a leading position; they operated mainly in Serb-populated regions of Yugoslavia. Partisans and Četniks alternately fought each other, the Nazi occupiers and Ustaša. While the partisans called all peoples to rally around a new federative Yugoslavia where they would all be equal, Četniks had a more narrow agenda. They also acquired a bad name during the war for (alleged or real) collaboration with the Nazis and for committing horrific war crimes against the Muslim and Croat populations.

Četniks perceived themselves as freedom fighters and descendants of all the heroes from the past that sacrificed themselves for their people,[16] building their image around the Serbian myths of death and glory. Yet, their war strategy eventually differed from the Partisans, who employed the Serbian self-sacrifice myth with a clear military and political purpose. After the Nazis undertook mass executions against the civilian population, Mihajlović decided to avoid large-scale operations in order to spare civilians from sufferings and vengeance, rather waiting for the Allies to give him more significant support and to invade the country. Pro-Četnik advocates claim that Tito misused the Serbs' readiness to die for freedom, his motto being "the worse the better", and intentionally drew German harsh reprisals[17] that only enraged the population and brought more recruits.

The war is seen as another national martyrdom where the Serbs were both victimised by the traditional enemy (Germany) and left with

two very important national traumas—the Ustaša genocide (with Moslem collaboration) in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) and the Albanian terror in Kosovo. During the Nuremburg Trials the scope of Ustaša's extermination was classified as genocide but the number of Serbian victims remained a hot issue between Serbian exaggerations and Croatian belitting. The situation in Kosovo Četnik forces as well as the Albanian fascist movement (Balli Kombetarë) committed horrific crimes and expulsions of the civilian population whenever being in a position to do so.

After the war the communist elite advocated the thesis of mutual guilt and glory equally for all Yugoslav nations. A Serbian author rightly stresses: The need for catharsis was removed by pushing traumas into the background. By combining various procedures, the traumas were first modified and made relative. The closing of this problem prevented the recently ended (fratricidal) war from becoming a matter of public consideration. By redefining the situational and historical circumstances, the autochthonous causes of mutual traumatisation of the Yugoslav peoples were smothered. By making them void of any concrete content—by the depersonalisation of both the executioners and the victims—the traumas were generalised. They were reduced to being a regular phenomenon of the anti-fascist war. By a proportional distribution of the liberation and the criminal actions by means of the formula according to which 'everybody is (a little bit) guilty', the intra-national gap was falsely bridged and the trail towards ideological brotherhood and unity was blazed. Instead of de-Nazification, in the name of 'love' among the Yugoslav peoples, the past was forgiven, but not forgotten (cf. Hadžić 2002).

Serbia was the largest republic of the Federal Yugoslavia both in terms of territory and population. The 1974 Constitution gave the republic a complex and unique structure, including Kosovo and Vojvodina as autonomous provinces. Serbs were the most numerous (some 40%), but also the most scattered nation; the "administrative" (open) borders within Yugoslavia nevertheless made them live in one state—as long as decentralisation did not begin. The interplay between centralist and decentralisation tendencies reached a first peak in the 1960ies, when many of the hidden deficiencies of the Yugoslavia project appeared more openly. The "Yugoslavism" of many Serbs was as pragmatic as that of the others, no matter its anti-nationalistic and patriotic rhetoric. Being a relative majority (around 40 per cent of the population) Serbs tended to adopt a state-wide identity in the sense

that as long as the central power was the ultimate locus of sovereignty they were satisfied with the role of one of the "peoples of state".

An impetus to a new Serbian nationalism came in the late 1960s, when the process of decentralisation initiated by the more developed republics gathered momentum, eventually spreading from the economic sphere to those of policies and securit. Many in Serbia saw this as a threat to the Yugoslav project and the removal of Aleksandar Ranković from the top political leadership[18] as a sign of a changed attitude towards Serbian cadres and interests.[19]

The feeling of uneasiness increased with the debate on widening powers to the autonomous provinces Vojvodina and Kosovo in the 1971 constitutional amendments: some Serbian lawyers argued that the new administrative and constitutional divisions of Serbia should be accompanied with similar changes in other parts of Yugoslavia. The 1974 Constitution was seen to discriminate against Serbia, which became constitutionally singular, with decision-making complicated by the autonomous provinces' structures, while 40 per cent of Serbs in Yugoslavia came outside the jurisdiction of the Serbian republic. At one point Yugoslavia ceased to be the perfect solution for their national question.

Serbs and Montenegrins were over-represented in the Yugoslav Peoples' Army, despite its ambitions of inter-ethnic balance. In 1983 Serbs made up more than 57 per cent of the YPA officer corps; an even higher percentage of Serbs was reportedly found in the high command positions. Moreover, virtually every former federal secretary for national defence or chief of the YPA General Staff was a Serb.

Given the extraordinary traditions, the military profession had always been honourable and prestigious in Serbia, but other factors contributed. Serbia had many undeveloped regions where the military profession altracted the lower and middle social clases, and this was equally true for almost all the Serb-populated regions all over Yugoslavia. Actually, it was the Montenegrins and not the Serbs who were the most over-represented nation, making up over 10 per cent of the officer corps but only 3 per cent of the total population; and as many as 19 per cent of the generals in the YPA were Montenegrin. The most ambiguous category was the group of officers who declared themselves as Yugoslavs. Some of them were really pro-Yugoslav, while for some Yugoslavism was only a pragmatic choice, whether as a safe shelter for hidden nationalism or an opportunity to gain on the basis of ethno-political correctness. Yugoslavism was both promoted

and the opposite. The young cadres' identity had been shaped by suppressing their ethnic identity and filling them with Yugoslav ideas. The moment they were to compete for much higher positions, however, the use of the "national key" provided incentives to declare their ethnic identity again. Yugoslavism was conditional and desirable as long as one did not strive for a higher rank.

Since the late 1960s, nationalists lamented that "Serbia won in war and loses in peace", referring to the unsatisfactory position in the Federation (they were totally groundless in terms of Serbs' participation in the main central structures). Serbia was not among the supporters of the "decentralisation" and liberalisation of the military: the new TD component in the Yugoslav Armed Forces gave the republics more say in the sphere that was seen by Serbs as crucial for keeping Yugoslavia's integrity.

The Serbia-YPA relationship looked quite harmonious, especially in comparison with the Croatian case where the top brass was the crucial factor in the 1971 crisis. During the crisis in Kosovo in 1981 the YPA engaged in a sanguinary repression of Albanian protesters.[20] While this was on behalf ofYugoslavia, not the Serbian regime, the symbolic meaning of the region made the action welcomed by the Serbs. At the time very few cared about the harmful consequences of the use of military force in an intra-state conflict.

8.5. A Yugoslav Army: For the Third Time

The rise of Serbian nationalism is widely acknowledged as a main cause of the bloody breakdown of the former Yugoslavia. Once set in motion, it provoked a chain reaction in other republics with their hidden nationalist agendas. Much of the analysis on the origins of Serbian nationalism was two focal points—Slobodan Milošević and the document called *Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts* from 1986, both unanimously blamed for fabricating myths in order to stir nationalism. Much of the analyses, however, resemble the essence of what they try to oppose, with more newly created mythical explanations than objective studies. Images of Milošević goes in two extreme directions: a modern Prince Lazar or "the butcher from the Balkans". As for the Memorandum, many questions remain:

> It was the dream of all nationalists in Yugoslavia to put their vision down on paper and then make it a reality. They knew their plans could not be executed immediately, but they were content to wait. The Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts remains shrouded in mystery nearly a decade after its existence was revealed. Was the memorandum an attempt to settle political scores in Serbia? How did Slobodan Milosevic, the ambitious Party chief, avoid taking a public stand? Was this revival of Serbian nationalism the first step towards dismembering Yugoslavia? (Silber & Little 1996: 31).

In hindsight, the Memorandum may appear a pale and hackneyed (Silber & Little 1996: 31) or even boring and uninspiring (Vujacic 1995) document, but the reactions it provoked were quick and convulsive. It was a catalogue of the Serbs' grievances seen through the nationalistic prism but it is still unclear whether the authors intended to make it public and when. The rough draft appeared in the press in a mysterious way, which provoked a cloud of more or less well-founded interpretations. Initially the Memorandum was most attacked in Serbia, but a new wave of critics soon appeared in the other republics. International interest in what was considered a manifesto of militant Serbian nationalism appeared only in 1991 and the first translation (into French) only in 1993.

While Milošević's role in the Yugoslav wars is universally the focal point of analysis, more attention is paid to his personality than to the social, cultural and political conditions. Only rarely is he seen as a mere administrator of the Kosovo myth, cunningly using the opportunity to become the *Vožd* (Leader) of his nation. The rise of the myth called Milošević has been facilitated by internal factors as well as by various moves of the international community and media.

Since the 1960ies the writer (and later president of FR Yugoslavia) Dobrica Ćosić has been known as a "spiritual father of Serbian nationalism", but Milošević gained most by the nationalist agenda. Initially conspicuously silent on the Memorandum issue, he soon took all the advantages it offered for pursuing his goals, skilfully reconciling several mutually incompatible ideological elements and political inclinations.[21] An author of Serbian origin rightly stresses:

> Analyses of the 'Milosevic phenomenon' which insist on only one dimension of his appeal (typically nationalism), are bound to miss the point. On the contrary, it was precisely the combination of simultaneous appeals to different constituencies which helps explain Milosevic's success.

Yugoslavia, unity and Titoism for the party orthodox and army officers, Serbia for the nationalists, reform and rehabilitation for the intellectuals, protection for the Kosovo Serbs, social justice for the workers and pensioners – this was the Serbian leader's equivalent of Lenin's 'bread, peace, and land' (Vujacic 1995).

Milošević's charisma peaked in 1989 after his speech at Gazimestan celebrating the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo. Having referred to its values as "unity", "courage" and "heroism" he anticipated, for the first time, the possibility of violent conflicts. If the Memorandum was (questionably) perceived as an advocacy for disintegration of Yugoslavia, then Milošević's cry was seen as a call for war. The best thing that could happen to his belligerent policy was a victory for Tudjman with his openly aggressive rhetoric in the 1990 elections in Croatia. By contrast, Milošević's foxy tactics was to be "a voice of reason" against "the dark and evil forces" in the neighbourhood. It lasted while helpful, but changed when the Serbian regime faced the demands of the internal opposition in March 1991. The Vožd announced:

> Borders, as you know, are always dictated by the strong, they are never dictated by the weak. Therefore it is basic for us to be strong. We simply believe that the legitimate right and interest of the Serbian people is to live in one state. That is the beginning and the end. That legitimate interest of the Serbian people does not threaten the interest of any other nation ... And, if we have to fight, God help us, we will. I hope they will not be so crazy to fight with us. Because, if we cannot work and produce well, at least we know how to fight.[22]

Behind the rhetoric of preserving Yugoslavia, the Serbian leadership *de facto* pictured the Serbian national question as an issue of Serbia being an incomplete state whose national statehood was to be (re)established at all costs, even by war if necessary. The issue of borders was coined in the slogan "Where Serbian graves are, there is Serbia." Somewhat schizophrenically, the Serbian policy would preserve Yugoslavia as it projected it (as a federation) and dismantle it along ethnic (Serbian) lines.

There are many indications that such a policy was not just imposed on Serbia by the other secessionist republics, but had been planned for

years, using revisionist history emerging in the mid 1980s. The new version of history was no more correct than the previous one; it just had a different bias, focusing on the historical experiences of the Serbs out of Serbia. The Belgrade regime unscrupulously exaggerated the number of Ustaša's victims in order to provoke the expected Croat reaction and arrive at the impossibility of living together. Since the project of a pan-Serbian state was likely to be meet armed resistance, the regime needed a strong military. The future of YPA had long been on the public agenda and at the brink of war the alliance between Serbia and the YPA looked like an incontrovertible fact to be met with organising one's own (para)military forces.

The Yugoslav agony included the YPA's involvement in a civil war where all that had been gained over decades was quickly lost. Having been the "nation's favourite", YPA was now an army without a state, or better, in search of a state. The attitude exhibited by the YPA officer corps shows their foremost concern to be the political safety and existential security for the army's members. YPA was the last effective federal institution; how could it switch so swiftly to pursuing the goals of the aggressive Serbian nationalism?

For decades the YPA had been surrounded by illusions about its own power, capability and Yugoslavness. It also misperceived the society it was to defend, the top brass believing in what they saw as desirable and unable to face the reality that Yugoslavism had failed. The ideology of Greater Serbia was sold to the YPA as the preservation of Yugoslavia that had also ceased to exist. When war was launched against Yugoslav citizens (in Slovenia), the absence of mutiny showed the YPA to be deeply internally divided as well as disoriented. Many officers with (pro)Serb inclinations suddenly got an opportunity to act on them for the cause they believed in. The others were in total confusion when a political leadership in disarray could not define any rational military goal. The collapse of the supreme command created a wide scope for arbitrary interpretations of the military actions in the first months of the war.

While the other republics were creating their new militaries', withdrawing officers of their origin and refusing to pay the budget allotments, the Serbian regime did no such move. Greater Serbia was too ambitious a project for paramilitary forces. By hijacking the YPA the Serbian regime got a ready-for-action force "overnight". The YPA cloned itself into three Serb militaries, one of them the Yugoslav Army (*Vojska Jugoslavije* – VJ), the official armed force of the new/old state called Third Yugoslavia.

8.6. Civil-Military "Marriage of Interest": FR Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav Army

Most successor states born out of the conflict have their oddities, but the so-called Third Yugoslavia is the only one that may be seen as a *hyperreal*[23] state. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, consisting of Serbia and Montenegro, was self-proclaimed on 26 April 1992 and adopted its new Constitution on 27 April 1992; both have been disputed as unconstitutional.[24] Serbia kept its constitution from 1990, which regulates the relationship with the non-existing SFRY. FR Yugoslavia was also in an ambiguous situation until Milošević fell in October 2000. Many countries had full diplomatic relations with FRY, while it was not admitted membership in any of the international organisations. FRY strove for recognition as an international subject while claiming to be the only legitimate successor state of SFRY and denouncing the other republics as secessionists. State borders define the territory where a state exercises sovereign authority—but the borderline with Macedonia was only defined in February 2001, and after the deployment of the international forces the Yugoslav legal system was abrogated in Kosovo. Formally a part of Serbia (and Yugoslavia), Kosovo is *de facto* under the sovereignty of neither federal nor republic authorities locating it somewhere between an international protectorate and a pre-state (or would-be state) community. The issue of unity of sovereignty, territorial integrity and defined borders is further complicated by the loosening ties between Serbia and Montenegro.

The federal units of FRY are extremely unequal partners: Montenegrins comprise only 6.2 per cent of the population; and Serbia's territory is 16 times larger than that of Montenegro. Ostensibly, Montenegro is favoured and privileged, equally represented in a federal structure where decisions are made by consensus and the interests and policies of the whole state may therefore be influenced by the will of the tiny federal unit. On the other hand, the Montenegrin establishment feels uncomfortable being "the smaller brother", especially in regard to the policies pursued on the international level by "the big brother". In reality, FRY policies and interests were directed and commanded from Belgrade until the worsening of the general situation made Montenegro behave more and more as an independent state entity.

In the Third Yugoslavia three different political systems coexist in an intriguing set of relationships: Serbia, Montenegro and the Federation. Whatever discrepancies the constitution texts contain

concerning the relationship of Serbia and the Federation or between the federal units, the situation was much clearer in reality, the seat of real power moving from Serbia to the Federation together with the position of the main actor: Milošević. As long as Milošević was its president, Serbia seemed to have a semi-presidential (Goati 1997) system, while the FRY had a parliamentary one (at least in the formal sense). *De facto* the president of the republic of Serbia had a key role, which was also recognised by the international community. Milošević was directly elected and the revocation procedure complicated enough to exclude his removal from office during his term. The president had broad authorisation: the right to veto laws, to declare war or a state of emergency and to dissolve the parliament. His power was thus immense and, to make things worse, uncontrolled, the lopsided balance between the legislative and executive power making the president of Serbia non-accountable. The Montenegrin president was also elected by direct vote, but his powers were limited and under certain circumstances the parliament had the right to recall him, which gave Montenegro a more consistent parliamentary system. On the federal level, the executive power was concentrated mainly in the government, which was supposed to be controlled by the parliament, the President's functions mainly being representative and ceremonial.

The normative framework established its true essence through Milošević's personal rule. With the constitution of Serbian tailormade to his personality, Milošević was quite comfortable there, while *de facto* having a predominant influence of the policy on the federal state. When all constitutional possibilities for staying in office there were exhausted, he just moved to the federal level. The rather narrow constitutional framework there did not prevent Milošević from continuing with his style of ruling. There were speculations about possible and more radical constitutional changes to transform the parliamentarian system into a presidential one or even an open dictatorship, but in hyperreal Yugoslavia constitutional and cosmetic adjustments have not been necessary:

> This is a classical system of lawless political power or, more precisely, dictatorship. When the top power-bearers do not respect the law, then one can freely say that there exist not only elements of authoritarianism but also of dictatorship. When the president behaves like that, then it is a matter of personalistic unlimited power … No one should hesitate to use such a qualifications in regard to our system.[25]

Civilian control over the military in a hyperreal state cannot be analysed by normal guidelines and principles. The big and visible discrepancy between the normative and the empirical mode indicates that the leadership did not even care to present a favourable picture of the state of affairs. As in the fairytale about "The Emperor's New Clothes", the Yugoslav public kept silent about the evident deviations in regard to the *de facto* commanding process in the Yugoslav Army. Serbia (and Yugoslavia) were more concerned with military victories and defeats all over Former Yugoslavia, while insisting that "Yugoslavia is not at war".

Being a federal institution, the YA is supposed to be controlled by the federal organs. The command in war and peacetime is entrusted to the President of the Republic, who is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Army. The Supreme Council of Defence, consisting of the Presidents of the Republic and the two member republics, is formally given a major role, since the President is supposed to command in accordance with its decisions. The competencies of federal parliament and the government were on paper only. In reality the parliament never discussed or decided on the most crucial issues. For example, the Defence Law and the Law on Armed Forces were adopted a year and a half after the formal establishment of FRY (in November 1993). This state still has not defined the defence and military strategy and does not carry out its control functions in regard to the security and military apparatus. As for the Council of Defence, it is still unclear whether it has a majoritarian or consensual decision-making procedure; both have been practised.

Civil-military relations in the Third Yugoslavia were heavily dominated by one person—regardless of what office he held. A bizarre aspect is the collision between the Serbian and federal constitutions in regard to the respective president's competencies. The Republic of Serbia is still a state within a (federal) state, its president having kept the position of supreme commander of the (non-existing) armed forces and being authorised to declare a state of war, a state of emergency, mobilisation, etc. According to the federal Constitution, the President of the Republic does not have great authority, but he is the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and chairs the Supreme Defence Council. Prior to Milošević, Dobrica Ćosić and Zoran Lilić, held this office, their "success" in it determined by their loyalty to the president of Serbia.

Remaining parts of the YPA, renamed the Army of Yugoslavia on 20 May 1992, were very happy finally to have their own state and

supreme commander. The colonels and generals euphorically pledged allegiance to Ćosić, who personified the national Serbian ethos; but this allegiance lasted less than a year until Ćosić was literally sacked from both offices, apparently because of insufficient loyalty to Milošević and scheming with the then federal Prime Minister Milan Panić. The brass had no dilemma whether to be loyal to the "federal pair" Ćosić-Panić or Milošević, so the FRY presidency was—for a while—reduced to a fictive role of the Commander-in-Chief (Sikavica 1997).

When Milošević was re-elected President of Serbia, in the December 1992 elections, things finally became politically and legally clear. He had always manipulated the army comparatively easily, but this now became a matter of pure routine. His first presidential mission was to get rid of the YPA officers unable to make the transition towards the new Yugoslav reality. The first session of the Supreme Defence Council he headed decided to retire 42 generals and hundreds of colonels in the third and greatest wave of mass retirement of commanding officers, justified in terms of "rejuvenation" and "professionalisation". The first two purges (at the end of 1991 and in early 1992) were by an ethnic principle, so-called "ethnic hermaphrodites" (including traditional Yugoslavists) being removed. The third purge of September 1993 was based on a political criterion.

The Constitution introduced a formal depoliticisation of the army and the function of minister of defence is assigned to a civilian politician. This constitutionally mandated civilian control should have represented a major step toward civilianisation of the defence ministry, but the inability of the legal regulations to change the arbitrary rule came was revealed during the short mandate of Prime Minister Panić, who intentionally kept the office of defence minister for himself. The top brass resolutely showed its political determination to remain loyal to Milošević and stay out of the Government's control. Silent politicisation has always been a reality within the YA, but the alliance between the ruling party and the top brass was not built on an ideological basis. The two elites shared not only the same "values" in terms of military victories and defeats but, more importantly, the responsibility for the war crimes committed all over the territory of the former federation. The tacit alliance coined during wartime, called "Hague transversal", strengthened the internal, intra-regime solidarity between the generals and the politicians. An author accurately points out:

> The list of war crimes with which some YPA officers are charged or are believed to have been committed under the Army's auspices not only indicates widespread violations of laws and customary norms of war but also assault on the basic moral and civilised norms. In this fact one should search for the reasons for the passive conformity of the re-named officers with the ongoing entropy of the Army they now serve.[26]

Many officers achieved the highest posts thanks to their accomplishments in the wars in Croatia and Bosnia. According to Tocqueville, wartime is an ideal period for swift promotions in the military hierarchy and therefore even the armies of the democratic countries secretly dream about war. Milošević's belligerent politics gave extraordinary opportunities for many soldiers to achieve glory in what was presented as a "just war". An alliance based upon mutual crimes is also one of mutual fear and mistrust. The swift and unexpected changes and purges in the top brass was the most practised method of securing the generals' loyalty, the other one being budgetary allocations. The alliance between the regime and the YA was built up on blood and crimes, which made two elites heavily dependent on each other. That fact made developments in FRY unpredictable and scary.

8.7. The Yugoslav Army: On its State's Service

Through war and crimes the former YPA found itself a state, albeit an incomplete one. Trying to avoid the Scylla of being a paramilitary force, the former YPA officers crashed on the Charybdis of being mercenaries of an aggressive ethno-nationalist regime. The YA is a military with huge war experience. Most of it resulted in (military or political) defeats but thanks to the Serbian passion for translating defeat into victory the YA has been officially praised as a respectable armed force that successfully accomplishes its military missions. The Constitution defines the army's military missions as "defending the sovereignty, territory, independence and constitutional order"—and thereby as many question marks as to how they were actually carried out.

Officially, FRY was never at war before the NATO air strikes in 1999, and there was a loud silence over the issue of the military's involvement in the Croatian and Bosnian conflicts. In the summer of 1991, there was no mobilisation in Serbia and Montenegro. The artillery men and tank soldiers around Vukovar were not mobilised either, but were members of the "reserve forces" sent to a "military drill". Dead men in welded metal coffins were accidental victims of manoeuvres of armed forces. "Serbia is not at war" is what Milošević used to say perpetually. The process of transformation of the YPA also included the military goals of the would-be YA. The Serbo-Yugoslav leadership was drawing the map of the new state and the military was expected to realise that state project at all costs.

There is an unspoken belief that if it had not been for the unpredictable and foxy tactics of the political leadership, the Army could have had better success. First, the YA was always been given tasks it was objectively unable to accomplish. It was sent in Slovenia to take part in a previously agreed (faked) war, the beginning of its long path of frustrations. When the actions shifted towards Croatia, Belgrade ordered fierce and ruthless (and from a professional military point of view even senseless) attacks on the cities of Vukovar, Dubrovnik, etc. The regime, badly surprised by the lack of enthusiasm for a fight (in Serbia proper), brought together all paramilitary forces under the Army framework. One effect of this was the disappearance of any hesitation in Croatia to rally around Tudjman's flag and strike back.

The other two Serbian armies, in Croatia and Bosnia, were soon formed. There was more than a parent-children tie between the YA and the armies of Srpska Krajina and Republika Srpska, the YA also being the most significant strategic reserve of the so-called Western Serbian armies. The post-Dayton period was a time of stagnation and political marginalisation of the YA, the catastrophic military defeat of Srpska Krajina and the huge exodus of Serbs from Croatia also contributing to aggravated frustrations.

The Kosovo War (March 1998-June 1999) brought the YA back on the scene. Initially given internal (what the regime called anti-terrorist) tasks in the rebellious province, from March 1999 the Army had the historical opportunity to take part in the second biggest Battle of Kosovo—against the mighty NATO alliance the YA saw a clear enemy and an honourable mission. The repeated Battle had all the necessary protagonists: a vastly superior enemy, Prince Lazar ready to face the challenge and the heroic Serbian soldiers. The roles were known and the players were ready to take part. Yet, the new Lazar was more concerned about his earthly kingdom and left the military and his people to die for the heavenly glory. Officially, the YA was victorious again as it was in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia, where the

main success of the YA was defined as the prevention of spill-over effects of the conflicts in other parts of SFRY.

The external military missions of the YA have mainly been performed in a weird manner, by presenting its actions as non-existing or translating its defeats into moral victories. The internal missions have been perceived as more down-to-earth matters with vital significance. Having failed with all megalomanic projects, the regime was threatened with huge (ethnic, social, political) internal conflicts. The constitutional definition of the military missions anticipated these difficulties by recognising the "constitutional order" as an object of protection. There were several flashpoints of potential or active military involvement in internal affairs: opposition rallies, the conflict with the Montenegrin leadership and in Kosovo, the fragile inter-ethnic situations in Vojvodina and Sandžak. The first bigger challenge was the student protests in 1996/97 after the local elections, where the unfavourable results were seen as a political threat by the regime.[27] This conflict revealed the deep political polarisation between the advocates of the *status quo* and those supporting democratic changes. During the crisis both sides considered the attitude of the YA very important. The General Staff issued a declaration on "neutrality" and the opposition wanted to believe that this was a message to Milošević that the Army would not support him. Yet, the "message" could be read in another way: as an advice to the opposition not to use "street democracy methods" but rather go through the institutions, although it knew that they had been created so as to protect the regime. Beneath the surface the situation was tense within the army as well. In an open and anonymous letter some officers said if need be they would stand at the head of the Serbian people and that their weapons would never be turned against the people. In this proclamation the officers also openly upbraided Milošević that he "degraded them in the 1991/92 war, attempting to turn them into minor persons in the country". The authenticity of the document was disputed; on the other hand, no conspirator ever declared himself publicly.[28]

During the 1996-97 crisis three aspects of civil-military relations became visible—the split between the high command and junior officers, divisions among military units, and the superiority of the police relative to the army. A gap between senior and junior officers is normal in post-communist states, believed to stem from the generation gap as well as from their different ideological dispositions. If we stereotype, the senior commanders are a product of the old system and prefer stability to anything else, whereas the younger officers prefer a

professional army and democratic society. The Yugoslav situation was more complicated than this, the senior officers being divided between hard- liners and moderates. The class of junior officers is also divided and Šešelj, the leader of the Radical Party, is believed to have quite substantial strongholds among them by claiming "firm war comradeship" from Croatian and Bosnian wars.[29] His chauvinist credo seems to have fallen on fertile ground among those who are frustrated by the defeat and socially marginalised. The very fact that the military itself is deeply divided along functional and political lines makes it politically unreliable. Not surprisingly, the YA has found itself relatively weaker than the police. In Serbia the army traditionally has a self-perception of being the defender of the people, looking down at the police, who are seen as the defenders of those in power. In the period 1992-95 the Yugoslav police forces grew almost as large as the YA. It was estimated that there were 100,000 policemen and 114,000 Army soldiers. With the worsening of the internal situation (and the obvious disappearance of the illusions of creating a Greater Serbia) the Army was pushed into the margins. Instead, the regime strengthened the police and turned it into more of a military force.[30]

The YA became a paper tiger that could not influence the political decision-making process. However, it did not totally lose its significance for the regime. It was still serviceable as a tool for policy enforcement in some parts of the country. In Serbia Milošević felt secure with his secret and civil police, but when the police were not enough to keep order in Kosovo, the YA got on the scene again. Belgrade could not count on the Montenegrin police, but with Montenegrins in a minority within the military ranks the YA might be useful for threatening the disobedient leadership of that republic.

FRY is officially a multiethnic country and the YA an army of the citizens. Many years of exposure to ethno-nationalistic ideology relieved the YA from any feeling of guilt for its Serbian character. With one major exception, the composition if the YA appears to be roughly proportional to that of FRY, which means that Serbs (including refugees from Croatia and Bosnia) are in a heavy majority. It was, however, a "public secret" that Albanians had abandoned military service; the state organs did not even try to charge them in an unspoken acceptance of the practice of "conscientious objection" by their feet by a large part of the state population. With FRY sovereignty over Kosovo reduced to nominal only, the exception disappeared again.

There is a big discrepancy between the formal and real identity of the Yugoslav Army. The foundations of its legitimacy are very fragile due to the long nexus with Milošević's regime. NATO's intervention in 1999 improved the reputation of the almost forgotten YA however. The public polls in 1999 showed the highest percentage of public confidence in the Army (65 per cent) in comparison to the other state institutions (the President of the Republic got only 23 per cent, and the Government even less—18 per cent).[31] Such a favourable public attitude was created in the war atmosphere that was perceived as an aggression where the Army was the only defender. The time of catharsis has gotten closer with Milošević's fall. The public now faces a new mass media image in which Milošević pushed Serbia at war with the whole world and with itself. The "victory" over NATO meant that the YA successfully protected itself and the regime for the time being, while leaving behind an unprotected Serbian population (exposed to expulsion and terror) and losing the "sacred" land of Kosovo. The officers might conclude that because of irresponsible political decisions the Army's fate, from Slovenia in 1991 to Kosovo in 1999, was that of a loser without any guilt because it obeyed the politics of "move on—stop—retreat". The NATO intervention strengthened the regime and the military's credibility for a while, but the country's future was less predictable than ever and the regime actually lost the elections in September 2000 and was toppled by a nonviolent revolution—which the YA did nothing to stop—when it would not recognise the loss.

8.8. The Yugoslav Army and the Regime: In the Broken Mirror

For a decade the YA has been going through a period of profound and painful transformations, essentially different from those in all or most of the other post-communist countries. The process has been far less determined by democratisation than by its mere war efficiency and its political usefulness. The main characteristics of the process have been unpredictability and an extraordinary dynamic by which the military was caught in a vicious circle. It is now in some respects back in the situation of 1990.

Since 1991 the YA has been trying to reduce itself in accordance to the changing state territory and eventually to adjust itself to the needs of the new state. Inclusion in the Third Yugoslavia solved the existential problem of the military, but opened up other problems. The reduction of the officer corps took place by initial desertions followed by purges on ethnic and/or political criteria. These changes incited

great dissatisfaction in the military with its social status. Low salaries, irregular payments, numerous housing problems (some 17,000 requests for housing units have been stacked for years in the competent office, without any chance of being reduced in the foreseeable future) and various other reasons forced about 4,000 experts with different qualifications to abandon the military from 1991. It is a public secret that many officers and non-commissioned officers have made a living by smuggling and selling goods at markets or through small business in their wives' names. The two ambitious projects for the Army's modernisation in 1992 and 1996 were not only questionable, but even looked like science fiction in the light of the security, political and economic situations. The NATO intervention was a turning point in defence thinking of both elites. Despite the loud praises of "the heroic resistance to the aggressor" and the Yugoslav "unconquerable spirit" the professionals have seen the Army's real (in)abilities.

The Army's attitude towards the regime was always crucial for the Yugoslav state prospects. If in the 1990s the YPA was in a search of a state, nowadays the YA is on the edge of survival in a search for financial support and a strategy, a crucial question being how far it is ready to go in this search. The YA's attitude towards the Milošević regime was conditioned by the entire history of the Balkans since 1991. The YA felt very humiliated and insulted due to the misuses and abuses from the politicians and eventually did nothing to save them.

The way in which Milošević's regime fell down was so sudden and spectacular that it overshadowed the Romanian Revolution of 1989. The most belligerent Balkan people, the notorious "bad guys", the Serbs ousted the dictator in the most unexpected way—by (essentially) peaceful means. During the drama of 5 October 2000, the most frequently asked question was about the attitude of the YA towards the protesters in Belgrade and the other cities in Serbia. The Army's loyalty to Milošević had been debated during the presidential elections, domestic experts making different estimations. High ranking officers could be seen in the public campaign of their Supreme Commander, which might be seen as an indication that the Army had taken side. The Chief-of-Staff, Gen. Pavković made a public statement that was perceived as an open support to Milošević.[32] The surprise was great to many when the Army stayed idle, which was a key factor for the peaceful and bloodless outcome of the Belgrade Revolution. The reason for this is, however, not so simple to explain. It was an autonomous decision of the Army's leadership, but heavily

influenced by an external factor. The stand of the Russian diplomacy against any military involvement was apparently of great importance for Milošević's followers in the army and their abandoning any interventionist ideas.

Like the "democratic opposition" that supported the changes of regime, the military corps is a very heterogeneous body in terms of political preferences. The forces that back Koštunica are comprised of people who are "democrats" with different backgrounds, some of them being in opposition to Milošević's regime since his rise in 1987, others from 1991, 1995 and/or 1999. The same can be concluded about the "democratically oriented officers" within the Army. Koštunica seemed to be the most acceptable Supreme Commander because of his image as a "salon Serbian nationalist". Finally, the top brass believed its destiny to be affected by the deal between Koštunica and Milošević to reject (at least, temporarily) the Hague Tribunal demands.

Not surprisingly, Koštunica met the members of the General Staff three days after the Revolution. After the first wave of euphoria, the public soon became impatient and confused by Koštunica's conciliatory approach to changes in the state apparatus, primarily in the police and army. The democratisation of the security sector has not even started yet and it will take quite some time just to prepare the societal and political conditions for this process to take lead. The analysts tend to repeat earlier mistakes by putting more emphasis on Koštunica's personality than on the societal milieu. The Democratic Opposition (DOS) is comprised of many political parties with varying political visions and democratic credentials.

The new government faces tremendous challenges in all spheres of society; as for civil-military relations the unstable security situation will be the biggest obstacle. The tense situation in southern Serbia, where the Kosovo conflict spilled-over, gives great importance to the security forces. The conflict has a dual impact on the military: it contributes to its significance for the state and in the eyes of the public, while the strict provisions of the so-called Kumanovo Agreement between NATO and YA make it a source of endless frustration. In late 2000 and early 2001, the soldiers were repeatedly clay pigeons with no opportunity to undertake any action against UÇK terrorists. The new government tries to advocate a new approach to the ethnic conflict resolution[33], reversing what the Milošević regime practiced, but even the most democratically oriented intellectuals in Yugoslavia are sceptical:

> Serbia is still under the debt from Milošević's time. She has to tolerate Albanian separatist guerila, to take care about it more than about the lives of her soldiers, to be full of understanding for everybody else but herself. And what is that but a proof that the world believes exactly in collective guilt? Who can expect that the military and the police will be kept together for long and that the discipline will be obeyed when they are exposed to attacks by the fanatics to whom even Kosovo is not enough, and whom nobody is allowed to fight back? Who is going to answer the state's call for limited defence, and to die trying not to violate the Kumanovo agreement? Furthermore, very few of the command staff can be sure that their names are not included in some secret indictments, and that they will not be picked up and send to Hague (Cerović 2001).

Yugoslavia finds it very difficult to open the process of legal reform of its security system, usually seen as a shortcut to democratic civil-military relations, before the federal drama is resolved. Even though the current federal minister of defence is Montenegrin, the inter-republic relationship is still very tense especially in politico-military terms.

More than ten years of conflicts and wars have left deep scars on the Yugoslav society. Both the people and the politicians (including the military professionals) are likely to reach a catharsis, but the question is when. The new President initiated the establishment of so-called "truth commissions" on the war crimes committed by Serbs, which should contribute to a differentiation between individual and collective guilt, but had a mixed reception. The open pressure from the Hague Tribunal does not help the internal reconciliation initiatives much, being perceived as an unjust interference by the "international community" and thus producing a "rally around the flag" effect. The time is obviously not ripe for such a painful and long process; yet every postponement makes things worse and more difficult to deal with. Genuine democratisation of the YA is tightly related to the society being ready to face the horrible "black hole" of its own traumas and the traumas it caused to the others.

Serbian society is still mired in myths: the old and new Serbian myths and the new myths added by the West. The Serbs had already been demonised because of their involvement and the war crimes all over former Yugoslavia. There were political—and even scholarly—

ideas about the need for denazification of Serbs, based on the presumption that both Nazi Germans and the Serbs belong to the same so-called "cultural mode" implying a "collective guilt"—and the appropriate punishment. Yugoslavia has been under different international sanctions, whose effect was that predicted by experts, i.e. the opposite of what was expected by the politicians initiating them. The highly isolated, frustrated and economically exhausted society was easy to manipulate—and the "conspiracy theory" advocated by Milošević's regime was directly supported by some moves of the so-called international community. In particular, the 1999 NATO intervention against Yugoslavia helped to make heroes out of war criminals.

One of the negative effects of the intervention is the delayed catharsis of the society and especially of the YA. The defenders of the country against the mighty aggressors were practically "purified" of the old crimes. The YA is not able to get rid of the old and new Kosovo myths because everybody expects it to play such a role. The "victorious" generals are aware of the huge problems that the Army faces in terms of old-fashioned military equipment, the dissatisfaction of the officer corps and even more of the military reservists who have not been paid for their job during the war, etc. In short, the Army is in collapse and misery and out of desperation it may act unpredictably.

Tocqueville wisely thought that the remedy for the vices of the military are not to be found in the military but in society. This is very true in the case of Yugoslavia. The YA is obviously not able to change itself or to "democratise" the society—it is as traumatised as the society it serves. They are caught in a vicious circle that neither can break. The critical tones heard in society mostly have it in common that they lament lost opportunities and criticise Milošević for his unsuccessful state-building process. With Kosovo being *de facto* an international protectorate Serbia remains a prisoner of its own military history. While NATO remains a prisoner in a Kosovo that can neither be made independent, nor returned to more than nominal Yugoslav sovereignty. Yet, the hopeless situation in which Yugoslavia/Serbia finds itself is more the result of political exploitation and manipulation of more recent myths than of the ancient ones.

Serbia is still struggling with its "split personality". An objective analyst will follow two main threads in Serbian political history. Even in the most difficult periods there have been two Serbias—a "black" (authoritarian) and a "white" (democratic) one. For many years, the dark sides dominated in Serbian and Western imaging alike, with little

attention paid to the weak but significant beacons of hope, such as the war resistance, the scope of desertion and the anti-war campaign run by civil society. The ongoing process of disintegration of hyper-reality leads to the creation of more than one real state identity, and the destiny of the Yugoslav Army is inevitably highly dependent on the outcome of this process. Before these crucial issues are settled it will be very difficult to make any prognosis on the prospects of civil-military relations.

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[1] Enticed by a great power (this time Austria), the Serbs rebelled during the Austro-Turkish war. When the Austrians retreated, the Patriarch led some 30,000 families in exile from their homeland in Kosovo. This pattern was repeated several times, with Austria or Russia as the great power.

[2] Serbian institutions of self-rule included the *knezes*, local popular assemblies called *skupstinas*, and military leaders called *voyvodes*. Karadjordje was the supreme *voyvode*, but he was elected by an assembly. A formal council of twelve was created in 1805.

[3] The Skull Tower, a place of pilgrimage, was built by the Turks in 1809 during Karadjordje's uprising. The monument's "peculiarity" is the fact that it was built of 952 skulls of the fighters from the famous group of Stevan Sindjelić. When further resistance was futile, Sindjelić fired his pistol into the powder magazine and thus saved his men from eventual death by impalement and made the Turks pay dearly for the victory. Hursid Pasha built the gruesome Tower as a terrible warning to the Serbs, but it rather became a symbol for their future resistance.

[4] The military budget rapidly increased to a quarter of the state expenditures, so as to make Serbia a Piedmont in the Balkans.

[5] The Serbian officer corps had been a magnet for poor but ambitious young men to get free education at the Military Academy, enter a profession as officers, and become influential in the capital city. The defeat of 1885 was not forgotten, the state proposed to cut funds for new equipment, even new uniforms, and the army despised the king for marrying his mother's servant. In 1903 officers, led by Captain Dragutin "Apis" Dimitrijević, brutally murdered Aleksandar and his wife Draga.

[6] During the Balkan wars the Serbian elite defined as a matter of survival access to the sea in northern Albania. As for Macedonia, it only insisted on historical rights over a part of its medieval state (it was renamed Southern Serbia).

[7] See on both perceptions Laffan 1989.

[8] Duklja (Dolcea) was established as a Byzantine vassal state in the ninth century in the region later known as Zeta and became independent 1042 under the Vojislavljević dynasty.

[9] Quoted from *Glas Crnogorca*, 19 August 1910.

[10] It is estimated that wartime damage and losses were enormous for all. Serbs and Montenegrins lost 300,000 soldiers and 500,000 civilians were killed out of the 5 million population. An additional 150,000 South Slav soldiers (Croats, Slovenes, and Serbs) were killed fighting for Austria-Hungary.

[11] The leader of the Croatian Peasant Party, Stjepan Radić, dared to state in the parliament that "the Croats were not slaves under the Habsburg monarchy", and that the Serbs "were never their liberators" (Bogdan 1989: 206).

[12] Aleksandar was assassinated while on an official visit to France in 1934 in a collaboration between Croatian *Ustaše* and pro-Bulgarian nationalists from Macedonia. Allegedly his last words were: "Keep on, my Yugoslavia!"

[13] The military's first task, to disarm the "new territories". was carried out as if it had been in enemy territory. Some official edicts even said that "the inhabitants of enemy districts, occupied by the army, are subject to the jurisdiction of military courts" (Banac 1988: 148).

[14] A few days after the formal unification, public protests occurred in Zagreb. On 5 December soldiers of the still active Croat units of the Austria-Hungarian military eventually clashed with the militia and the units loyal to the National Council. The unrest extended to many cities in Croatia and the Yugoslav military intervened. In 1919, Montenegrins staged a national uprising against the decision of the "Grand National Assembly" (the so-called *Podgorička skupstina*) to join Serbia. The main resistance was crushed in a severe military campaign in 1922-23, but guerrilla resistance continued in the highlands.

[15] The communist party claimed that its Central Committee had issued a proclamation on 25 March 1941, denouncing betrayal and appealing for popular protests, seen as the main factor overthrowing the government. British intelligence officers also claimed credit for the coup (Singleton 1996: 171-72).

[16] Their name originated from "četa", the nineteenth-century guerrilla bands that harassed the Turks. The Serbs appreciated guerrilla fighting as a part of their military tradition.

[17] In July 1941, with some Četnik support, the Partisans launched uprisings that won control of much of the countryside. The Partisans established an administration and proclaimed the Užice Republic in western Serbia. Germany warned that it would execute 100 Serbs for every German soldier the resistance killed. Having defeated the rebels, the Germans engaged in a mass-killing, executing 4-5,000 civilians in just one week. The massacre continued in Kragujevac and elsewhere; the military administrator of Serbia reported that 20,000 "Serbs, Jews and Gypsies were executed" on 20 and 21 October 1941.

[18] Once among the closest and most loyal war comrades of Tito, he was, when suddenly removed, organisational secretary of the Communist Party and chief of the powerful security apparatus. He was accused of "bureaucratic centralist" deviations, blocking economic reform, by-passing the party authority, creating out of the police "a state within a state" and plotting against Tito personally.

[19] Ranković's death in 1983 was exploited by nationalists to present another example of Serb martyrdom: a man of strength suppressed by Tito (a Croat).

[20] It was not the first time that the Yugoslav military was engaged in the rebellious province. After the Second World War the Yugoslav regime declared an emergency situation and introduced martial law for a couple of years.

[21] The ability to reconcile incompatible elements and to relate to a wide audience is considered to be a typical characteristic of charismatic leaders. (For more details, see Jowitt 1992).

[22] From a speech of Slobodan Milošević given at a closed meeting with the leaders of all Serbian municipalities in March 1991 (Pesic 1996: 3).

[23] "Hyperreality is a reality constructed and artificial—but with the full awareness of the participants of this reality. It is a reality that exists while at the same time negating (or even denying) other realities, but the fact that the participants (and creators) are self-conscious of its artificiality opens numerous possibilities for paradoxes. Hyperreality is a place (or area, domain, field, etc.) where all the paradoxes meet and co-exist, side by side" (Boskovic 1997).

[24] Prof. Pavle Nikolić argues that the current Constitution of FRY is unconstitutional because it was voted for in an illegal way by the people who had no legitimacy to vote for it.

[25] Interview with Dr Slobodan Samardžić, *Naša Borba (Nedeljna)*, 3 August 1997.

[26] Miroslav Hadžić, "Javne šutnje o Vojsci Jugoslavije" (Public silences on the Yugoslav Army), an unpublished position paper in the project of the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, "Law and Policy".

[27] The ruling SPS refused to recognise the victory of the coalition *Zajedno* (*Together*) in many constitnencies, including Belgrade and other major citites. The opposition reacted by mass demonstrations in all bigger towns on the ruling party's attempt to misrepresent the election results. In February 1997 the SPS unwillingly recognised thetrue results and a wider civil conflict was avoided.

[28] Among other units, the famous 63rd Parachute Brigade based at the Niš airport was considered the leader in sending the proclamation. It belongs to the Corps for Special Tasks, which is directly subordinate to the Chief of General Staff and are his closest aides.

[29] This started when Šešelj, in the uniform of a "fierce Serb warrior" with a Kalashnikov in his hand and accompanied by the YPA commanding officers, shouted on the ruins of Vukovar: "I am not a leader, I am an army leader."

[30] According to Col. Radiša Djordjević, the head of the Defence Ministry budget department, "the police have been trained to drive tanks and use anti-aircraft guns. A multiple rocket launcher was also being built specially for the police." Cited by *Vreme*, 1 February 1997.

[31] Quoted from the report on the 1999 public opinion poll of the Center for Public Opinion Research, Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade.

[32] "We will not allow anyone to steal freedom and the fatherland from us in a cheap, perfidious and corrupt way... We, as soldiers, understand that September 24 is D-day when we must once again be in the front line, because again we will say that members of the Army will do everything to protect freedom and our country" (Quoted by Reuters, September 17, 2000).

[33] Immediately upon the worsening of the security situation in southern Serbia, President Koštunica made an appeal to the public to abstain from hate speech and war cries, "because this is not time for fight but for wise diplomatic action... We have no right to war cry in an impoverished country like ours is." (Quoted by AIMPress, "War Games", 7 December 2000).

Chapter 9

Civil-Military Relations in Macedonia

9.1. Historical Background

As there have been many Balkans throughout history, there have also been many Macedonias, the ambiguity concerning geographical and ethno-cultural boundaries more than political entities. Geographical Macedonia was never a contested issue—as long as one does not try to define the outlines too precisely. They were movable and changeable in different periods, but also in the perceptions of various groups. The distinct Macedonian ethnicity still being a matter of dispute in linguistic, religious, cultural and historical terms (Craft 1996), we focus on the predominant perceptions of the population of the current state; those of others are taken into account only *if* and *when* they significantly affect political and military issues.

In former Yugoslavia the Macedonians were seen as descendants of Slav tribes moving into the territory that had been known as Macedonia in the sixth century.[1] That this changed the cultural and ethnic makeup of the region was not disputed as long as the Slav component was seen a dominant. The delicate Macedonian Question remained frozen until Yugoslavia's dissolution re-opened it. Neighbouring countries as well as some in Macedonia criticised the communist version of history. External critics argued that Macedonians are an artificial nation invented by Tito for (geo)political reasons. Macedonian nationalists have the grievance that Tito's policy deprived them of their cherished lineage from Alexander III of Macedonia (known as Alexander the Great).

In the collective perception the statehood tradition is not continuous, but certainly glorious. The Kingdom of Samuil (AD 976-1014), although a short historical episode, gives the Macedonians a sense of identity by being the largest early medieval Slavic state.[2] The fact that Samuil was crowned a Bulgarian king is a matter of bitter disagreement; in the Macedonian interpretation he had liberated Macedonia from the Bulgars,[3] merely getting the Bulgarian crown

since the Byzantine Emperor already held the Macedonian one. The legend contains all the necessary elements of myth—historical setting, military glory and trauma. The decisive military defeat was colossal: 14,000 soldiers were blinded on the Byzantine Emperor's orders, each hundredth soldier being left with one eye to lead the others home. The defeat was even greater than the glory, but the trauma does not seem deep. The "Golden Age" was very early and brief, never to re-appear. The documents are very fragile as well as controversial; moreover, they do not always back the thesis of a Macedonian statehood. The tragic episode is a basis for complaints about historical "misfortune", but the myth lacks a defined enemy to blame for later misfortunes. The legend was renewed only at the beginning of the national awakening process in the nineteenth century.

The insecurity of the Macedonian identity grew after Yugoslavia's dissolution. Paradoxically, gaining state independence affected the need for ethnic confirmation. Having rejected the Communist interpretation of history, Macedonians took a step back and versions of a glorious ancestry from ancient and even biblical times soon appeared. Some saw the issue as a tool for personal promotion in political life. A would-be candidate for presidency promoted a new "identity" in a kind of "reconciliation" of all Macedonias and all Macedonians:

> I uphold the approach that focuses on history i.e. in the past as a real basis for what is happening and will be happening to us in the future. In that sense, I believe that we have to interpret all our existences—the ancient, current, future—through a harmony that can be achieved only through respect for all and everybody ... In this context, at the beginning of my writing on the history of Macedonia, which means of all Macedonians throughout time, I find it unacceptable to fight or argue with anyone in order to prove our distinctiveness, or to deny others' positions. (Tupurkovski 1993: 7).

The "reconciliation" approach could not help much, for Macedonians—as everyone else—define their identity by what they are *not*. The extreme version argues that the Macedonians are a "biblical people" and today's Macedonians stem from a cross-breeding between the ancient Macedonians and the Slavs (Pop-Atanasov 1995: 132). Alexander the Great's legacy would have given the best military traditions, but it would clash with the image of the

Macedonians as disseminators of the Slav culture, and the cultural identity was given priority. It gives not only a sense of identity but also of superiority over nations that were more successful politically or militarily. The legend of Cyril and Methodius from the ninth century pictures the two brothers from Saloniki who "enlightened" the Slavs by bringing them literacy and Christianity. Their foremost disciples (Clement and Naum) were founders of the first Macedonian archbishopric in Ohrid, which became a centre of Slavic culture in the Balkans.

The Byzantines and Bulgars ruled Macedonia alternately from the ninth to the fourteenth century, when Stefan Dušan of Serbia conquered it. A local noble, Volkašin, briefly called himself king of Macedonia after the death of Dušan, but the Turks annihilated his weak military forces in 1371. The long Ottoman rule is perceived as a period of subjugation and cultural deprivation: the Macedonian Slavs, once disseminators of culture and education, became backward and illiterate. Having been treated as *raya* (Christian subjects) Macedonians believe that they could not develop their ethno-specificity, but succeeded in preserving the sense of being different and their love of freedom. In real history there are no clear proofs of much insubordination. A well-known proverb reads: "The head kept down cannot be cut off by the sword". The legend about Krale Marko (King Marko), whose seat was in today's Macedonia, is preserved in the epic poetry, shared with Serbs and Bulgarians. Deterioration of the living conditions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries caused sporadic resistance by ill-organised fighters called *komiti*.

The "real" history and ethno-genesis of the Macedonians begins in the nineteenth century. Despite efforts to prove the opposite, the documents show that even the name "Macedonian" was then used for the first time to denote a distinct ethnic identity. Macedonians believe that national consciousness came late to them because of a lack of cohesiveness and of international support for the national movement. The new Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian states also had competing claims over Macedonia. Macedonians feel betrayed by their neighbours, and the picture of the Four Wolves surrounding the country is still present, even though one of the "wolves" occasionally becomes the best supporter and protector from the others.

At the end of the Ottoman Empire, Macedonia was often described as a conglomerate of several nations without ethnic Macedonians. It is said that the Slavs there were uncertain about their allegiances. A

foreign observer gives the following picture of the Macedonian population during the First World War:

> Many visitors have expressed surprise at the poverty-stricken, unprogressive, unintelligent appearance of the people, and the poor use made of land. But is this not to be expected, when for years the peasants have lived in a state of uncertainty and haunting terror? One feature of the landscape bears eloquent witness to the age-long spirit of fear that has lain like a cloud over Macedonia ... Ask one of these Macedonians what he is? He will, of course, not tell a soldier of the Allies that he is a Bulgar. Nor will he be likely to say that he is Serbian or Greek. He does not know who may overhear him, or what might come of such a declaration, should the Bulgars come back. He will probably smile and say that he is *Makedonski*, which is a wise answer and that has not yet been improved upon by the professors and journalists who have studied the question. The Macedonian child must have gone through a bewildering education in Serbian Macedonia. Starting perhaps with being educated as a Greek in a Patriarchist school, he then discovered, after the 'conversion' of his father and schoolmaster, that he was a Bulgar. Then came the Serbian army and annexed the country, whereupon our lad found that he was a Serb. (Laffan 1989: 65-6).

Macedonians have identified three crucial factors to blame for the failure of their liberation movement: the Great Powers, aggressive neighbours and the chasm within the movement, often referred to as the "Macedonian syndrome"—a kind of self-destructive force that like a curse has been hanging over the fate of the unhappy land.[4] There are many examples of betrayal when some of the best activists were killed by their own compatriots (Goce Delčev, Djorče Petrov, etc.). The national liberation organisation from the nineteenth-century, Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO, or in Macedonian VMRO) wasted much time on internal quarrels and was split into two factions—Macedonists (advocating an autonomous Macedonia) and Vrhovists (calling for the "reunion" of Macedonia with its "motherland Bulgaria").

Macedonia's fate has been decided at different diplomatic conferences, from San Stefano (1878) to Berlin (in the same year), and from Bucharest (in 1913) to Paris (in 1919), and never according

to the will of the people concerned. The Berlin Treaty granted Macedonia autonomous status, regarding it as a distinct ethnic and territorial unit. Macedonia thus left its anonymity and entered world politics (Hristov 1990). The Ottoman refusal to implement the Treaty provoked rebellions. During the Kresna Uprising in October 1878, Macedonian revolutionaries adopted a document known as *Rules - Constitution of the Macedonian Revolutionary Committee*, which embodied the national programme and the vision of a sovereign state. The Constitution defined the aims of the rebels in the following way: "Liberation of Macedonia, of the country of the famous Slav scholars and teachers, St Cyril and Methodius, a country which for centuries suffered under Turkish slavery" (Lape 1953: 257).

The Ilinden Uprising of 1903 remains the brightest memory of the national struggle and *de facto* state building even though it was a military failure, being premature and poorly organised. One interpretation is that the leaders were aware of their military inferiority but intended to draw the attention of the Great Powers so as to make them intervene in favour of the Macedonian cause. Another possibility is that the pro-Bulgarian faction in IMRO intentionally urged the rebellion (whose tragic failure was not difficult to predict) in order to demoralise the autonomists and to get them back to the idea of a Greater Bulgaria. The leadership of the uprising eventually reached a compromise. Macedonia was to become a "self-governed" territory within the Ottoman state, but under international protection.

The Kruševo Republic, named after the small town where the rebels seized power, only lasted for ten days, but is seen as an extraordinary political achievement: the leadership proclaimed the first Republic in the Balkans, established elected institutions and promoted some of the best socialist ideas of the time. The Republic issued a Manifesto addressing all the nationalities living in the district, inviting "fellow countrymen and dear neighbours" to a joint struggle "since Macedonia is ours" and saying that "since the time of our great-grandfathers we have been living as brothers on this land and therefore we consider you as ours and we would like this to remain so". It also stated that "we did not take arms against you—it would be shameful for us; we haven't risen against peaceful, hardworking and honest Turkish people". Some external analysts have read this as indicating confused notions of "Macedonia" and "the Macedonians" among the leadership that only reflected the reality of its time. For a domestic scholar the Manifesto promoted

beliefs untypical for a time and a region which was known for religious exclusiveness and violation of human rights and freedoms. It strongly echoed the ideas of the French Revolution and anticipated the Huriet, while in the history of the Macedonian people it was remembered and included in the foundations of the ASNOM proclamation of the idea of ethnic co-existence. (Popovska-Nedkova 1995: 141).

IMRO developed intensive "para-diplomatic" relations, but both the Great Powers and the Balkan governments resolutely objected to changing the *status quo*.[5] Left alone, the rebels and the civilians were subjected to a brutal repression, which was characterised as genocide by some international observers. However, the European powers recognised the Turks' sovereign right to suppress the internal rebellion by all means.

The Ilinden Uprising has been remembered not only as the most heroic moment, but also as the first in a series of national traumas in the twentieth century. The years that followed spelled disillusionment and trauma, lack of self-confidence and shifting coalitions. Macedonia, formally under Turkey, became the battlefield of a silent war among the neighbouring élites. Serbian and Bulgarian guerrillas were fighting each other and terrorised the population, while leaving the Turkish forces alone. The fierce nationalist propaganda divided the population into zealously Serb-, Bulgar- and Greek-minded. This was an overture to the three wars that had Macedonia as one of their main objectives and would be *bellum omnium contra omnes*.

The Balkan wars left deep scars in the collective memory, which significantly differs from other Balkan nations. The wars were mostly seen as victories for the indigenous populations. For Macedonians they ushered in a new national tragedy. Within the Balkan armies there were Macedonian volunteer units who supported one or the others and the number of men forcibly mobilised by various armies was even bigger. Yet, the historical memory is mostly focused on the enormous sufferings, material destruction and fratricidal war crimes.[6] The Treaty of Bucharest in 1913, which concluded the Second Balkan War, was the most painful outcome. Greece got about 50 per cent of the territory (Aegean Macedonia), Serbia about 40 per cent (Vardar Macedonia) and Bulgaria the remaining 10 per cent (Pirin Macedonia).

From the Macedonian perspective, the First World War had little to do with global affairs, nor did it spell the same heroic national

martyrdom as to the Serbs. Bulgarians wanted to regain "their historical territories", while Serbs were dying for what they called Southern Serbia. At the end of the war IMRO appealed again to revoke the injustice, but the Versailles Conference merely confirmed the provisions of the Bucharest Treaty, arguing that an international legal personality could be given only to states, not to national liberation organisations. This attitude suited the governments of the three Balkan states, who had already embarked on assimilation policies.

9.2. Yugoslav States and the Macedonians

The deep cleavages among the three (constituting) peoples in what was originally known as "The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes" were pernicious to the state-building agenda of First Yugoslavia, but had no particular meaning for the Macedonians, who officially did not exist. The province of Southern Serbia, as Vardar Macedonia was called, had no recognised ethnic, cultural or other specificities. Unlike the Slovenes, who enjoyed cultural and linguistic autonomy, Macedonians were not recognised but subjected to a fierce process of ethnic assimilation.

Macedonia's quasi-colonial status thus remained the same as in the Serbian Kingdom, the state administration and decision-making controlled by Belgrade, which the Yugoslav army as an instrument of Serbian domination. Individuals of Macedonian origin could make military careers, but there are no reliable data since they were all categorised as Serbs. The major post-war change was the deployment of 50,000 troops, which gave an impression of a military occupation. Belgrade considered the situation in the province as unstable and the population as unreliable. That some Macedonians took Bulgaria's side during the war was neither forgiven, nor forgotten. The military undertook actions of punishment and even executions. Forced labour for the army was imposed on a part of the male population.

The regime supplemented its serbianization of Macedonia with an internal colonisation by means of Serbian settlers. Macedonia was not a part of the core conflict but certainly of the complex conflict formation. The security situation was dramatic due to the continuous military provocations by VMRO groups organised in Bulgaria. Most of their members were of Macedonian origin, but there was genuine confusion among them regarding the real goals of their actions, with a deep division between those with pro-Bulgarian orientation and those who believed in fighting against both Serbia and Bulgaria. While quite

unable to harm the regime, the armed actions heavily affected the status of the local population. The VMRO activists considered themselves freedom fighters, while the regime treated them as terrorists. The population suffered from both sides and showed no signs of the rebellious spirit that VMRO hoped for. Reports from that time pictured the sad social and economic situation: famine, malnutrition, a high mortality rate and a low level of literacy. (Todorovski 1997: 134-5).

After Yugoslavia's capitulation, Macedonia was put under different occupation regimes. With Hitler's permission, the Bulgarian army once more "liberated" major parts of Macedonia in April 1941. Many were fed up with the Belgrade state terror and indeed welcomed the Bulgarians as liberators:

> The concentration of two-thirds of the Yugoslav ground military forces, along with the gendarmerie, border units and the para-legal organisations in the three districts of Skopje, Štip and Bitola, had backed up the colonisation policies, expulsions, expropriations, resettlements, cultural assimilation and psychological annihilation. The resistance against such a Serbianisation had been formed primarily in the Bulgarian spirit. At the time of their invasion in 1915 and in 1941, the Bulgarian troops were greeted as liberators, but in the four-year rule Bulgarian nationalists lost all sympathies. (Troebst 1997: 58).

It soon became clear that the Bulgarian regime behaved as any other occupation regime bent on revenge against its opponents. Many organised quisling groups offered their services to the regime.[7] In western Macedonia Albanians greeted their "liberators", the Italians, who granted them a Greater Albania. The only contested issue between the Italian and Bulgarian forces was Ohrid, the city that King Boris the Unifier considered a "cradle of Bulgardom".

Hitler seems to have considred a nominally independent Macedonian state like the Croatian. The Pavelić was the VMRO leader Vančo Mihajlov, but he obviously failed to convince Hitler of his ability to control Macedonia. Today, this is used by some historians to prove that the Macedonian nation had been recognised even before Tito did. Mihajlov is one of the most controversial figures of the national movement, seen by some as a traitor and fascist collaborator and by others as a devoted patriot who fought for an

independent Macedonia. In pursuing these objectives he collaborated with the Germans and with the Albanian Ballists, but also had a good relationship with Ante Pavelić's Croatia.

Yugoslav historiography later praised the Macedonian contribution to the partisan movement. Reality, however, resembled all previous war situations: Macedonia was in a state of total confusion for quite a long time, all historical frustrations and aspirations once more awakened. In addition to the Italian, German and Bulgarian regular forces and paramilitaries, there were many other groups with unclear political goals in shifting coalitions.

Today the myth of the glorious partisan resistance and of the heroic struggle in the anti-fascist coalition is still highly appreciated. That Macedonians were the last to join the struggle of the other Yugoslav peoples is blamed on an internal discord within the Regional Committee of the Yugoslav Communist party for Macedonia and interference by the (communist) Bulgarian Worker's Party, into which the faction led by Metodija Šatorov-Šarlo decided to include the organisation. Recent reinterpretations deny Šarlo's treason, depicting him as a patriot who only wanted to emancipate the movement from the Yugoslav party. The Bulgarian party having advocated a policy of non-resistance and waiting for better times to fight, Šarlo was in addition remembered as cowardly. History textbooks teach that after the removal of the pro-Bulgarian elements the partisan movement flourished with new impetus (Pepeljugovski 1988: 181-253). Macedonia proudly celebrates 11 October as a state holiday, commemorating the beginning of resistance in 1941. In fact, the communists attacked the undefended Bulgarian police stations in Kumanovo and Prilep, but these small and symbolic actions are still praised as a symbol of national disobedience.

For long, the partisan movement was underdeveloped. The first major partisan unit was established only on 18 August 1943, which is today the official day of the Macedonian Army. The same year the Macedonian Communist Party (MCP) was created and Tito sent his aide Svetozar Vukmanović-Tempo to "put the Macedonian party organisation in order" and to organise the resistance. The Macedonian communists were caught in the old historical dilemmas: to join the Yugoslav option, to support a pro-Bulgarian policy or to fight for the liberation of Macedonia and over its ethnic and historical boundaries.

The success of the pro-Yugoslav orientation was due to its ability to use the rhetoric close to the ideals of independent statehood. One of the most significant documents of the MCP, the Manifesto of the

Central Committee from June 1943, expressed all the national ideas about unifying Macedonia, a "Second Ilinden", the right to self-determination, etc. While strongly criticised by Yugoslav leadership, it was actually very helpful in bringing Macedonian cadres closer to the Yugoslav option. According to the eye-witness account of a British liaison officer in 1944:

> The Macedonian partisan movement is primarily national, and only secondarily communist. In their propaganda the emphasis is always placed on their national independence. [...] Because since the twelfth century they have not had independence, the swift realisation of these goals through the partisan movement have united all political and class considerations in Macedonia [...]. Their ideas are absurdly grand. The leaders seriously think that Greece and Bulgaria will hand out territories to new Macedonia. [...] Being a centennial target of the various Balkan forces, they are deeply aware that in order to preserve their independence they will need to rely completely on a strong Yugoslavia.[8]

The second gathering of AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist Assembly of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia), held on 29 November 1943, has been considered not only as the birthday of Second Yugoslavia, but also as the first time in history when the right to freedom of the Macedonian people was recognised. After 1990 there have been more cirtical interpretations by which AVNOJ's decision has no legitimacy for the Macedonian people because it had no delegates there, and the Macedonian communist leadership is seen as sacrificing the ideals of independent state and accepting a new form of Serbian domination in Vardar Macedonia, while forgetting about the other two parts of integral Macedonia.

During the Second World War there was a real confusion in Macedonia, both in terms of political and military strategy. Deep historical distrust and trauma caused disunity among the Macedonians as well as between them and the other ethnic groups. As in other parts of Yugoslavia, the war often had a trait of civil conflict. The fighters were more attached to the Macedonian territory than was any other partisan movement in Yugoslavia; despite the strong supervision from the Yugoslav General Staff, they were primarily concerned with the situation in all parts of what was perceived as Macedonia.

The Macedonian partisans were internally divided as the end of the war approached. Throughout the war the Ilinden and VMRO's ideals were used in a more than symbolic manner,[9] but the turning point came by the end of the war. The Yugoslav leadership wanted Macedonians to engage in the final operations to liberate Yugoslavia, while a part of the Macedonian communists was more bent on the final liberation of the other parts of Macedonia. The first major purges happened in 1944/45 and some remembered the post-war years as a period of terror and persecution of the patriots and VMRO fighters by communists loyal to the Yugoslav/Serbian leadership.[10] The "Brotherhood and Unity" in Macedonia had to reconcile many subconflicts in the civil war: Macedonians vs. Macedonians, Macedonians vs. Albanians, Albanians vs. Albanians, Serbs vs. the others, etc. As in the other parts of post-war Yugoslavia, the issue of war crimes was mostly enveloped in a heavy silence.

The First Session of ASNOM (Anti-Fascist Assembly of the People's Liberation of Macedonia), held on 2 August 1944, is the most important event in recent history. Despite all controversies, the state was born and institutionalised, hailed as a "Second Ilinden"[11]. Tito did not invent Macedonian nationalism, but certainly blessed its institutionalisation, at least apparently. The process of "national enlightenment" was not an easy one. Metodija Andonov-Čento, the first president of ASNOM, is seen as a martyr for having insisted on a clause in the 1946 Yugoslav constitution on the right of self-determination, including the right of secession, for the constituent nations.

Several decades of peaceful development now followed. From 1991 tradition was constructed by re-interpreting history. Except for a minor revision in the 1990ies, the main part of the Macedonian military history was written after independence. The predominant image is that there were many wars on Macedonian territory, but they were not the wars of the Macedonian people:

> The Macedonian military tradition and experience are freedom-loving, non-militant and anti-militaristic, because they have been shaped throughout the struggle against foreign occupiers and riles over Macedonia. The main goal has always been the liberation of Macedonia and the creation of its own free and independent state. It is a product of a progressive struggle, because the Macedonian people has always connected its national liberation struggle with the

progressive ideas, hopes and movements in the Balkans. (Atanasovski 1994: 124).

This typical self-perception was partly a result of the Yugoslav leadership's blessings. Such a privileged treatment gave an unprecedented impetus to a state- and nation-building process that enchanced political, economic and cultural development. Where as Macedonia had traditionally blamed someone else for the misfortunes and eventually developed a sense of self-pity, Second Yugoslavia helped them nurture national dignity and self-respect. However, there are still some who argue that Macedonia's existence within the two Yugoslavias consisted in 83 years of cruel occupation during which Serbs managed to transform Macedonians into their appendage. For different reasons the Yugoslav leadership as well as those in republics treated Macedonia as a "pet":

> In spite of difficulties related to their national history, at the beginning Macedonian authors enjoyed bigger freedom regarding the introduction of nationalistic symbols than historians from other republics. (Palmer & King 1971: 64).

Tito had practical external and internal reasons for the promotion of the Macedonian republic: it was useful to neutralise Bulgarian claims on the territory and population and diminished the size of Serbia relative to the other republics. The Macedonian leadership also flirted with national sentiments whenever useful. It could complain to the central government about allegedly "re-awakened" fears from the Belgrade terror in Southern Serbia. Macedonians could always rely on sympathies from the Croats and Slovenes against centralist tendencies. The other republican élites also found it very useful to support Macedonian nationalism as a way of promoting their own interests:

> The involvement of the Macedonian reformists gave enough coverage to their northern partners, who received protection against Belgrade's accusations about nationalist deviations: the Macedonian case was perfect, since the national element that was the moving force in the process of construction and 'affirmation' of the young nation could not be condemned as nationalistic. (Troebst 1997: 74).

Macedonia was seen as a coalition partner of the more developed republics in the 1960ies. Macedonian liberals held different positions

but were seen as useful because of their strong national component. The liberals from Croatia and Slovenia primarily cultivated economic interests vis-a-vis the central power, while the Macedonian exponents advocated a more consistent implementation of "democratic centralism" in the relations between the republics and the federation. Thus Macedonia, while small and rather weak, became a significant agent in the inter-republican power game.

This republic was more of a consumer than a provider of services, especially in economic and security terms, but this did not prevent critics from talking about being economically exploited. They were grumbling about their position in the federation but did nothing to change it. Macedonians strongly supported the 1968 military reform. The participation of Bulgaria in the intervention in Czechoslovakia was perceived as a direct security threat, taking place at the peak of anti-Macedonian/Yugoslav propaganda in Bulgaria itself. Tito's statement that any attack on Macedonia would be considered as an attack on SFRY calmed down the situation and earned great appreciation.

Included as an equal member of the powerful Federation, Macedonia not only received security guarantees but also certain experience in defence matters. The only experience in civil-military relations that Macedonia ever had before 1991 was from the communist period. The communist legacy is usually considered an obstacle to a democratic transformation of civil-military relations, but in Macedonia it still has a significant national dimension and is cherished as such. In the Federation, the republics could only acquire some civil-military experience through the functioning of the Territorial Defence (TD). The constitutional principle of proportional representation in the YPA provided fair opportunities for Macedonian officers, but their never occupying the highest posts in the politico-military hierarchy was a source of silent dissatisfaction. It contrasted to the case of Slovenian officers, whose always being a small minority never prevented them from playing important roles in YPA.

Macedonians have never quite developed a cult of the military as such. The peaceful way in which Macedonia left the Yugoslav federation helped to preserve this state of affairs. Yet there are also serious threats to the prospects of democratic civil-military relations. The process of inventing tradition is in itself normal, but what is really worrisome is that it is multiple: each ethnic group assumes its single line of tradition, which is dogmatised and extended rigorously in both directions of time. (Troebst 1999). That all these interpretations of

history are competing makes it very difficult to construct a common military and political history for all citizens of muliethnic Macedonia. In that sense, the current Macedonian military stands on shaky historical ground.

9.3. Macedonian "Peace Story"—if any?

Having been heavily dependent on the federation, Macedonia was a total outsider at the beginning of the Yugoslav imbroglio. The dire predictions of many analysts appeared to be wrong—almost a decade later Macedonia was still the last miracle in the Balkans. The historical "powder keg" seemed to have become an "oasis of peace". The last miracle, however, vanished with the beginning of violent conflict in early 2001. For a decade the most intriguing question was explaining the magical formula for preserving the peace in the turbulent environment; once the conflict started, the question became the opposite—how could the oasis of peace slide into conflict over night.

In the years prior to Yugoslavia's turmoil, Macedonia was not immune to nationalist fever, but there was neither a wish to secede, nor to prepare for the ongoing disintegration. Foreign analysts praised it as the only peaceful actor:

> It was not the 'Macedonian Question', well known to scholars as leading to battles between rival experts in a half-dozen fields at international congresses, which provoked the collapse of Yugoslavia. On the contrary, the Macedonian People's Republic did its best to stay out of the Serb-Croat imbroglio, until Yugoslavia was actually collapsing, and all its components, in sheer self-defence, had to look after themselves. (Hobsbawm 1992: 166).

By contrast, in the "family quarrels" Macedonia was blamed for the bloody outcome. According to the northern republics, it should have opted for the confederal solution. In the internal debates, President Gligorov was also blamed for his alleged pro-Serbian orientation and for hesitating to promote the Macedonian cause at the most critical moment. Gligorov and the Bosnian President Izetbegović devised a "Quixotic" constitutional compromise formula in their desperate attempt to preserve Yugoslavia. The two most vulnerable republics were not so much pro-Yugoslav as merely trying to secure their survival. They shared a lack of state traditions, a high internal conflict potential and a hostile regional environment. The proposal came too late, polarisation having gone so far that Serbia and Montenegro saw it as far too radical, and Croatia and Slovenia as insufficient. Although Macedonia was not a crucial player in the game, its vote in the federal presidency allowed the use of the YPA units against anti-regime protesters in Belgrade in March 1991. Later on, the Macedonian representative voted against the Serbian proposal to introduce of a state of emergency.

Macedonia gained its independence as a by-product of Yugoslavia's disintegration rather than by deliberate state-building. Once there was no other choice, Macedonia's official stand was that 1991 was a glorious year, symbolically pictured as the "Third Ilinden". The two dominant standpoints were difficult to reconcile. According to the moderate one, Macedonia had to withdraw from the collapsing federation so as not to take part in a fratricidal war. Nationalists, however, celebrated the death of "Serboslavia" and the final liberation of the Macedonian people. Yet, it soon became clear that the Third Ilinden was not the apotheosis of the final struggle but the overture to a long and uncertain period.

The new state now had to define its legitimacy foundations and historical identity. Even the moderate factions accepted the ideas summarized in the formula: VMRO + 100 = FYROM. The Macedonians were introduced to a new period of historical amnesia and made believe that an independent Macedonia was what they had always held as the only genuine political ideal, even though a feeling of Yugo-nostalgia is still mixed with the idea of the Third Ilinden. The process of invention of traditions was twofold: contemporary calls for statehood were projected back to the creation of VMRO in 1893, while selected historical facts were extrapolated into the present and further into the future:

> Symbolically VMRO may be pictured as a Phoenix, the mythical bird that emerges from the hearth of the enslaved people, the bird with incomparable beauty that burns out from its own heat and reproduces from its own ashes. The symbolism is clear: resurrection and immortality, cyclical birth and death. This Macedonian bird with shining colours has wings that eventually get darker—one of them turns black (Todor Aleksandrov, Vančo Mihajlov), and the other tuns red (Dimitar Vlahov, Pavel Šatev, Petre Šaulev) ... VMRO is the philosophy of the Macedonian existence, the never ending

pulsation of Macedonian independence. VMRO is the very essence of the Macedonian nation. (Todorovski 1994: 293).

Almost a decade later, the question is still whether Macedonia really was the only peaceful and anti-militant actor of the Yugoslav drama? As for peace, the crucial point is that for a decade Macedonia managed to preserve negative peace, but not to anchor it in positive peace. Issues of war and peace repeatedly appeared in the internal debates, and the government sometimes saw war as an immediate danger and at other times Macedonia as the oasis of peace and prosperity in the Balkans.

The Macedonian case attracted the attention of many observers trying to discover the "peace formula". Macedonia's peaceful divorce from Yugoslavia was due to several factors. First of all, it was not a part of the core inter-ethnic and inter-republican conflicts and the Serbian elite did not perceive it as a threat: Macedonia was helpless and the Serbian minority quite small, so it seemed that "Southern Serbia" could be re-instated later, if ever. The second happy circumstance was the tactics of the leadership, which had not pursued any military preparations and favoured the negotiation table; in the worst-case scenario Gligorov opted for non-violent resistance and appeals to the international community. Yet, military reasons were behind the decision to withdraw peacefully: in 1991-92 Serbia focused on the other Yugoslav fronts.

The public was in a state of shock because of the coincidence that the first casualty was a Macedonian private killed during the unrest in Split in spring 1991. However, the only anti-war reaction was due to the government's belated withdrawal of the Macedonian conscripts and officers from the YPA, provoking their parents to demand safe return of their children in improvised demonstrations. Since the officers of Macedonian origin were withdrawn only in early 1992, the republic was obviously partly involved in the wars in Slovenia and Croatia. The final factor that determined Macedonia's behaviour was the lack of any external ally to rely upon. Self-reliance meant strengthening of Macedonian nationalism. The appearance of the new Macedonian Question in 1991 had this new actor to counter the old ones.

The first occasional calls for a Macedonian army and secession came from the nationalist political block. The first party that endorsed secession was the Movement for All-Macedonian Action (MAAK) in August 1990, but the demand did not get much publicity. In early 1991 VMRO urged the creation of a Macedonian army. One of the first who dared raise the issue in public was Prof. Trajan Gocevski, who was then condemned as a nationalist but later became the first civilian defence minister.

On 25 January 1991, the Macedonian Assembly adopted the Declaration of Sovereignty, but still hesitated to burn all bridges to the federation. The issue of possible independence was on the agenda of the Assembly on the day when the war in Slovenia broke out, but the decision was postponed again. On 6 July, the decision was made that "if no agreement can be reached in a peaceful and democratic way on a union of sovereign states on Yugoslav territory, the government must put before the assembly a constitutional law whereby the Republic of Macedonia, as an independent and sovereign state, will assume and carry out its sovereign rights". On 8 September 1991, a referendum on independence was held. While this was seen as a historic day when Macedonian citizens decided on their future without Yugoslav patronage, the wording of the referendum question indicates a dose of reluctance and/or lack of self-confidence. The ambiguous question got an overwhelming Yes because it was seen by some as a clear vote for independence while for others it was not a definite goodbye to Yugoslavia, leaving open the possibility of a future association with the Yugoslav republics. The referendum result, however, also implied the anticipation that only citizens of ethnic Macedonian origin would back the statehood. The Albanians (about one quarter of the population) boycotted it in a symbolic message for the coming years. Their hope was that when Yugoslavia was disintegrated Albanians would finally gain the right to self-determination. The underlying prognosis was basically wrong: neither did the Macedonian republic receive full international recognition, nor did the Albanians get support for their demands.

9.4. Birth of the Macedonian Army: Decoration of the Statehood?

After independence and the new Constitution of 17 November 1991, the first organic law adopted was the Defence Law in February 1992. YPA only withdrew in March 1992, so for a while the new defence system co-existed with the federal one. The YPA took along all movable armament and equipment (and destroyed the rest). Macedonia was left totally militarily helpless and even without any heroic tales of courageous resistance to a mighty opponent. The price was paid in material terms, but the reward was peace. Macedonia did not fight for peace, and, more importantly, the Macedonian army had

no internal opponents in the form of paramilitary forces out of any state control.

Slovenia had built up its military force from the TD; the delayed process in Macedonia took a different course. As the YPA withdrew, the Macedonian TD took over the control of the borders, but never became the nucleus of the new army. Returning Macedonian officers were immediately included in the Army of the Republic of Macedonia (ARM). For a few months there was a slight competition between the TD and the YPA officers. The former insisted on a more prominent position, claiming that the ARM was established thanks to the TD's efforts, and even formally requested the President to make the Republican Staff of TD the new General Staff of ARM. Once established, ARM included without any discrimination all available cadres.

The government undertook more resolute steps to form the ARM only after establishing the political and legal framework. There was no strong national sentiment accompanying the creation of the military. Even the nationalist party (MAAK), which called for secession since 1990, proposed a radical solution in the opposite direction in September 1991. Its *Manifesto for Demilitarisation of the Macedonian Republic* made some domestic authors uncritically euphoric:

> The process of gaining independence from the ex-Yugoslav federation peacefully has cast light on the Republic of Macedonia as a civilised state and the small Macedonian population as a great civilised people striving for establishing eternal peace in Kant's sense of the word: Zum ewigen frieden. […] The essence of the Macedonian peace model on the Balkans has been pointed out in the Manifesto for Demilitarisation of the Macedonian Republic' in September 1991. (Murdzeva-Skarik & Skarik 1996: 11).

The Manifesto was a symbolic cry of a group of intellectuals concerned about the future in the hostile Balkans. Not being a product of a mature civil society movement or thorough political consideration, it found little resonance in the society. By contrast to Slovenia in 1990, the demilitarisation idea was not backed by any critical evaluation of the deficiencies of the previous military establishment. It was more a product of Macedonian passivity and self-pity than an expression of a proactive and democratic attitude to national security issues. Macedonia's peacefulness was more a

coincidence than a result of some political decision, and it soon became apparent that the state had a deep conflict potential but no democratic culture of conflict resolution. It is therefore incorrect to conclude that demilitarisation and making an "oasis of peace" were the leading ideas in government policy-making in 1991-92. Nor did the idea of a neutral Macedonia get much public attention; it was treated only as a nice but unrealistic idea (Gocevski 1995).

In early 1992, Macedonia was *de facto* a demilitarised country with almost no armament whatsoever; *de jure* it was in the beginning of the new defence system build-up based on the very meagre available resources. The efforts seemed hopeless in the face of all obstacles: the double embargo from the north (due to UN sanctions against FR Yugoslavia) and from the south (Greece acting in the name dispute); the UN indiscriminate arms embargo for all Yugoslav successor states indiscriminately; the shrinking economy, economic development etc. The activities undertaken by the government did not convince the citizens that the military was capable to perform its mission.[12] The army was under pressure to accomplish simultanously the functional and societal imperatives, a mission impossible under conditions of trauma, transition and fledgling democratisation.

Paradoxically enough, when it was totally disarmed the country was not militarily threatened. The possibility of a spillover from the conflict zones was great, but the traditional rivals showed no aggressive intentions. The growing feeling of insecurity was more due to the state identity issue. The struggle for international recognition was more than difficult, but the obstacles contributed to strengthening nationalism among Macedonians who could not forget the moment when they were "left in the lurch" by the Albanians on this paramount issue—the international recognition.

The threat of overt inter-ethnic conflict was becoming more and more imminent by several indications: The Albanians boycotted the referendum on independence in 1991 as well as the census; the Albanian parliamentary group boycotted the adoption of the new Constitution; an illegal referendum in 1992 demonstrated that 90 per cent of the Albanians wanted independence; in 1994, they declared an autonomous "Republic Illyrida" in the western part of the Republic. In early November 1993, the police arrested a group of Albanians (including a deputy minister of defence) and accused them of attempting to establish paramilitary forces. Their next steps would evidently have been to have "Illyrida" by force and then join Albania and an independent Kosovo.

ARM was supposed to find solid foundations of its legitimacy in a state whose identity was highly contested in every respect: its name, borders, membership in international organisations, etc. The Defence Law defined it as an "armed force of all citizens". Like once YPA, the ARM was supposed to contribute to pan-ethnic integration and faced big difficulties. For several years, the Albanian conscripts boycotted compulsory military service. The government and the judicial system deliberately ignored this, while in the public it was a taboo. Albanians were highly underrepresented in the officer corps in the Second Yugoslavia period. The ARM had to rely on the old cadres from the former parent-institution and therefore inherited this problem. Unofficially, the "national key" was seen as the best solution, at least regarding the top brass, but for years Macedonia did nothing beyond declaratory statements. The data on the first five cohorts of cadets enrolled in the Military Academy indicated that the problem remained, reinforced by the gap between the Macedonians and the Albanians, with the so-called "question of loyalty" in the background. Ethnic concerns have been present in all debates on the Army's profile. The calls for a professional army were often motivated by its being more easily tailored according to ethnic criteria. In March 1998 the so-called Council of Intellectuals around VMRO (then in opposition) advocated a "Macedonian National Army". The retired Gen. Arsovski (the first Chief of Staff) explained that whereas the ARM, as the military of all citizens, is to serve the state, the National Army was to serve the (ethnically Macedonian) people. Another member of the Council put it more explicitly:

> One cannot expect loyalty from a military consisting, among others, of Albanians and Kosovars. (Vukobrat 1998).

The Constitution clearly determines the external military mission. The interaction of societal and external factors determines the concept of security as well as the roles of the military and the police. That the police were much better off than the Army indicates that internal security threats were seen as more serious than the external ones. Thus the police have become a serious functional rival to the military competiting for scarce resources. Conscious of its weakness in guaranteeing external security and the gravity of the internal (ethnic) conflicts, the ARM was ready to turn more attention to the internal plight. During the first months of independence, some border incidents occurred. The spontaneous reactions of the top brass, "ready to respond in a decisive manner", manifested its inability to adjust to the new environment. After retiring, Gen. Arsovski proposed an internal security doctrine that would allow the military to intervene in domestic riots when the police were not sufficient to cope with them.

The government's call for an international presence manifested a far more circumspect attitude to the security problems. President Gligorov having asked for an extension of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) beyond Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the UN Security Council authorised "UNPROFOR's Macedonia Command" in November 1992 with the mandate: "to monitor the border areas with Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; to strengthen, by its presence, the country's security and stability; and report on any developments that could threaten the country". In March 1995, UNPROFOR was replaced by three separate peacekeeping operations and Macedonia got UNPREDEP, whose mandate was extended by several further six-month periods through 30 November 1997. The deployment of the UN troops was perceived as a very important "achievement" of the Macedonian government, serving as a kind of *de facto* international recognition. For the public it was a sign that the international community was not indifferent to the peaceful Macedonia. There was a predominant optimism and exaggerated misconceptions of the real scope of the mission. As it later turned out, the first more serious situation ruined all optimistic expectations that the country was under international protection.

The character and creeping changes of mandate proved that the mission was stationed for the wrong reasons (which may have been politically necessary), being established when external aggression from the north was in fact a very unlikely scenario. The mission gradually focused more on internal conflict mitigation, but this was officially admitted neither by the UN, nor by the host government. UNPREDEP did not succeed in alleviating the conflict potential, but possibly in postponing its violent manifestation. It was, however, quite successful in monitoring the porous borders towards Albania and Yugoslavia (Kosovo) where were the main routes for drugs and arms smuggling, greatly helping ARM's border units to perform their tasks. In the period 1993-99, the Macedonian military co-existed with another (international) military force, whose mandate was not seen as competing, but helpful.

In conclusion, Macedonian civil-military relations were for many years in the shadow of a more important issue—society-military, or, better, ethnic-military relations. Soon it became clear that this issue

would deeply affect the profile of civil-military relations in the long run.

9.5. Impediments of Macedonian Civil-Military Relations

The revival of the pre-communist military traditions in the other Yugoslav successor states was not mirrored in Macedonia, where the national "emancipation" in the military sphere came as a sort of surprise. Ultimately seeing independence as inevitable, the authorities turned to building up its legal preconditions, the Constitution and several organic laws being *sine qua non* for state legitimacy in the eyes of the international community. This was done in a rush, with no time for a public debate on the state (and security) policy. The fragile balance of the political actors (none of whom had enough power to determine the basic directions) was mirrored in the many compromise solutions in the legal system.

Parliamentary democracy was introduced inconsistently and with lots of improvisations, the democratic deficit papered over by imitating Western institutions and principles. The major focus was on democratic legitimisation, with special emphasis on fundamental human rights and freedoms, and the solution was to copy basic international documents and paste them into the Constitution. There was not much to constitutionalise in autumn 1991, so the Constitution was more a list of good intentions than a product of social reality. Lacking democratic traditions, the constitutionalists had a rare opportunity to draft a political system "out of nothing" by free selection among available Western models. The issue of the democratic control of armed forces, was not given any special attention: the existing model is a by-product of the imported checks-and-balances pattern rather than a result of an awareness of the importance of the issue. At that time nobody knew when Macedonia would have its own armed forces so the (normative) model of democratic control preceded what was to be controlled. A decade later, the issue still has an aura of novelty. The problems are growing, while the gap between the normative concept and reality is getting deeper, the inconsistent model of checks and balances showing its deficiencies.

The Assembly has actually been playing a secondary role in the political process in spite of holding the legislative power and furthermore having a position that is stronger than normal: no other branch of power can dissolve the parliament and call for new elections. Under the clear supremacy of the executive power

(government and/or the President), its normal role has been that of a voting machine for decisions made elsewhere. The structure of the Assembly so far has been a strong ruling coalition with a weak opposition, which led to a disdainful attitude to proposals from the opposition and a weakened control over the executive branch. The parliamentary commission for internal policy and defence has been more inclined to supporting government proposals than critically studying them.

The executive branch consists of the Government and the President of the Republic. The relationship between legislative and executive power has depended more on the current power-holders than on the constitutional model, as has that between Government and President. Somewhat inconsistently, the Government cannot dissolve the Parliament under any circumstances, while the President is elected directly and is thus not responsible to Parliament. An additional problem arises from the lack of a legally defined relationship between the Government and the President, especially in the realm of security and defence policy. The Constitution defines the division of competencies in a vague way, leaving it to the Defence Law to develop a network of institutional relations. However, the 1992 Law also left several such problems open: between the President of the Republic (as designated Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces) and the Government; between the Government and the Ministry of Defence; and between the President, the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff.

Most analysts agree that this is not a pure model because of the strong elements of presidential system. The debate is usually on the legal aspects while neglecting more substantial dimensions. The presidential system developed under Gligorov (1991-99) was more a matter of fact than based in the constitution, as became evident when the new President Trajkovski, an inexperienced and even anonymous Methodist priest replaced the "Old Fox", who was a charismatic leader backed with by popular and international support, remembered as a reasonable "father" of the "oasis of peace".

A cunning politician, Gligorov exerted his influence in a rather informal way; there are few acts with his signature. He wanted to see himself as a president of all citizens, but the opposition saw him as the number one member of the ruling Social-Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM).[13] He had unquestionable authority in the ARM, often even bypassing regular channels of communication. The opposition saw this a clear sign of an alliance between the pro-Serb

oriented President and the former YPA officers. Many analysts deemed the civilian control of the national security system as "personalistic".[14] The 1999 change in office showed that the presidential function was heavily dependent on who is in office. Gligorov's successor lacks his experience and charisma, but also his knowledge in defence matters. More important, his legitimacy is weakened by accusations of fraudulent elections.[15] Trajkovski has attempted the peace-promoting approach of his successful predecessor, but to little avail.

It is believed that in the invisible coalition between Gligorov and the Government of Branko Crvenkovski (SDSM), the former dominated the young Prime Minister. After the unsuccessful assassination attempt from 1995, his influence was gradually reduced by the young SDSM élite. After the 1998 parliamentary elections, the (VMRO-led) Government and the President belonged to opposite political parties. Their "cohabitation" was explained as a normal political phenomenon, but there were several serious collisions on foreign and security policy. The election of (VMRO candidate) Trajkovski would seem to promise far better understanding between the President and the Government, but the Prime Minister and leader of the ruling VMRO soon turned out to be the most dominant political figure by far.

The 1991 Constitution introduced a new institution—the Security Council of the Republic of Macedonia, consisting of the President of the Republic (who acts as its chair), the Prime Minister, the president of the Assembly, the ministers of foreign affairs, the interior and defence and three members appointed by the President. Although not attached to the President's office, so far it has been under its decisive influence. Tasked with considering matters of national security and giving advice and recommendations to the Assembly, it has in practice been a rather "shadowy" institution, actually functioning *ad hoc* and in a highly non-transparent manner. The public has perceived sessions of the Council with feelings of confusion and insecurity, especially after the contradictory statements on the security situation given to the media by different members.

At the beginning of the 1999 NATO intervention in Yugoslavia, President Gligorov said that he had been outvoted in the Security Council when proposing a state of emergency. The Government spokesman stated that the situation was under control and that Gligorov only wanted to effect a "coup d'état" in order to postpone the elections. The public debate seemed unaware that a state of

emergency can only be declared "when major natural disasters or epidemics take place". A similar situation occurred in spring 1999 after several armed incidents on the border with Kosovo, when the President ordered a part of the ARM into combat readiness and doubled the soldiers in the border area, while Prime Minister Georgievski tried to calm down the public by saying that the situation was perfectly stable.

The Government's competencies in defence matters in practice mainly depend on the relationship between the President and the Prime Minister, although routine activities are left to the Defence Ministry. The legal lacuna regarding the position and responsibility of the Defence Minister raises the issue whether the Minister is responsible to the Government or to the President. The 1992 Defence Law implied a closer relation with the President and Gligorov's informal consent on the choice of the defence minister was believed to be decisive. President Trajkovski is often left out of the most important issues of national security, which puts him in a rather farcical situation as far as the public is concerned.[16]

The clause in the 1991 Constitution that only a civilian can be appointed defence minister aimed at strengthening civilian control, but the ambiguous relationships between the President, the Government and the Defence Ministry was noticed by the Chief of Staff, Gen. Arsovski, and a group of high-ranking officers. They proposed a tighter linking of the General Staff with the Commander-in-Chief (the President), claiming that a civilian defence minister was a politicisation of the Ministry and the ARM. Soon after this letter, Gen. Arsovski was dismissed and retired, to re-appear as an under-secretary in the Defence Ministry in a later VMRO government.

Appointing a civilian minister cannot guarantee civilian oversight unless competent civil experts surround the minister. The ministers in fact rarely call for external civilian expertise and the élite comprehends civilianisation as an opportunity for purges and nepotism. Purges among civil servants and experts are made on a political criterion of loyalty to the SDSM or VMRO (the two dominant political parties), but are also affected by the old division between Serbophiles and Bulgarophiles respectively. (The Albanian deputy minister and under-secretaries are merely decorative.) During the SDSM rule two under-secretary offices were vacant after the spectacular removal of civilian officials with the assistance of the military police. Under the VMRO-led government the positions were occupied by people who were in office for an extremely short term

and then replaced. The under-secretary for defence policy was a military officer (Gen. Janev, later appointed assistant to the Chief of Staff of ARM), as was the under-secretary for legal affairs. Asked at a press conference, Minister Kljusev replied that Gen. Janev wore a civilian suit during work hours and had been very obedient, so there was no danger of the principle of civilian control being violated.

Civil-military relations have been shaped in an atmosphere of sharp political fragmentation and antagonism. The party system is divided along ethnic lines as well as behind them. A political opponent is usually seen as an enemy to be discredited as a "traitor". Some years ago, the SDSM government was accused of being "soft" on Albanian demands. VMRO has always declared itself the only genuine Macedonian party, the "patriots" as opposed to the "traitors"; yet once in power, it went into coalition with the more radical Albanian party (PDPA)—and was blamed for "dividing" Macedonia between Albania and Bulgaria. Civil-military relationships are still far from well-defined, since both the political system and the military have been going through mutations with uncertain outcomes. The 2001 security crises found all actors unprepared for the challenges deriving from a mixture of internal and external threats.

9.6. The Officer Corps: Old Faces in New Uniforms

The ARM was recently created, with new political, legal, social and cultural foundations; yet it still bears some visible scars from its parent institution.

Macedonia had no problems recruiting officers, the military profession being attractive among its youth. Most of the officers of Macedonian (and a few of Albanian) origin moved to the republic after the appeal from the government in 1992, altogether ten generals and 2,400 officers. Some were from the navy or air force officers; for a while the landlocked country had a Vice Admiral (Bocinov) as Chief of Staff.

Officers left the YPA with an inferiority complex or even a belief that they had been discriminated against. Others mourned the loss of the state and the military they used to loyally serve. Two opposite but equally harmful forces—Yugo-nostalgia and Macedonian nationalism—have shaped the institutional identity of ARM. The older generation of officers tend to remember the "good old times" when they served the fourth best military in Europe and find it difficult to adjust to the new unfavourable conditions. Some found a favourable ground for professional affirmation in a Macedonian

patriotism that tends to be more ethnic than civic, their loyalty being more to the nation than to the (multiethnic) state. Officers from other groups face even more difficult identity problems.

Constitutionally, the ARM only has an external military mission. One of the most critical incidents happened in 1994, when ten Yugoslav soldiers occupied Height 1703 (known as Čupino Brdo) on the undefined Yugoslav-Macedonian border in what was seen by many as a clear provocation. Minister Popovski resolutely set a deadline for the withdrawal and threatened with use of force if necessary (Dzambazoski 1994). When they withdrew, no one really believed that it was the Macedonian military that had made them go peacefully. Presidential elections were close, so the opposition speculated that the incident was faked in agreement between Gligorov and Milošević. Allegedly, both of them could score positive points—Milošević internationally and Gligorov by the eviction of a foreign army showing his decisiveness and removing his pacifist image. The feeling after the peaceful settlement was not one of victory, but rather relief at getting out of a dangerous venture with much more at stake than the strategic significance of Height 1703.

The ARM is not permitted to exercise any internal missions, except disaster management under conditions prescribed by law, but this has not always been trusted. Having blamed the government for fraud in the first round of the 1994 elections, the opposition organised a mass protest in Skopje. The rumours that the President then ordered some units to raise their military readiness were denied, but it was later admitted that these units had been safeguarding the Commander in Chief on an order by him order through Defence Ministry channels, but without the knowledge of the Chief of Staff. The affair showed that the possibility of military involvement in the political confrontations had not been eliminated. The special units in question were out of the regular chain of command and under another from the President to the Defence Ministry (the Department for Military Security and Intelligence). Finally, bypassing the General Staff might indicate doubts that the military in general would be willing to act against the citizens. Several years after the event, Gen. Bocinov, who had been Chief of Staff at that time,[17] energetically denied his involvement in the whole matter:

> I find offensive the allegations about my responsibility for obeying the orders for mobilisation of the army and increase of the military readiness. I claim that such an order was not

> issued. If it had been issued—you can be sure that I would have rejected it. Since long ago I had said 'no' to such orders. I had no motivation and there is no power in the world that would enforce me to use weapons against my own people. I have proved that many times before, even in the times when one should have courage to do that and to persist as a Macedonian. [...] As a professional and orthodox soldier I have always honourably and with dignity defended the interests of the Macedonian people. One thought has always been leading me—the thought of the Macedonian cause. I am not a machine and a servant, but I am a patriot (General Bocinov 1999).

This statement illustrates the idea of the so-called "patriotic soldier", as opposed to a "professional soldier". In the Macedonian case the problem is that the nation is not seen as the same as (all) citizens, given the fragile inter-ethnic relations. Even some of the drafters of the Constitution have advocated possible military engagement when territorial integrity is threatened,[18] arguing that there will be no need to declare of a state of war or state of emergency if a secessionist movement tries to violate the territory: if the police and other security forces are insufficient, then the ARM will be automatically called to intervene. Such interpretations leave a "small door open" for military intervention in case of intra-state conflict. Since the officers are overwhelmingly ethnically Macedonian, their loyalty in such a case would be assured. The events of 2001 vastly confirmed these expectations.

The lack of a concept of national security has made the ARM uncertain about its *raison d'être*. In 1993, the Constitutional Court repealed the statutory provision that military service was to be regulated by the defence minister and the legal vacuum thus created has not yet been eliminated.

Depoliticisation of the ARM is formally proclaimed, but only in the form of departisation, the Defence Law prohibiting activities on behalf of the political parties and other civil associations within the Army. The *de facto* situation looks different. The overwhelming majority of the officers have a communist pedigree and until VMRO's victory in the 1998 parliamentary elections they were very often accused of being the "old guard". The new government intensified the depoliticisation process, but now in the form of *VMRO-isation* of all security structures, and is blamed by today's opposition (SDSM) for

purges by political criteria. Staff without adequate education and experience hold higher positions, while the removal of the old cadres is explained as cleansing the ARM of Gligorov's influence.

The biggest purges were in the fully professionalised ARM units, such as "Scorpios" and "Wolves", where in addition a mass exodus by the well-trained cadres has been triggered by bad working conditions, unlimited work hours and unpaid salaries. The government claims certain achievements in demanded professionalisation as well as ambitious plans for the future. The figures seem less important than the negative tendencies, such as nepotism, corruption and politicisation, which are relativising the very meaning of professionalisation. It seems to be more thought of as a way to gain admission to NATO than as a control mechanism. In any case, the financial ability of the state to achieve the stated goals is very questionable.

Macedonia had to build the army from scratch, so the priority was to provide some armament regardless of its source or standard. Many of the donor-states virtually turned Macedonia into a depot for old arms that are expensive to maintain.[19] The ARM hardly even deserves the attribute of "paper tiger" since no one has ever taken it seriously and some episodes present it in a rather comical light. It faces small prospects of shedding its inferiority complex in the years to come.

9.7. Macedonia after the Kosovo War: Place d'Arme

For years, Macedonia had practically no security policy, focusing on itself and the urgent problems of survival. When UN troops were deployed in 1993, the Assembly also declared Macedonia's wish to join NATO. Looking for security providers rather than a security policy, the "oasis of peace" wanted to catch up with the other NATO aspirants while needing international peacekeeping presence.

The decision to join NATO was not preceded by any public debate, but was one of the rare issues around which an all-party consensus has been reached, the logic being that small and helpless Macedonia could only survive by powerful external assistance—and that the NATO bid would provide legitimacy in the eyes of the West. The results of scholarly analyses or public opinion polls have never been made public because of the catastrophic image of the international actors, especially after 1999. The issue of the economic costs of the admission has been avoided, making the public believe that the security benefits would be much greater than economic expenses.

It was attempted to create the illusion that NATO was "begging" Macedonia to join it as soon as possible. The SOFA agreement signed in June 1996 was presented as proof of the high level of co-operation with NATO/USA, while independent media saw this as an abuse of a rather technical issue in the domestic political game. Macedonia, however, soon became a hostage of its policy of unreserved cooperation. According to the former President Gligorov,

> The agreement that allows deployment of NATO troops in Macedonia was signed too easily. They enjoy legal immunity, which means that they are only responsible before the institutions of their countries of origin and their own courts. This is only one aspect. The other one is that according to that agreement at most 9,000 NATO troops could have been deployed. As the crisis in Kosovo and later on the NATO intervention were escalating, their number rapidly increased. The government accepted the situation with no objection and too promptly. [...] Having permitted transit and deployment on its territory to the extent that even our military had to leave the barracks in order to provide space for the NATO troops, the question could have been posed. Did Macedonia assert itself as a sovereign state? The situation should have been used for imposing certain conditions and for clarification of possible cases that usually occur when foreign troops are deployed. Our agreements do not assume any compensations...[20]

The overture for the following events was the expected termination of the UN mission as a result of China's veto in the UN Security Council.[21] From that moment on, civil-military relations have got an unusual dimension, being primarily concerned with the relationships between the leadership (and the ARM) with *foreign* military troops, while domestic aspects of civil-military reforms within the democratisation context have been marginalised.

When the so-called international community started intervening in the Kosovo crisis in autumn 1998, one proclaimed motivation was to prevent the conflict from spreading to Macedonia. It actually initiated the stationing of missions with weird mandates in Kosovo and Macedonia. The OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission was followed by the NATO-led 4,000-troop "extraction" force at Macedonia's northern border, allegedly to evacuate the verifiers if and when necessary.

Suspicions about its real mandate increased when speculations about sending in additional troops ("extractors of the extractors") were revealed by the media. The Macedonian landscape was dramatically into a *place d'arme*, simultaneously hosting UN and NATO forces with essentially different mandates and impacts on its security. The demand to host NATO troops was made in the interregnum period after the 1998 elections and stated the price for Macedonia's possibilities to join NATO. It was obviously not in the country's interest to participate in something bound to antagonise Serbia and looking like support for Albanian separatism through violence. Heavily dependent upon foreign assistance, the government accepted an ever-increasing foreign military presence; for a while NATO had three times more soldiers there than the regular Macedonian army.

The rhetorical term "collateral damages", used by NATO spokesmen, actually applied perfectly to the situation in Macedonia. The euphoria that followed words of praise from NATO Secretary-General Solana vanished during the first weeks of the war. When Georgievski warned that the NATO campaign was about to make Macedonia an innocent victim of the war, the country was already at the verge of catastrophe. The government's "ostrich tactics", however, prevented any debate over the price paid during the Kosovo crisis and after the intervention. Georgievski hurried to congratulate Gen. Clark on the "shining victory" and publicly declared that during the crisis NATO troops had been so welcome that they were "not guests but hosts in our country".

The worst and the most dangerous consequence of the NATO intervention were the shaken societal identities. While the government spoke about "positive energy" and "relaxed inter-ethnic relations", internal cohesion grew equally among ethnic Macedonians and among the Albanians in Macedonia and Kosovo. The gap of distrust and animosity between Macedonians and Albanians has become deeper than ever.

The NATO intervention left deep scars on the ARM, which was not only pushed out of the barracks but also to the edge of bankruptcy. The population of Macedonian origin overtly manifested its disagreement with the intervention, while its solidarity with the Yugoslav side was primarily based on seeing the Albanians as a common enemy. While the level of military readiness was increased and a number of reservists mobilised, the dominant attitude was anti-war. On the Albanian side, the behaviour was completely different. In the cities in Western Macedonia there was open illegal mobilisation of

Albanian youngsters, who were sent to Kosovo to fight. In an interview to the Italian Radio, Arben Xhaferi said that Albanians in Macedonia would ignore any official mobilisation call, echoing his statement already in March 1998 that the situation in Kosovo "is pushing us to be soldiers, to think in a military way. We are good soldiers and we know how to fight."[22] This standpoint was repeated in January 1999 by one of the leading Albanian intellectuals in Macedonia, Kim Mehmeti, in a TV interview.[23] Mehmeti, who is ironically also a director of the Centre for Inter-Ethnic Understanding and Co-operation, appealed to his co-nationals in Macedonia that supporting their Kosovo brethren was their moral duty.

The internal security situation worsened dramatically. The police found huge amounts of ammunition in secret KLA stores or headquarters. Facing complaints that KLA had moved its headquarters and resources to Macedonia's territory and that the country might become an involved party in the conflict, Gen. Clark and German Foreign Minister Fischer promised to appeal personally to the KLA not to destabilise Macedonia. In the Albanian-populated villages one could see graffiti such as "UÇK—NATO" and monuments built in honour of the KLA fighters. ARM trucks passing through Albanian-populated places were stoned by citizens shouting their support of NATO and KLA.

The war against neighbouring Yugoslavia officially ended, even if the Kosovo conflict did not. Macedonia has remained a *place d'arme*, not only because it has become a transit route for KFOR troops and NATO soldiers deployed in the country. There are also reports on several Albanian paramilitaries and para-police forces operating in Macedonia, the so-called National Liberation Army (with the Albanian acronym UÇK) being one of the best organised.

9.8. Macedonia's Virtual Reality and Security

During a decade of instability, ethnic strife, economic collapse and individual insecurity in the "grey zone" of Southeastern Europe, Macedonia has created its own "virtual world" where the government is rhetorically concerned about the so-called new security agenda while being itself a part of the country's security problems. In the first months of 2001, new defense legislation and a new defense strategy should have been produced. Unfortunately, a real conflict occurred.

What really happened in February/March 2001 was a kind of "baptism by fire" of the Army of the "oasis of peace". The publicly praised "military offensives" against the Albanian insurgents constituted a Pyrrhic victory of the Macedonian security forces in terms of deepening distrust between the country's two major ethnic communities. As is normal for such a conflict, however, the military (and the police) achieved the highest rate of public confidence among Macedonians they had enjoyed since 1991. Not withstanding their obvious lack of success and of coordination between the military and police efforts, the majority of Macedonian citizens clearly saw the security structures of their state as capable, reliable and patriotic. As for the Albanian part of the population, one can only guess since no publicly by available surveys were made. The (Macedonian) public reacted harshly on reports that the military officers of Albanian descent demanded swift promotion in order not to quit the army collectively (Oficeri-Albanci 2001).

When the conflict turned violent, military force was lavishly used without any proclamation of a state of war or of emergency. The stated justification of this decision was that the country had been attacked from outside (i.e. Kosovo. This created the problem how to explain that the enemy was not another state but a territory under international (UN) protection. The whole situation was weird and the use of military force unconstitutional; yet neither Macedonians, nor Albanians seemed to care about these legal issues.

Interpretations of the developments of early 2001 vary greatly. Was it a "faked war" to carry out a previously agreed division of Macedonia? Did the crisis arise from criminality in which both Albanian and Macedonian groups were involved? Have Albanians employed violence in order to "incite" a dialogue over the political status of Kosovo? Was this an instance of "controlled chaos" being used to speed up the process of federalisation of Macedonia? Was the violence generated by problems of human/minority rights? While these differing views are not mutually exclusive, they do draw attention to highly divergent explanations of Macedonia's security condition and future.

The present prospects for the country are precarious. The political system is in total paralysis. The crisis resembles the Yugoslav situation in early 1991. While the constitutional institutions, and in particular the parliament and the government, are largely out of function, unconstitutional bodies and practices quietly arise, such as summits of the leaders of the political parties in the office of the President. There is more and more of controversial international mediation: the Albanian side calls for more internationalisation of the conflict, while the Macedonian side is highly suspicious about offers

from what it sees as institutions or persons with disputable credentials, such as Javier Solana. Social problems and mistrust have raised the nationalist fever in the country to a point much higher than it was in 1991. Only vague estimates exist of how much the military "victory" cost in economic terms, let alone possible future investments in military security.

Since early 2001, Macedonia faces accelerating security challenges. Peace and the very existence of the state are at stake, while ethnic-military relationships overshadow the paradigm of civil-military relations. The "homework" of implementing a democratic management of national security had been far from accomplished when the state started sliding into general erosion and degradation. The issue of democratic control of the military has widened into one of control over all armed forces operating on (il)legitimate basis, sometimes with the blessing of parts of the state apparatus or even certain political parties, let alone various para-military and para-police forces, mujahedin, desperado or mercenary groups, etc. In some other Balkan countries, such as Croatia, the security sector was built up through an armed conflict and by re-organisation of various (more or less) private security actors. The developments in Macedonia go in the opposite direction: state security actors slowly transform into various kinds of private security actors.

After a decade as an "oasis of peace", Macedonia is now transformed into a stage for various international peace-support missions and heavily depends on international guarantees for its peace and security. The state has drastically lost its ability to provide security for all citizens; at least this is the perception in a significant part of the population. Macedonia has too many security sector players with contested legitimacy and with conflicting goals. The divided society has gotten a divided security sector, while the international community tries, with little success to fill the gap and provide a common ground. The more security providers, the less security for the citizens.

Security actors provide security on an exclusivist basis, sometimes even against their original mandate: for example, ARM was never supposed to defend only Macedonians. The deep distrust (whether well-founded or groundless) makes the members of the ethnic groups tend to see everybody who is not of the same ethnic stock as unreliable and even hostile.[24] A time of crisis may provide a temptation to re-structure power relationships between and within the political and security structures on both sides of the ethnic cleavage.

The issue of better ethnic representation of Albanians in all state structures had been on the agenda of political negotiations for years before the new Albanian armed groups and their leaders achieved what looked like a quick "victory" after using violence. The "heroes" of armed conflict easily overshadowed the heroes of political negotiations, both among Macedonians and Albanians. The Ohrid Framework Agreement from 13 August 2001, mediated by the international community, included provisions on ethnically more balanced police units and other security structures. The Macedonians saw this as an imposition favouring Albanian demands, while the Albanian side in the negotiations saw it as confirming that their armed struggle was just and their demands justifiable.

From an oasis of peace Macedonia has transformed into a completely militarised society, where citizens have more trust in belligerent and boisterous leaders than in any political option.[25] Even if the military structures would mirror the ethnic composition perfectly, the problem of violence stays unresolved. The cease-fire agreement may reduce forms of direct violence, but the re-structuring of the political system and the security apparatus may still preserve the elements of structural violence. The conflict parties now widely rely on the "successes" of the armed forces under their command in the political battles. The citizens in both campuses are coaxed to believe that everything is about justice, human and/or collective rights—or statehood, patriotism and survival. Thus, the solution is seen in the repressive institutions in the political system, and people tend to believe that they will be more secure if only the members of the security institutions are of the same ethnic stock as themselves. The ethnically coloured interpretation of the conflict easily gets embedded in the collective memory and may strengthen the cultural violence in society.

Macedonia still lives somewhere "between a pipe dream and reality", without knowing what is worse, the dream or the reality. For ten years it has been living on an imagined peace island, while the population strongly believed in the country's utmost strategic importance for the international community. The price for the illusions and mistakes is being paid, but the most important thing for the country is probably to wake up, so as not to allow a new round of a post-conflict virtual reality.

[1] The ancestors of the Macedonians had no common name (as Serbs and Croats had). By the mid seventh century, several tribes (Draguviti, Brsjaci, Sagudati, Strumjani, Velegziti, etc.) are believed to have inhabited the territory of Macedonia.

[2] At its peak, Samuil's Empire occupied territories between Danube and the Balkan Mountain, Epirus, a part of Albania, Dalmatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Srem.

[3] According to some newly discovered documents (or, better, new interpretations of history), Samuil's father Nikola was exalted as a saint by the villagers in Poreče (in today's Macedonia) for liberating them from the "Bulgarian occupation", seen as Asian tribes. By contrast, the wars between Samuil and Byzantine military are seen as fratricidal, the soldiers on both sides having the same ancestor (i.e. Alexander the Great).

[4] One of the most popular local jokes says that one Macedonian is a *komita*, two Macedonians make a group of *komitas*, and three Macedonians are a group of *komitas* with a traitor.

[5] The leadership of the Uprising addressed the Great Powers with a Declaration, which explained the goals of the Macedonians' struggle. European diplomacy was asked to get involved in the process of resolving the Macedonian Question.

[6] Athorough testimony of the atrocities against the civilian population was given in 1913 in the Report of the Carnegie Endowment Commission on the Balkans. Although advocating the same thesis, for decades the Macedonian government never based its allegations on that document because of its calling the population Bulgarian. Reprinted in English (The Other Balkan Wars, 1995) the Report was translated and published only in early 2000 by the (pro-Bulgarian) government led by VMRO.

[7] According to some Bulgarian sources the force deployed in Macedonia consisted of 47 per cent recruits from Vardar Macedonia.

[8] (Macdonald 1997). This statement is often quoted, but with different purposes: some to prove that Macedonians always supported the Yugoslav idea and were recognized as allies in the Anti-fascist coalition, others that they always wanted an independent and united Macedonia (prevented by Tito and the Yugoslav policy).

[9] Documents and proclamations from the MCP and the General Staff often referred to, the glorious Ilinden traditions and the goals of the Kruševo republic. Most of the partisan units were given names of the Macedonian revolutionaries, and each anniversary of the Ilinden Uprising was officially celebrated. (Veljanovski 1994: 459-85).

[10] There are speculations on a mass execution of Macedonian officers charged with treason for refusing to go to the Srem Front. In the period 1945-48, many VMRO members were tried for anti-communist activities during the war. Some believe that the trials were merely political, to combat the ideology of mihajlovism (i.e. of independent Macedonia). The 1991 Constitution includes a clause on rehabilitation of the VMRO fighters prosecuted by the Yugoslav regime. It is done in a reconciliatory way that equates the participants of the partisan movement with the others.

[11] At the First session of ASNOM, the oldest delegate referred to the traditions from Samuil to the Kruševo Republic. He pictured the "young Macedonian Army" as a successor of the glorious Ilinden military and even anticipated the unification of al Macedonia.

[12] The agency for Public Opinion Survey (NIP Nova Makeodnija, DATA Press) conducted two surveys during March-May 1996 on a sample of 2,800 respondents. Only two per cent were convinced that ARM had contributed to preserving peace, while 15 per cent thought that the realization of a lasting peace would depend on the military.

[13] Before the presidential and parliamentary elections in 1994, Gligorov's campaign was conducted together with that of "Alliance for Macedonia" (a coalition of the SDSM and two other parties).

[14] Gligorov promoted the former defence minister, Col. Damjanovski, into a general without using the regular procedure of getting proposals from the General Staff. Damjanovski had been retired when promoted into a general. However, the public debate focused mostly on his alleged pro-Yugoslavism (Gligorov 1997).

[15] OSCE reported serious violations of the election process in Western Macedonia, but only after the new president came into office.

[16] In spring 2000, a scandal occurred when the media revealed a report of the Head of the Military Intelligence Service on the existence of Albanian paramilitary. It had been submitted to the Prime Minister without even informing the President.

[17] Bocinov is known as the "Macedonian hero" because of his refusal to fire at Split (in Croatia). He was charged by YPA and jailed. After long negotiations he was released and got back to Skopje.

[18] Prof. Popovski, a member of the expert group that drafted the 1991 Constitution and a former minister of defence, interviewed by Vankovska in Skopje, June 2000.

[19] One of the biggest "achievements" of the VMRO Government was getting 100 tanks from Bulgaria. This gift was supposed to reassure distrustful Macedonians of the friendly intentions of Bulgaria by significantly improving Macedonia's defence capabilities. Sofia could show NATO/EU that it had Europeanised its regional policy while elegantly getting rid of surplus tanks to satisfy the CFE agreement. The actual amount was smaller, the funds needed for their maintenance were a huge burden, and they were inadequate to Macedonia's security needs, badly harming the image of ARM during the 2001 fights against the Albanian rebels in the Tetovo region.

[20] Interview with Kiro Gligorov for the Macedonian weekly *Start*, 12 November 1999.
[21] A week prior to the session of the UN Security Council that was to extend the UNPREDEP mandate, Macedonia recognized Taiwan. China's response was to cease diplomatic relations with Macedonia, so its veto was anything but a surprise.
[22] "Macedonians fear they could be next", *BBC News*, 11 March 1998.
[23] Interview with Kim Mehmeti in the TV show *A1-International*, 20 January 1999.
[24] A public opinion survey was conducted by the Centre for Ethnic Relations at the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research in June 2001 on a random sample of 1200 ethnic Macedonians. It showed that the Army and the police are seen as the most successful state institutions (with 94% and 87% support); only 5 % of he respondents answered affirmatively to the question whether they consider the Albanians loyal citizens. (Background paper presented at the Conference "Intra-Macedonian Dialogue", Interlaken, Switzerand, 25-26 November 2001).
[25] The public opinion surveys from 2001 show the most poular politician among the ethnic Macedonians to be the belligerent and controversial Minister of Interior, Boskovski. In addition to his public slogans he established special units ("Tigers" and "Lions") under his personal command, recruited among ethnic Macedonians with criminal dossiers and blessed by the Orthodox archnishop. What is going on within the Albanian campus is less known, since the units of the Albanian National Army (AKSh) are quite shadowy and not available for any survey.

Chapter 10

Past, Present and Future: Some Conclusions

Let us now seek more general patterns beyond the conclusions in our seven cases. How was the post-communist present affected by the past (including aspects of that present) and expectations about the future? How far was civilian control over the military achieved, by what methods was this done, and what is the doctrinal balance between external and internal missions? Armies, like states, have a genetic relationship to the political cultures and historical experiences of the societies they serve (Remington 1996: 153). How were these aspects of CMR affected by perceptions of the distant past; experiences under and after communism; the type of polity evolving; domestic political and economic balances; and Western influences by, e.g., crisis interventions, conditions for aid or loans or the lure of membership in various Western clubs? What relative weight did these influences have? To answer, or at least clarify, these questions we must compare how our countries range in terms of CMR with how they range in the above respects. With seven cases no serious statistical analysis is possible, but we may be able to see some patterns—or an absence of them—of influences by collating how our cases rank on the different dimensions.

10.1. Mapping the Past

In the pre-communist past, our states largely experienced a national development as non-state nations. By a strict criterion of continuous statehood, Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia are merely a decade old. Albania was occupied by WWI combatants after its birth in 1913, and disappeared into (the "Greater Albania" part of) the Italian empire in 1939 to reappear once more in 1945. Bulgaria and Romania are a few decades older, their sovereignty only interrupted by occupation during WWI and/or WWII. Serbia depends: two centuries old if Yugoslavia counts as continuity, otherwise in the youngest group.

A more complex picture is painted by popular perceptions, including those produced by what Ivo Banac aptly called "para-historians". Slovenes look back at a duchy in the 7th century and some continuity as an entity since then in the two empires and two Yugoslavias they used to belong to. The second Bulgarian kingdom a millennium ago is seen as Macedonian in Skopje, its centre being in Ohrid. Albanians trace statehood back to Skënderbeg half a millennium ago, if not to Illyrian polities before the Roman empire. Bulgarians recall their first state created in the 7th century and their second through the late 14th century. Romanian history writing sees continuity back to medieval principalities, or even further. For centuries, Turkish rule interrupted these states as well as the Serbian kingdom (later empire) born in the 12th century. Croatia's constitution lists all the different forms in which some kind of specific Croatian entity existed since the Triune Kingdom a millennium ago. Popular and/or official eyes everywhere see an ancient state, albeit with long interruptions.

What about the "heroic" component of these real and perceived pasts? In reality, Slovenia and Macedonia clearly belong to least heroic end, with no marked military traditions before their recent statehood, even though most Balkan quarrels and wars were somehow linked to Macedonian territory. Next comes Albania, whose only real claim in modern history is defined by the partisan success by the end of WWII. The other armed forces played varying stronger roles in history. The Romanian army played some role in the creation of its statehood, but usually a modest role later: defeated in WWI, though ending among the winners, and again in WWII, now among the losers, then to be purged and transformed by the Communist regime. The Bulgarian army had a more decisive role in the stepwise liberation from Turkey and further state formation, but its initial victories, against Turks and Serbs, were soon over: it lost the Second Balkan War in 1913 and both world wars, after which its development resembled Romania's. Serbia and Croatia are in a category of their own, having (apart from the operetta war in Slovenia) the only forces to have seen battles since WWII. The main Croatian achievement in the 19th century was helping Austria and Russia to defeat the Hungarian liberation war in 1848. It was among the losers in WWI and its military were then fairly humiliated when integrated into that of the First Yugoslavia. Its armed forces in WWII were defeated; some successfully escaped abroad, but most were sent back to be thoroughly purged, their record seen as shameful by all except some

Croats. Serbian history contains victories (Turkey, then Bulgaria, then the world wars) as well as defeats: the initial catastrophes in the world wars—and the decidedly non-heroic defeats when attacking Turkey in 1876 and Bulgaria in 1885.

When studying *perceived* military traditions, we have to bear in mind that Balkan societies often revolved around a political culture that glorified the military and looked for military solutions to decide their fate, the military as an institution seen as a midwife for the new 19th century states. Traits of this political culture can be found in Bulgaria, Albania and Romania; among the Yugoslav successor states they are strongest in Serbia and Croatia. There were also praetorian traditions in most of these states, especially during the inter-war period (Bebler 1988; Bogdan 1989). Here, too, present "para-historians" had great importance by reviving (often imagined or romanticized) historical military glory with a political agenda. These countries still suffer from national and political identity problems, making it functional to claim glorious and long-lasting military traditions when the state and the military seek new non-communist legitimacy. Serbia and Croatia clearly have the strongest elements of such heroism in their self-perception, both combining them with a martyrdom that actually adds to the heroism. The myth about ancient Croatian knights is kept intentionally alive to create a direct connection with the heroes (often involved in war crimes) of the Patriotic War in the 1990ies, who, as symbols of Greater National Interest, became "untouchable" by political and legal control. The Kosovo Polye Battle on St. Vitus's Day (Vidovdan—28 June) 1389 was in fact a major military defeat, but gradually achieved crucial significance for the identity of the Serbs, who preserved their dignity and sense of nationhood by recalling the battle in epic poems and songs and retaining the day as the biggest Serbian national holiday. Here, too, a lot more was added recently:

> The genius of Milosevic is his ability to mold a medieval myth of Serb identity to his political purposes today..... The Kosovo myth is the touchstone of the Serb national character—its disdain for compromise, its messianic bent, and its firm belief in the meaninglessness of loss and the promise of restoration of Serb glory and might... It is a tragedy that Serbs in Serbia and throughout the former Yugoslavia are obsessed with the myth, which calls on them to avenge the injustice of Kosovo and teaches them that no sacrifice is too

great for the ultimate good cause of the Serbs (Doder 1993: 15-17).

We would therefore expect the legacies of the distant past to give high prestige and influence to the military in Serbia/FRY and Croatia, with Romania and Bulgaria further down, followed by Albania, Slovenia and finally Macedonia.

The more distant past was followed by about 45 years of the Communist past. We noted in the Introduction that this common denominator is partly spurious, the countries having had fairly different security arrangements, threat images, doctrines—and systems of civil-military relations (Bebler 1997), their military's dependence on the USSR lying anywhere between very high and virtually none. There were also significant shifts over time in Albania, Romania and Second Yugoslavia. Yet there were also common traits, first and foremost the principle of unity of powers and symbiosis between the communist party and the state apparatus. The party was always in firm, even brutal, control of the army. Occasional rumours of risks of a military coup were never confirmed and may well have emanated from the party to justify stronger control. In a couple of cases, the position of the army may have decided the fall of the leader or even the party, but then by passivity rather than active intervention. So *civilian* control there was indeed, but very different from *democratic* civilian control over the military; especially as communist rule in the Balkan states (except Yugoslavia after the 1950ies) tended to be more repressive than in Central Europe. On the other hand, while communist ideology did indeed detract from military professionalism in some cases, the military generally had a rather high degree of corporate autonomy with respect for professional norms of behaviour.

10.2. The Environment of the Present

The roads and speeds of the processes of change after the Cold War must be assumed to have affected the development of democratic CMR. The end of the old communist regimes came in several ways, from a bang to a whimper. Transition in the Balkans tended to be more chaotic and violent than in Central Europe, with Romania and Second Yugoslavia as extreme examples, where the army played a very significant role (Vankovska-Cvetkovska 1998; Gow 1995; Hadžić 2002). Reformed communist parties sometimes ruled on for years, even returned by the ballot; where new parties come in, the reform communists sometimes returned later. Slovenia had quite

stable government by regular shifts of ruling coalitions; so had Croatia, but for a long time by one party rule; and other states saw a rapid succession of alternating governments or even a total collapse of the state (Yugoslavia 1991, Albania 1997). Liberals, nationalists and other forces competed to provide new contents of state identity, with varying outcomes, including inter-ethnic armed conflict (Croatia, FRY, Macedonia). Real democratization was swift and fairly successful in Slovenia only; elsewhere it is still in process, advanced at best and uncertain at worst. Initial progress was sometimes made already under communist parties (Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and Macedonia; and sometimes it took long time even when a new party had taken over (Croatia).

The relative weights of parliament, government and president in different states depend on how we define the question and read constitutions and laws. All except Albania quickly got new constitutions embodying democratic principles. If one sees constitution making as the codification of achievements already made, the paradox is that there were hardly any to codify at that time. Another reading is that the constitutions etc. expressed hopes for accelerated future reforms; in the Yugoslav successor states, constitution enactment was in addition a symbolically important part of nation-state building. All our states are in constitutional terms parliamentary democracies; yet most of them developed a presidential rather than a parliamentary system (Goati 1997), thus reinforcing centralist authoritarian features in the overall political system. Berisha in Albania, Iliescu in Romania, Milošević in FRY and Tudjman in Croatia also led the ruling parties and could directly control the work and behavior of the parliament, the government and indeed all other political institutions. This was made possible by the "democratic deficit" (Larrabee 1992): nowhere was there much of a democratic legacy, the communist rule having been preceded by an interwar autocratic and/or military regimes. Nobody had any practical experience of the norms, institutions and political processes associated with democracy[1]. Civil society was (and remains) weak while the state traditionally enjoys a privileged status in the eyes of the Balkan peoples.

Armed forces cost money. All our states suffered an economic downturn after the end of the Cold War, sometimes just continuing or accelerating a previous period of stagnation or recession[2]. Economies had been run by (various versions of) communist recipe, with sizable parts worn out, unprofitable and facing bankruptcy in the market

economy that all Western clubs demanded. IMF (among others) contributed by standard recipes calling for at least a long initial phase of increased unemployment and falling standard of living before the cure started to work (if it did). Privatization often meant concentration of wealth to the old nomenclatura under new hats, to the cronies of the new leadership or to the rapidly expanding mafia. Most states had vast inflation or hyperinflation (Hungary in 1946 is the only case in world history that can compete with FRY in 1991-94). The economic sanctions against FRY damaged it severely, with the economies of most of our other states as (sometimes heavy) "collateral damage" with at most symbolic compensations from the West in spite of Article 50 in the UN Charter; Macedonia, which was worst hit, also suffered by a Greek blockade for years. The war in Croatia ruined large areas. NATO bombed the Yugoslav economy decades back in 1999, again with neighbouring countries as economic "collateral damage", as they also were to the destruction of the infrastructure of Bosnia wrought by Bosnian (Serb, Croat and Moslem) forces and NATO. By a crude estimate, the destruction wrought by the warring parties inside the Balkans was of the magnitude of USD 100 bn. and that caused by Western economic sanctions and war-fighting of the same magnitude. By GDP per capita, Slovenia (and perhaps Albania, where statistics in notoriously unreliable) is the only state that has now managed to get back to approximately the earlier level or even pass it; elsewhere it is far or very far below that level, FRY being the biggest loser. These per capita figures being averages of some getting very much richer and very many poorer, the figures even underestimate how standards of living have dropped. This made it difficult to provide the funds neeeded to secure the officer corps a respected social status; in periods it was downright pauperised (Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia). Strong temptations of corruption and other illegality appeared everywhere, the more difficult to resist when the surrounding society in several cases was (and remains) deeply affected by corruption and criminality.

10.3. The Shadow of the Future

When the fascist dictatorships fell in Greece, Portugal and Spain in the 1970ies, the new regimes quickly sought membership in as many Western clubs as they could find. The two first were already in NATO (and Spain had a US base), so this primarily meant EU, Council of Europe, WEU, etc. All of these had democracy as an entry condition, sometimes combined with others. The new memberships sometimes called for stretching these other conditions a bit, the (in retrospect well-founded) idea being that they would stabilise the new democracies. Thorough debate in terms of national interests about the pros and cons of joining EU or NATO was rare, the issue being to a large extent one of symbols: "getting back to Europe/the West".

When communist dictatorships fell all over Europe, there was a new rush to "join Europe" (whatever that was seen to mean[3]). The thresholds had risen markedly in the meantime: NATO now demanded democracy, plus various reforms and aspects of interoperability, and the *acquis communitaire* of the EU had become much more extensive. Again, there was no or little national debate on pros and cons; the new regimes all quickly proclaimed that there was no alternative and tried to enter the queues, making it their agendas to (seem to) fulfil various entry conditions. As long as the issues were defined in abstract and value loaded formulations and as issues about a rather distant future, there tended to be broad public backing for these stands; only when memberships looked like being just around the corner and their contents had become much more concrete did they start to split some nations close to the middle: for instance, NATO in Slovenia and Czech Republic, EU in Czech Republic and Estonia.[4]

Nor was the West really eager to get new members quickly, no matter the official rhetorics (often gainsaid by opinion polls): various "waiting rooms" were created (Partnership for Peace, EU Association Treaties, etc.) and time tables came late. Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic joined NATO in 1999, and it is only in late 2002 that both clubs are expected to decide to take in many new members in 2004-05[5]. This tardiness can be explained in several ways that do not necessarily contradict each each. By the "official" line the criteria for membership were indeed demanding and took long time to meet satisfactorily. Another line is that most Western populations were cool to expansion, providing little to gain and something to lose for governments that would rush these issues. There may also have been a conscious but unspoken strategy of keeping applicants hopeful and obedient as long as possible: if they became members quickly, or if they lost hope or interest, obedience would drop in favour of pursuing their national interests (Mouritzen et al. 1996).

Since most (and today all) of our seven countries soon started "looking West", no matter the colour of their governments, the "shadow of the future" must have played a large role in determining developments. NATO and the EU (and IMF, etc.) often pull in the same direction: 1) they don't want to import trouble and applicants

must have no boundary conflicts or severe domestic minority problems; 2) they demand democracy, rule of law and human rights; 3) they demand marketization and other economic changes. They occasionally also pull in opposite directions, e.g. when NATO demands military expenditure hikes and the EU and IMF budget cuts. Demands like interoperability or civilian control over the military are primarily or only made by NATO. For this reason we will focus on the "shadow of the future" effects of NATO.

All our countries except FRY soon clearly declared their determination to join NATO, sometimes years before submitting their applications. Apart from some nation-specific stated grounds and the ubiquitous "there is no alternative", some additional common denominators appear. One of them actually covers much more than NATO: different versions of the "back to the West" theme, often adding that the West somehow owes this to them for shedding communism in order to make it possiblesome times. It may be argued in terms of Habsburg history (Croatia and Slovenia) or Latin language (Romania); but even in Albania, Bulgaria and Macedonia, the discourse contains a strong dosis of it. Another ground is security in its most traditional (politico-military) sense. Most of our states see themselves as located in a delicate geopolitical situation, in a "no man's land" too close to the "near abroad" of Russia and too distant from the core of the western democracies. In addition, our post-communist countries differed from the others by conflict actually threatening or burning there. Security guarantees from Euro-Atlantic defense structures were then seen as necessary to counter potential threats, notwithstanding the end of the Cold War; it is, as it were, the "old NATO" these states want to join while willing to pay the price of the "new NATO". In several countries (and notwithstanding Turkey's experiences) governments also see, or pretend to see, membership in NATO as a fast road to development, whether by attracting investors or getting quicker into the EU, integration through military reforms being seen as easier than through deep structural economic reforms and development. There were therefore in several respects strong incentives to simply copy NATO countries or eagerly follow NATO advice.

There is the methodological problem how to assess the magnitude of the expected effects of this shadow of the future? We might go by the dates of membership applications: but then Albania's in 1992 was actually the first one, whereas the Slovenian came much later and the official Bulgarian one only in 1997. We might also go by NATO's

own time tables: the Madrid meeting in July 1997 put none of our states in the first queue for new members, creating strong frustrations, especially in Romania. The statement from the meeting that the doors remained open triggered some speculations to the opposite effect. Only after March 1999 with its first new members and the war against FRY did further expansion get new impetus; while nothing was officially specified, Slovenia (and perhaps Bulgaria and Romania) seemed to be the only new members expected to get a time table in 2002. Both these solutions, however, suffer from the problem that we should expect states to act on the basis of their own expectations rather than opinions of external observers. Going by the rhetorics of governments, we would get a third ranking, where deviations from NATO's own time table may express genuine wishful thinking, reflect attempts to curry favour with the West or be devised to counter domestic criticism of impopular measures based on membership aspirations. The following collated ranking must therefore be seen as tentative:

1) Slovenia, the most "Western" state anyhow[6], with little of the problems that bedevil most of the others, and in many respects closest to satisfying official NATO demands;
2) Romania, with (comparatively) little trouble to import into NATO, some strategic value for US penetration across the Black and Caspian Seas and ambitious efforts to satisfy constitutional and operational demands; and Bulgaria, for which all these things are also to some extent true;
3) Croatia, where the change to a more palatable regime only came in 1999, albeit with the Hague Tribunal (ICTY) as a millstone around its neck[7], some CMR reforms remaining to be credibly carried out and the issue of Serb refugees defining potential trouble.
4) Albania, Macedonia and FRY are by far the poorest states, all with much and severe (inter-ethnic and other) trouble to import[8] and with FRY having all the problems of Croatia to an even higher degree.

One more thing remains to consider concerning the likelihood of obedience. If a state sees itself as virtually assured of membership, it may be less motivated to work hard to earn it, just as may be the case if membership is seen as hopeless within foreseeable future. Slovenia is the only case where the first reason might apply; but its political

climate is such that some of the NATO demands coincide with demands it makes on itself anyhow. FRY might be closest to the other end, at least if we go by official rhetoric.

We may get a first check of these arguments by looking at purely quantitative indicators (data from SIPRI 2002), although various methodological problems force us to see the following figures as approximate. In terms of real military expenditures (cleansed of inflation), the sum of our seven states was USD 3 bn. in 2001 (like Switzerland or Norway). Among those states that did not have war in 1992-2001, Slovenia represents one extreme with small variation around some USD 300 mn. The others went down to between half and two thirds of the 1992 figure, with a small upward trend in the last years for the most eager NATO applicants. Croatia's milex increased during the war years, peaked in 1995 and is now down at about half the 1992 figure. FRY's war years never really ended, it always having to count with that possibility even after 1995 (as UÇK and NATO confirmed in 1998-99), and its milex is only estimated since 1997 by SIPRI: c. USD 1 bn., with 2000 as an exceptional peak year.

The development of the relative role of the military (milex in per cent of GDP) shows a different pattern. In the year 2000, milex weighed heaviest in FRY (5-6%), followed by Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania (about 3%), Macedonia (2%) and finally Albania and Slovenia (just over 1%). The states arrived there along very different roads however. Among the non-war states, Bulgaria changed very little and Romania went down to two thirds of the initial proportion, both with slight reversals upwards in recent years. Macedonia resembles Romania, Slovenia halved its proportion and Albania quartered it. Croatia gradually went down from 7-9% in the war years to 3%, whereas FRY looks more constant (but must have gone down since the early war years without reliable statistics). This is the indicator that tells us most about the relative role of the military and changes in it. The age of statehood does not seem to matter much for it, whereas having been at war in the period clearly does. The countries with the least "heroic" traditions (Slovenia, Macedonia, Albania) reduced most and ended at the lowest levels. The most "heroic" (Serbia, Croatia) lie considerably higher, but are difficult to compare with others because of their long war years. The most eager NATO applicants also show some (varying) signs of being precisely that: in Bulgaria and Romania relative milex went up (slightly) in the last few years; so did absolute milex, even if it still lies far below that in 1992. Slovenia, on the other hand, did not reduce its absolute level

at all, but its relative level has sunk by half. We can thus find some apparent effects of "heroic past" as well as "NATO future".

10.4. The Development of Civil-Military Relations

Some things vary among our cases, others apparently don't, such as being "post-communist" (but after different kinds of communism) and "Balkan" (but most of them try to distance themselves as far as possible from that). At the beginning of our period, they all had decided *civilian control* over their armed forces, but none of them *democratic control*. This could not simply be established by substituting democratic rule for authoritarian, since the type of civilan control had been quite different from that usually prescribed in Western models, e.g. the deep penetration of the party into the army. Though our states have travelled differently far on the road to stable and apparently irreversible democracy, there are some common features in their approaches to establish a new model of civilian control: by writing constitutions and promulgating legislation, with separation of powers as a basic principle within some kind of attempted check-and-balance system. If we remain satisfied to view matters from this normative aspect, successful reform of CMR has generally been achieved by establishing frameworks based on the principle of the supremacy of democratically elected civilian institutions over the military. This has also resulted in some progress in civilianizing the defense ministries and in some cases an increased transparency in defense policy; and in some cases (notably Romania, Bulgaria and Slovenia) the political institutions have invested much effort in order to interest civil society and public opinion in politico-military problems[9].

Yet, common problems, albeit gradually ameliorated, still remain as to the division of responsibilities and lines of authority between the main controlling actors. One stems from the insufficiently developed democratic political culture in most states and the low level of tolerance among competing political elites who present their own political positions as the only correct ones. This made it difficult to reach a broad consensus in defining national interests. The new constitutions therefore tended to become compromises that failed to distinguish clearly between the roles of the president, the prime minister, the defence minister and the chief of the general staff; in addition, deadlock situations tended to delay or dilute the laws on defence and armed forces that were needed to clarify the ambiguities. Two main risks stem from that, both manifested in some of our cases:

the military presenting itself as the genuine carrier of national interests; and political elites trying to coopt and politicize the military body to avoid its somehow favouring their opponents on the political arena.

How closely the text of a constitution and the realities of power are related[10] depends, inter alia, on the presence or absence of solid democratic traditions, a strong civil society and an independent judiciary. In all these respects our states are mostly still weak. The *de facto* introduction of presidential rule in most countries heavily affected the armed forces and tended to weaken, or even make symbolic, any other political control over them. The presidents were the real creators of every change in the military realm, and civilian control over the army became the personal control of the president *cum* commander-in-chief. That problem has receded somewhat recently, but is far from over. In addition, there is a significant difference between *having* and *exercising* control over the military. The latter faces several problems, to begin with that effective democratic control needs well-functioning democratic institutions and cannot easily precede them. Another problem is the weakness of civil society in general, in particular the low level of civilian expertise in security and defense matters that is common to most Balkan countries, and which also induces mistrust and skepticism in the military with its internal loyalty and conviction that it knows best in defense matters (Pantev 1997). This may be exacerbated by the fact that public opinion polls in Romania, Croatia, Bulgaria and FRY indicate low confidence in politicians while the military belongs to the institutions most trusted by the citizens.

Another problem lies in potential or actual rivalry betwen the military and police/security forces. In at least Albania, Romania, FRY and Macedonia, the latter were the clear winners in terms of social, material and political status, for several reasons. Our fledgling democracies faced the challenge of securing control over the enforcement apparatus of a state facing, in most cases, major internal (inter-ethnic and other) problems and tensions, at the same time as NATO clearly discouraged internal missions of the military. That led to a (non-codified) concept of national security giving primacy to the police at the expense of the military. Our democracies may thus face the Scylla of a militarised society and the Charybdis of a police state.

10.5. In Search of New Military Missions

The mission of the military is the central aspect of CMR anywhere. Whatever their external mission, the military in all our states used to have the social control function to defend a communist regime against internal enemies. The new regimes faced the challenge of endowing their armed forces with new roles and tasks. A litmus test of democracy being the ability of a political system to survive without military support, the legitimacy of the political institutions in a society is inextricably linked to the legitimacy of the military and the character of its mission (Gow 1995). This as well as expectations from the West has lain behind the effort in our states to belittle the internal dimension of the military mission by emphasizing the external. For several reasons, this was not easy. The officer corps in several states carries elements of two contradictory attitudes: a messianic self-image, and an inferiority complex on its ability to deal with external or internal dangers (Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia). The economic hardships, with little resources to drill and train the soldiers, impaired the ethos of the military as an institution as well as its ability to fulfil its fundamental mission: to protect national security. An army with such a complex is dysfunctional: in the worst case these perceived shortcomings may redirect the interest of the military to peace-time domestic relations. Our post-communist military generally avoided using force in domestic politics even when it was heavily politicized: FRY and Croatia are impressive examples of this. Sometimes, however, the armed forces suffered the misfortune of getting engaged into action against their own people. In the 1997 uprising, the Albanian Army found itself in a role familiar from Hoxha's days: to defend the ruling party from popular insurrection, the problems within the army getting even greater as a result. When UÇK escalated the violence in Kosovo in 1998, the Yugoslav Army soon found itself involved in the inter-ethnic clash there when police forces were insufficient, then combined that role with the external mission of defence against NATO and finally had to withdraw—to be faced with new dilemmas when UÇK led a rebellion in southern Serbia in 2000.

Clearly defined national security doctrines and strategies are normally seen as basic pre-conditions for a military institution to get a credible role in defending its country. In our cases (and most other post-communist states) creating them proved to be a long and difficult process, for the reasons previously stated. This sometimes left the military in a "vacuum", confused about what the state and society expected from it when the new security policy was forged in response

to swift internal political transformations, external demands and (in the Yugoslav successor states) national identity creation and actual war-fighting or threats of it. On top of this, some countries are ethnically divided: Croatia before the cleansing of the Serbs in 1995, FRY before losing Kosovo (and to some extent even now), Macedonia all the time, and to a lesser extent even Bulgaria and Romania. Such countries face the risk of militant nationalism with an ensuing likelihood that the devotion and loyalty of the military will be to the nation (in the non-state sense) rather than the state. Their democratic prospects depend on managing to establish the military as a constitutional, rather than national, institution.

Let us now look at the shadow of the future, in particular expectations from NATO. One part of these was that the military should have no internal mission, another stems from NATO's own expectations being affected by, *inter alia* recent changes in the international system with their new challenges both for the state and military. Coping with potentially hostile states is increasingly replaced by various threats for which the conventional military is often not very well prepared: "extended peacekeeping", "peace enforcement", "humanitarian intervention", "combating terrorism", etc. The Balkan military are trying to prepare themselves for this new kind of engagement, e.g. by PfP activities. The slight absurdity, or at least irony, in this lies in the very fact that the Balkans continues to be a beehive of conflict behind the "success" facades and the object of all kinds of such operations: UNPROFOR in Croatia and Bosnia until 1995; IFOR, SFOR, etc. in Bosnia; ALBA in Albania in 1997; UNPREDEP, later NATO and perhaps EU in Macedonia; OSCE and later KFOR in Kosovo. Discouraged from internal missions and often incapable of any major external missions, the Balkan military is increasingly directed toward what we may call "external internal missions".

10.6. Democratic Reforms within the Military

The military legacy in our countries by the end of the Cold War had some common features in addition to what we already noted on CMR. These include doctrines mostly outdated by the international and regional changes; vast conscript armies, often obsoletely equipped; and an officer corps that was highly politicized but otherwise fairly professional. Most of them also faced similar challenges while hanging in the air for a long time waiting for new doctrines from the political system, such as facing some deep reform demands to follow

the (real or simulated) reform pace of the political and economic systems as well as other demands soon defined by PfP and the lure of NATO membership (compatibility, interoperability, etc.). The military had to cope with all this while deep budget cuts often meant lost economic and social status for it. There were even more challenges for the armies in the Yugoslav successor states: long wars (Croatia, FRY) or facing that risk (Slovenia, Macedonia); having to rebuild and equip the armed forces more or less from scratch (Macedonia, Croatia and to some extent Slovenia); or inheriting an army where a large part of the officers and conscripts were deserting and the rest deeply split on fundamental issues (FRY; cf. Hadžić 2002).

In functional terms, the military faced depoliticisation, professionalisation (including reform of military education), downsizing and re-structuring, rearmament and redeployment. Ideally, all these processes—together with the CMR reforms—should be integrated with each other so as to optimise their internal dynamics and interactions; but this proved impossible everywhere. The official documents usually saw two reform phases: transitory adjustments, including depolitization, which were to prepare for a later radical reorganisation of the armed forces to provide them with increased mobility and capability for new tasks through radical downsizing, higher professionalization and updated equipment. Several obstacles occurred however.

Depoliticisation initially meant dissolving communist party structures within the military, sometimes also "reversed indoctrination". Yet, without a radical democratic transformation of the political system and entire society the military risks being abused by the ruling party, the depoliticization being merely cosmetic. Several ruling parties (most notably in Croatia, FRY and Albania) used technical grounds to purge officers or lopside promotions by political criteria, filling the vacancies with politically loyal soldiers, whose loyalty in many cases made up for lacking professionalism; in other words, subjective control of the worst possible kind, whether in Huntington or Janowitz terms. In some of them, that legacy is still heavy.

Some aspects of professionalisation have generally made progress, especially in the most eager NATO applicants. Professional competence, mainly that of senior officers, has been enhanced, e.g. by training programmes in bilateral cooperation with NATO members, taking part in PfP exercises and being on various missions abroad. Substituting professional soldiers for conscripts is on its way in

several states, although the pace tends to be kept down by budgetary strictures. There were also problems, especially where recruitment and promotion took place by political and sometimes even ethnic criteria (Croatia, FRY, Macedonia), highly professional and experienced officers being removed and sometimes replaced by incompetent people. This exacerbated the potential conflict factor lying in the heterogeneity of an officer corps where there is often already a marked gap between (and among) senior and junior officers that stems from different careers and legacies.

As for modernizing the army in terms of manpower and equipment, there were very ambitious plans in official documents (Bulgaria, Romania, FRY, Macedonia), whether in order to satisfy NATO criteria ("Romania 2000") or endogeneous needs. Much of these were soon invalided by budgetary constraints, the eventual reality in terms of training and equipment lying far short of the plans. No post-communist Balkan state made it to the first queue of new members in 1997; at most a minority can expect membership in 2002.

10.7. Roads Taken, Not Taken and Yet to be Taken

Let us start with an abstract speculation, assuming that by the time of their regime shift from communism in the direction of democracy our states had had time to reflect systematically over what they needed their military for and what kind of CMR were appropriate for this—and had not been under harsh budget constraints making most options impossible. Creating democratic CMR is a long term task, with value in the process itself as well as the final result (Carnovali, 1997: 26). What models of CMR would they have chosen? Would they choose the same?

The search would have found some models on the shelf, but might have found them flawed in several respects. There is some literature on to what extent and how the military rule or do not rule in the Third World; but the societies there tend to differ too much from those in the Balkans for it to be very useful. Most of the literature on the West, e.g. the Huntington and Janowitz traditions, takes for granted a mature democracy with settled institutions and is therefore of questionable relevance for states where the task of building this is simultaneous with that of building democratic CMR. They also tend to take it for granted that there exists some civilian expertise on defence matters in government and civil society—which has been a very scarce resource in the Balkans. And they largely ignore ethnonational (as distinct from ethnic) conflicts, with which some of our countries had to count.

Would our states have constructed the same, or similar, models—or clearly different ones? Arguments can be marshalled in both directions. The first sections of this chapter showed some respects where they are fairly similar and others where they are not; they would also have had the opprtunity to watch and learn from each other's successes and mistakes.

Yet this is iffy history, since that was not the road taken; there *was* no time for our Balkan states to think of their own needs in a systematic way when facing a flood demands from NATO, EU, IMF, and so forth, accompanied by lots of missions, advisors and experts (most of whom did not speak any language of the region and knew largely nothing about its history, culture and institutions). The only state showing some signs of systematic deliberations of its own is Slovenia; elsewhere the choices were apparently dictated by some combination of legacies of the past, the hardships of the present environment and the urgent shadow of the future. The most important part of that shadow was the NATO membership sought by a growing number, which implies that the models to implement or imitate were more in line with the Huntington than the Janowitz tradition. In each country we then saw the resultant of these three forces in the cases where they pulled in different directions—which they often did: the degree of diversity of civilian control over the military is higher now than during the Communist period.

Almost every Balkan leadership has claimed that democratic civil-military relations have become a reality in its country, which meets all necessary criteria for NATO admission, except, perhaps, where economic difficulties define the only remaining obstacle. What this means in reality varies greatly, ranging between the advanced reforms in the Romanian and Slovenian armed forces and the serious challenges still faced by the Macedonian and Albanian military. The main efforts were often at the formal level or concerned the most visible aspects of CMR, deeper implementation having to wait for a later phase of the process of democratization. The result is sometimes virtual reality, or, as the President of Bulgaria called it in a speech some years ago, "simulation of reforms", leaving NATO with the choice when to accept that virtual reality for political reasons and when not to.

The effects for the military also vary. The only states where Huntington's recipe to keep them "busy and happy" could apply for a while were those most strongly subjected to a clear and present danger: FRY and Croatia, and to some extent Macedonia in 2001. In

all three, however, the effect was to make CMR more, not less, problematic. To the extent the military were kept busy in other states, that was by a combination of mission and non-mission tasks, the latter consisting in all the reorganisation called for by new CMR. We noted above that they often had to wait for very long time to get a clear new doctrine as mission guidance. In the meantime, the external demands on the one hand largely banned internal missions, at least until 11 September 2001, since NATO decidedly did not see them as a task for the military. At the same time, these demands also largely banned external missions, since NATO does not want to import trouble and national doctrines therefore must not anticipate the possibility of an armed conflict with any neighbour. Where budget cuts permitted being busy with much else than administering these cuts, it has essentially meant two things: modernizing the army in line with NATO guidelines with MPRI[11] and others as advisors, plus preparing for, and to some extent even taking part in, the new "external internal missions" that NATO, OSCE, UN, etc. call for. These tasks did keep *some* of the military busy and happy in *some* countries in *some* periods, but as exceptions to the rule that budget cuts, politicised reorganisations, fuzzy doctrines etc. meant losses of economic status, in the worst cases outright pauperisation, as well as of social status, both generally and in comparison with the police, with the collapse in Albania in 1997 as perhaps the worst crisis. If we take into account that these hardships were far beyond anything their Western colleagues have experienced in modern times, the Balkan military has often performed admirably.

Under the communist regimes, tensions between government and the military were rare exceptions. We must expect considerably more of them now—and should see that as a positive sign. The military is by its nature an authoritarian institution and such tensions are characteristic of democratic societies, where the literature on CMR includes how to cope with them in an optimal way—while the two main traditions tend to disagree on what to see as optimal. Let us conclude by some speculations on what to expect in the future in this respect: will CMR in the Balkans go more in the direction of objective control (Huntington), subjective control (Janowitz) or both?

One premise for these speculations is that some of our countries will soon become members of both the EU and NATO, some others probably a few years later. They will therefore get more room to develop own models and ways, no longer being limited by having to qualify to get in. They will, however, increasingly face dilemmas

similar to, or even worse than, those of the most Atlanticist among the present NATO members in EU in issues where the USA and the bulk of EU disagree: EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, the relations between EU forces and NATO forces, etc. The dilemmas may indeed get worse, since all our states will be in weak bargaining positions vis-a-vis both the USA and EU, at the same time as major EU members will suspect them of being instruments for the USA to get more of a say in European affairs. Since NATO demands and expectations until now have been strongly coloured by the USA, the new situation may reduce the present predominance of the Huntington tradition, perhaps in favour of that of Janowitz. This in turn means that there will be increasing pressure for democratization inside the armed forces. The degree and pace of this may be expected to depend on how two other trends counterbalance each other. One of them is the continued march towards democracy: by Western experiences, full democratization tends to take decades, depending on how much of the crucial institutions was already there in nuclear form when formal democracy was introduced (in the Balkans the answer is: very little). This march will mean that civil society and the political system will pull increasingly in the direction of subjective control. The other trend, which has been on its way in the West for decades for several reasons, is the abandonment of conscription armies in favour of fully professional ones. In several Western countries, a long-standing argument for the former was that they contributed to civilianizing the military. This is now getting lost under the double impact of budget restrictions and the skills revolution. On the other hand, this aspect of professionalisation may define another limit for how authoritarian the military system can remain: if the level is too high, recruitment will tend to be limited to youngsters who have little other alternatives and may therefore also be expected to become inferior soldiers. Continued democratization in the Balkans will gradually make new cohorts of conscripts less tolerant of a highly authoritarian system and more bent to use ballots to affect it—which again points in the direction of subjective control. How heavy the impact of this will be depends on how soon professional soldiers are substituted for conscripts, the ambitions for this having so far been delayed by financial constraints that are not likely to be lifted soon. The expected increasing presence of civilians with some expertise in defence matters is ambigous. They may wish to leave their imprint on the armed forces and be in a better position to get it, also because of being better able to communicate with the military. But that communication may also persuade them to

endow the military with a high degree of autonomy in matters that are seen as professional.

If it is true that the first train has largely left, the development of civil-military relations in the Balkans having been more determined by circumstances and external demands than by systematic and competent reflection on the nation's needs, it should be added that this was hardly the last train: there is more to come—and perhaps in more favourable circumstances—in the development of civil-military relations in the post-communist Balkan countries. Rome was not built in one day.

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[1] The main exception is the millions of Yugoslavs who had spent long periods working in the West; but only in Slovenia does this experience seem to have been important in the demand for independence and was hardly prime factor even there.

[2] The average citizen in Second Yugoslavia had already lost about half of his real income during the 1980ies.

[3] There are at least five "Europe images", differently combined in different EU members and applicants: 1) peace by integration project; 2) free trade zone; 3) dispenser of economic aid; 4) guarantor of democratic and related values; 5) security against a big neighbour (Wiberg 1996).

[4] In Northern Europe the symbolic loading was lower, interests counting more. Referenda and opinion polls show all countries to be split close to the middle on EU, while the NATO memberships of Denmark, Iceland and Norway have just as strong public opinion backing as the non-memberships of Finland and Sweden.

[5] EU, however, is less bent than NATO to lower thresholds or pretend that criteria are fulfilled when political considerations speak for admission; new members are more expensive to EU than to NATO.

[6] NATO membership, however, is more controversial in public opinion there than in any other case but FRY.

[7] The new regime is damned if it does (by the realistic threat of the old nationalist regime returning to power) and damned if it doesn't (by economic and other punishment from the West).

[8] To some extent, the trouble is already imported, the Albanian mafia with its centre in Kosovo dominating drug and sex traficking in large parts of Western Europe.

[9] This, however, seems to have been primarily dictated by governmental interest in canvassing public support for already decided policies. The main focus in this information is on rights, duties, responsibilities and consequences for these countries as NATO members, rather than a balanced discussion of pros and cons.

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[10] A study at the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo in the 1970ies showed that if we were to use their being written into constitutions as an indicator, human rights were in a sad shape in Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries, but thriving in the Soviet bloc and South America.

[11] Military Personnel Resources, Inc. is officially a private business organisation selling services inside and outside the USA. Some of its staff consists of retired US officers, other parts of career officers who are on leave while serving in the MPRI. In some of our countries doubts have been raised as to whether MPRI serves their interests or those of US foreign policy. The most drastic example appeared in Macedonian press reports in 2001, according to which MPRI had advised the government to cut down on tanks and aircraft, shrink the army and primarily deploy it in the eastern parts of the country. If this is true, the effect would have been to make the Macedonia largely helpless against UÇK terrorism.

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