

Political Integration of the Romani Minority in Post-communist Macedonia

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Introduction: Roms as a hard case

Within post-Communist Eastern Europe, the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Macedonia seem to hold down the ends of a continuum in the treatment of Roms ('Gypsies').¹ In Slovakia, there has been frequent talk of the Gypsies as a national threat, with former prime minister Vladimír Mečiar only the best-known Slovak official to express publicly his concern that Roms might come to outnumber Slovaks if the 'population explosion' among the former is not contained (Kamm 1993; cf. Crowe 1998: 52; Bacová 1992: 30; Benkovicová 1995: 391-392; Bútorová, Gyárfášová, and Velcic 2000: 309; Fris and Gál 1995: 22; Paukovic et al. 1990: 48; Smelz et al. 2000: 144; Vacecka 2001: 236). Additionally, although Roms are the only group identified by ethnicity in crime reports, standing legislation on racially motivated violence has rarely been applied in cases of skinhead attacks on Roms, with the President of the Association of Judges of Slovakia defending another judge's decision in one such case with the argument that "[f]rom an anthropological standpoint it is evident that Roms, and in this case also the skinheads, come from an Indoeuropean race" (Slobodníková 1999). Further, Slovak authorities at the local level have taken actions against Roms ranging from passing ethnically specific curfews, to prohibiting Roms from settling, to advocating the selective killing of Gypsies as a remedy for the social ills they allegedly cause (Borszék 1999; Havrlová 1999; Hušová 2000; Kamm 1993; Koptová 1999: 26-30; Open Society Institute 2001: 452; Towers 1993).

In contradistinction to their counterparts in Slovakia, Roms in Macedonia have not generally been treated as a problem.² Referring explicitly to Roms as a nationality³, the Macedonian Constitution of 1991 places Roms in the same legal category as the Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, and "other nationalities" which live in Macedonia.⁴ Moreover, former president Kiro Gligorov spoke favorably of Macedonia's Romani population before various audiences (including the General Assembly of the UN) and sponsored Romani cultural festivals (Barany 2002: 285-286; Poulton 1993: 43; 1995: 195), with a 1997 publication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1997: 3) stating that "[t]his minority is characterized by a high degree of integrity and a clearly expressed feeling of belonging to the

Republic of Macedonia.” Whereas ethnic Macedonians often express fears of the country’s Albanian population in terms of population growth or the disintegration of the state, neither of these concerns are generally applied to Roms.⁵ Other characteristics which distinguish Macedonia from Slovakia include the extremely low incidence of racially motivated attacks on Roms and the absence of skinhead groups organized to carry out such attacks.

The differences between Slovak and Macedonian treatments of Roms beg the question as to what accounts for these variations. Focusing in this paper on the Republic of Macedonia, I propose to explain the granting of rights to the Romani population in terms of political competition within the Macedonian majority on the one hand and between the Macedonian majority and the Albanian minority on the other. I begin by demonstrating the inadequacy of standard accounts of minority political integration⁶ in explaining the treatment of Roms: in addition to being inexplicable in terms of Roms’ ability to upset domestic political stability or as a case of successful homeland nationalism, Macedonia’s treatment of its Romani population cannot be attributed to cultural proximity or even to the legacy left by Yugoslav socialism. In the remainder of the paper, I examine evidence in support of my thesis that the political integration of Roms is a function of their political usefulness for other ethnic groups.⁷

Classical explanations of minority political integration

1. Domestic political stability

The link between minority rights and domestic political stability is perhaps best developed in the work of Arend Lijphart (cf. Heisler 1991: 41). According to Lijphart, “in a political system with clearly separate and potentially hostile population segments, virtually all decisions are perceived as entailing high stakes, and strict majority rule places a strain on the unity and peace of the system” (Lijphart 1977: 28). Further, Lijphart (1984: 22-23) claims, the feelings of exclusion generated by continual denial of access to power result in a loss of allegiance to the regime on the part of the excluded minorities. Pointing to the need for British military intervention to maintain stability in Northern Ireland as a result of the exclusion of Catholics from power for half a century, Lijphart suggests that majority rule in plural societies is extremely likely to result in civil strife (Lijphart 1984: 23).

In order for a concern with maintaining domestic political stability to explain the political integration of Roms, authorities must see Roms as capable of upsetting such stability. Falsifying the proposition that Romani political integration is a matter of bolstering domestic political stability therefore requires evidence that Roms do not organize resistance to the regimes under which they live. Forms of resistance to a regime in power range from rebellion through terrorism⁸ to peaceful demonstrations for additional political rights. While neither Roms in Slovakia nor Roms in Macedonia have engaged in rebellion or terrorism, Roms in both countries have occasionally been involved in

demonstrations. Nonetheless, the character and handling of the demonstrations suggests that Roms neither present themselves as a threat nor are perceived as such by relevant authorities.

Roms in Macedonia have organized and executed fewer than ten demonstrations of any kind. Moreover, while precise numbers are not available, it appears that most demonstrations by Roms were organized in preparation for the local elections of September 2000 by the United Party of Roms of Macedonia, which seeks primarily to improve Romani living conditions rather than to secure additional political rights for Roms (*Partija na Romite od Makedonija* 1998). Earlier demonstrations by Roms include a protest against police brutality in Štip, a political rally in Prilep in preparation for the local elections of 1996, and a 1999 demonstration in Skopje demanding that more attention be paid to Romani refugees from Kosovo. In light not only of the themes of these demonstrations but also of the fact that Macedonian authorities responded to none of these demonstrations (with repression or with concessions), there is ample reason to believe that Roms in Macedonia are perceived as harmless by Macedonian authorities, such that their relatively high degree of political integration cannot be explained in terms of their apparent ability to upset domestic political stability.⁹

2. *Homeland nationalism*

In contradistinction to the many works on nationalism which address separatist movements (see, for example, Deutsch 1961; 1966; Hechter 1975; Gourevitch 1979; Gellner 1983; Rokkan and Urwin 1983; Horowitz 1985; Anderson 1991; Hardin 1995; Laitin 1995; 1998), Rogers Brubaker's *Nationalism Reframed* treats the rights-seeking nationalisms resulting from the nationalization of political space in post-Communist Eastern Europe (Brubaker 1996: 4). While Brubaker is not the only recent theorist of nationalism to examine the strategic interaction among leaders of states in the process of consolidating their authority, ethnic minorities in those states, and the leaders of states with ethnic diaspora in other states (see, for example, Laitin 1996), Brubaker's account of this interaction is the most comprehensive thus far. Holding that European history is returning to rather than moving beyond the nation-state, Brubaker describes a triad of distinct nationalisms at work in the new states of post-Communist Eastern Europe. "Nationalizing" nationalism exists where the titular nationality¹⁰ of the state in question views that state as an unrealized nation-state, using state power to promote the interests of the core nation in order to remedy this perceived defect (Brubaker 1996: 4-5, 63). "Homeland" nationalism, on the other hand, exists where the political and cultural elite of one state "define ethnonational kin in other states as members of one and the same nation," asserting the right to protect non-citizen members of the nation's diaspora (Brubaker 1996: 4-5, 58). Thus, "[n]ationalizing and homeland nationalisms are diametrically opposed and directly conflicting," as nationalizing states and external homelands advance competing claims on the

same set of persons (Brubaker 1996: 111). Finally, “minority” nationalism reflects the precarious situation of national minorities between nationalizing state and external homeland, with minority nationalism both reflecting and reflected in the interaction between nationalizing and homeland nationalisms (Brubaker 1996: 4-5, 111).

By Brubaker’s account, minority rights are presumably the result of successful homeland nationalism. As a result, while Brubaker’s theory may explain the political integration of many minorities in many states, it is not applicable to stateless minorities, for homeland nationalism requires a homeland state. Insofar as Roms everywhere constitute a stateless minority, homeland nationalism cannot explain Romani political integration anywhere (cf. Stokes 1993: 208). Consequently, accounts of state policy toward Roms must rely on other factors.

Macro-social explanations of minority political integration.

Cultural proximity.

Defining a civilization as “the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have short of that which distinguishes humans from other species,” Samuel Huntington warns that intergroup conflict after the Cold War will be fought in large part between groups belonging to different civilizations (Huntington 1993: 22, 24). While civilizations encompass a wide variety of characteristics, the most important of these is religion (Huntington 1993: 25). Additionally, although Huntington’s article appears in *Foreign Affairs* and deals primarily with interstate conflict, Huntington is careful to point out that his theory applies equally to domestic conflicts between ethnic groups: “At the micro-level, adjacent groups along the fault lines between civilizations struggle, often violently, over the control of territory and each other” (Huntington 1993: 29).

If Huntington is correct in thinking that “[t]he fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future” both between and within states (Huntington 1993: 22, 29), then we can expect that minorities which belong to the same “civilization” as the titular nationality of the state within which they live will exhibit a higher degree of political integration than do minorities which belong to a civilization different from that of the titular nationality. Given the primacy of religion in Huntington’s account of civilizations, the proposition that cultural distance accounts for differential Romani political integration can be tested by comparing the religious affiliations of Roms on the one hand with those of ethnic Slovaks and ethnic Macedonians on the other. Thus, insofar as Roms are better integrated in Macedonia than they are in Slovakia, Huntington’s central hypothesis leads us to expect that the religion of Roms in Macedonia should have more in common with the religion of the ethnic Macedonian population than does the religion of Roms in Slovakia have in common with that of the ethnic Slovak population. In fact, however, the state of affairs is the opposite of what

Huntington would predict, as the religious difference between Roms and ethnic Macedonians is greater than that between Roms and ethnic Slovaks.

Whereas both most ethnic Slovaks and most Roms in Slovakia are Roman Catholic, 94.8% of ethnic Macedonians declared themselves Orthodox Christians to census takers in 1994, while 91.6% of Roms declared themselves Muslims.¹¹ Thus, while the vast majority of ethnic Macedonians, Serbs, and Vlachs belong to what Huntington (1993: 25; 1996: 45-47) has called “Slavic-Orthodox” civilization, a similarly overwhelming proportion of Roms in Macedonia belong to the “Islamic” civilization shared also by the country’s Albanian, Turkish, and Macedonian Muslim (*Torbeš*) populations.¹² Although most Roms in Macedonia are Muslim, however, their relations with the Orthodox ethnic Macedonian population (as well as with the state as a whole) are considerably better than are relations between Roms and the largest Muslim population in Macedonia, the Albanians (see, for example, Kanev 1996: 242-243, 247; Najcevska 2000: 6; Najcevska et al. 2000: 6). Thus, cultural proximity fails as an explanation of Romani political integration.¹³

The Communist inheritance

Stressing the need for analyses of post-Communism to “com[e] to analytical grips with the cultural, political, and economic ‘inheritance’ of forty years of Leninist rule,” Jowitt argues against those who would characterize the end of Communism as entailing an immediate transition to democracy (Jowitt 1992: 286-287). According to Jowitt (Jowitt 1992: 286), “[a]ll cultural and institutional legacies shape their successors.” Consequently, just as pre-Communist societies shaped the regimes which transformed them, post-Communist societies can be expected to display a degree of continuity with the regimes which raised them. Advancing the thesis that the historical differences among the post-Communist states and the specific events which brought about the end of Communism are less important than are the similarities among them, Jowitt further asserts that “[t]he Leninist legacy is currently shaping, and will continue to shape, developmental efforts and outcomes in Eastern Europe” (Jowitt 1992: 286, 299).

Applied to the case at hand, Jowitt’s theory would lead us to believe that differences in Communist Gypsy policies will be evident in the policies of post-Communist regimes toward their respective Romani minorities. In other words, differences between Czechoslovak and Yugoslav Communisms should account for the differences in post-Communist policy toward Roms in Slovakia and Macedonia. More specifically, current treatment of Roms in the Republic of Macedonia should be explicable in terms of policies enacted in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. This hypothesis can be tested by comparing Romani political integration across the constituent republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia before and after 1991.

Insofar as former Yugoslav republics other than Macedonia with numerically significant Romani populations experienced war in the 1990s, measurement of Romani political integration in the successor states of the

Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is problematic. Nonetheless, available evidence suggests that Roms have gained rights in post-Communist Macedonia and lost rights elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia. Relevant evidence includes constitutional recognition of Roms as a national minority, official use of the Romani language, and racially motivated violence. Despite its fragmentary nature, this evidence is sufficient to establish that the Republic of Macedonia has been exceptional in its extension of rights to the country's Romani population.

When the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia recognized Roms as a national minority in 1981, it assigned Yugoslavia's Romani population a legal status already given Roms earlier by some of the country's constituent republics. Thus, whereas Roms had nationality status in Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina as early as 1945, this status came to the Romani population of Macedonia only with the federal-level upgrade of 1981 (cf. Kenrick 2001: 409). At present, however, the Republic of Macedonia is not only the sole former Yugoslav republic to recognize the Roms as one of the country's nationalities in its Constitution, but it is also the only country in the world to extend such recognition to its Romani population. While the Preamble of the 1991 Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia mentions "Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Roms, and other nationalities,"¹⁴ the Preamble of the 1995 Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina refers to "Bosniacs, Croats, and Serbs, as constituent peoples (along with Others),"¹⁵ while the Republic of Montenegro's 1992 Constitution guarantees to members of "national and ethnic groups" protection of their "national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and confessional identity" but neither distinguishes between the types of groups nor enumerates the members of each category.¹⁶ In Slovenia, Croatia, and Serbia, on the other hand, the legal status of Roms has reverted to that of an ethnic group, as had been the case before 1981.¹⁷ The fragmentary data available on state support for Romani culture in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia suggest that Macedonia is unique in this regard as well. While there is no evidence of use of the Romani language in conducting state business in any of the former Yugoslav republics save Macedonia, Romani has been used in the media in the Republic of Serbia as well as in Macedonia (Kenrick 2001: 417; Rakic-Vodinelic 1998: 103, 114-115; cf. Cabada 2000: 253; Djurdjevic 2001: 9). However, although the absence of state support for Romani culture in former Yugoslav republics other than Serbia and Macedonia as well as the use of Romani in Serbian state media following the breakup of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia suggest continuity with Communist policy toward Roms, the emergence of mass violence against Roms in Serbia is indicative of a deterioration in Roms' status not observed in Macedonia (Hedges 1997; Human Rights Watch 2001; Latham 1999: 208-209; Liégeois and Gheorghe 1995: 18; cf. Mitrovic and Zajic 1998: 54; Sudar 2002; Sunter 2001). Moreover, the fact that the number of hours of Romani programming on Serbian Radio and Television in Kosovo far exceeded the number of hours broadcast in Serbia proper and Voivodina combined (which together were home to over twice as many Roms as Kosovo) suggests that the

broadcasts have been motivated by a concern with the growth of Albanian influence over the Romani population in Kosovo (Rakic-Vodinelic 1998: 103).

Jowitt's theory that the legacies of Communist policies manifest themselves in post-Communist policies provides a more plausible account of the treatment of Roms in post-Communist Macedonia than do the other hypotheses treated thus far. Still, although post-Communist policies exhibit some degree of continuity with the policies of their Communist predecessors, the absence of a consistent relation between the previous and current situations of Roms in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia presents a problem for Jowitt's hypothesis. By way of contrast, a concern with the growth and activism of the ethnic Albanian population goes a long way toward explaining policy toward Roms not only in Macedonia, but also in Serbia.

Political competition as an explanation for Romani political integration

My working hypothesis is that the difference between Slovak and Macedonian official treatments of Roma has stemmed from political divisions in Macedonia not salient in Slovakia. In the Republic of Macedonia, the refusal of one of the two largest parties of the titular nationality to participate in a governing coalition with the other has combined with the strong showing of the ethnic Albanian voting bloc at elections to result in the inclusion of ethnic Albanian parties in all governments formed since the first multi-party elections in 1990. Additionally, agitation by the Albanian diaspora in and around Macedonia as well as official statements of the Albanian government led ethnic Macedonians to view the threat posed by Albanian mobilization as real even well before events in Kosovo created a refugee crisis in Macedonia (Blazevska and Mehmeti 1998: 20; International Crisis Group 1999: 18; Moore 1998; Netherlands Helsinki Committee and the Norwegian Helsinki Committee 1998; Poulton 1995: 130, 136, 141; Poulton 1998: 19, 33; cf. Bogoev 1985; Bubevski 1985; Reuter 1987: 139-140). In what follows, I propose to account for the political integration of Roms in terms of ethnic Macedonians' perceived need to secure loyal allies against both the other major segment of the titular population and against the ethnic Albanian population.¹⁸

Macedonian-Albanian relations and the Romani population

As Albanian separatism spread from Kosovo to Macedonia in the late 1970s and early 1980s, "[t]he Rom found themselves caught up in the bitter upsurge of Albanian nationalism," with Macedonian officials noting pressure on Roms as well as Turks and Macedonian Muslims to declare themselves Albanian (Crowe 1996: 228; Ramet 1992: 194, 196-197). Authorities in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia viewed the assimilation of Roms into the ethnic Albanian population as problematic on the grounds that the latter group constituted "the main internal threat" (Poulton 1998: 19; cf. Poulton 1995: 130, 141; Reuter 1987: 139-140). Consistent with this view, a 23-part series entitled "Islamism in Macedonia"

published in the Skopje daily *Vecer* from 25 September to 21 October 1980 provides a detailed exposition of the official Macedonian view of Islam as a tool of Albanian nationalism by which Albanians can assimilate smaller Muslim minorities such as Turks, Macedonian Muslims, and Roms (Poulton 1989: 27). Additionally, an edited volume published in 1985 by the Macedonian Academy of Arts and Sciences and entitled *Problems of the Demographic Development of SR Macedonia* contained discussion of problematically high natality in Muslim enclaves in general and among ethnic Albanians in particular, linking high birthrates to expansionism (cf. Bogoev 1985; Bubevski 1985). That same year, Victor Friedman (1985: 51) made note of pressure on Roms in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia to assimilate to an Albanian identity.

Since the breakup of Yugoslavia, it has reportedly become common for Roms in Macedonia (and Kosovo) to be offered bribes in exchange for their declarations to census-takers, with threats and physical violence also used to ensure Romani collaboration (European Roma Rights Center 1998: 36-37; cf. Duijzings 1997: 212-213; Friedman 1995: 179; Poulton 1989: 27; 1991: 90; 1995: 130, 141; 1998: 15). Additionally, Nevzat Halili, founder and president of what was then Macedonia's largest ethnic Albanian party (the Party for Democratic Prosperity, or PPD) appealed to Roms and other Muslims to declare Albanian nationality in the census of 1991 (Andrejevich 1991: 27; Bugajski 1994: 115-116; Poulton 1995: 139). In this context, the introduction of documents in the Romani language during the census of 1994 despite the fact that few (if any) Roms in Macedonia read and write Romani better than Macedonian, Albanian, or Turkish suggests a concern on the part of Macedonian authorities with preventing Roms from heeding Halili's appeal (cf. Friedman 1996a: 96, 99; 1996b: 98; 1999: 334; 2001: 149). In similar fashion, the fact that administrative redistricting in 1996 had the overall effect of making cities with the largest Albanian populations less Albanian, more Macedonian, and more Romani also suggests that Macedonian authorities see Roms as harmless in contradistinction to Albanians (cf. Maleska 1998: 163; Popovski and Panov 1998: 60-65).¹⁹

If the evidence presented in the preceding paragraphs of this section points to Macedonian authorities' concern with Albanian assimilation of Roms, the stances of Macedonia's two largest political parties provide evidence that political parties of the titular nationality view ethnic Albanians as a threat and that they see the Romani population as a potential ally in both inter- and intra-ethnic political competition. Whereas the program of the ruling Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonia National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) mentions the potential for the activities of national minorities to have adverse effects in all spheres of life and contains a section on "Population and Demographic Policy" aimed at reducing both Albanian natality and Albanian migration (Vnatrešna makedonska revolucionerna organizacija-Demokratska partija za makedonsko nacionalno edinstvo 1998: 16, 73-74), a representative of VMRO-DPMNE's main rival, the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM), made explicit reference to the

threat to the constitutional order posed by the Albanian political parties, also mentioning the dream (and the danger) of a Greater Albania.²⁰ The same interview revealed a view of Roms as politically relevant and wielding “an important influence” in addition to being among Macedonia’s most loyal citizens (in contradistinction to ethnic Albanians, for most of whom Macedonia is only a “reserve fatherland”). An interview with a representative of VMRO-DPMNE, on the other hand, revealed that as a result of the polarization between VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, the Romani population often decides which candidate wins local and national mandates.²¹ Statements by representatives of SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE about Roms’ political relevance are supported by these parties’ demonstrated interest in Romani support, as both parties campaign in Romani settlements.²²

Extending the logic of political competition: Serbia

Evidence from Serbia suggests that the logic explaining Macedonian interest in Romani support applies also to Serbia, as measures taken to protect ethnic minorities living in Kosovo had the effect of weakening the Albanian majority there which is at the same time the Republic of Serbia’s largest ethnic minority (Abrahams 1999: cf.). First, the Socialist Republic of Serbia introduced broadcast and primary school instruction in Romani in Kosovo in the 1980s, at a time when the activism of the region’s Albanian majority was on the increase. Second, after the breakup of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Serbian government appealed to Roms through measures including subsidy for Romani publications as well as radio and television broadcasts in Romani, which were concentrated in Kosovo. The effective removal of Kosovo from Serbian control seems accordingly to have brought a reduction of official interest in the Romani population concentrated there, as suggested by the recent elimination of Romani broadcasts at Radio Niš.²³ Finally, Milošević’s inclusion of Roms and Egyptians in Serbia’s delegation to the February 1999 Rambouillet negotiations over Kosovan autonomy, like his expression of concern for the status of Kosovo’s *Goran* minority (Serbian Muslims living in the hills above Prizren (cf. Poulton 1998: 16) and his insistence that any national group represented in the parliament of an autonomous Kosovo be allowed to block any decision contrary to the group’s (undefined) “vital interest” further suggests that the extension of rights to stateless minorities in general and to Roms in particular stems from a concern with the potential costs to the state of political mobilization by a country’s largest ethnic minority. In this manner, political competition explains not only Macedonian, but also Serbian policy toward Roms in both Communist and post-Communist periods.²⁴

Conclusion

To summarize, whereas the nonexistence of a Romani homeland state rules out homeland nationalism as an explanation for Romani political

integration, the form and content of Roms' demands on the states in which they live combines with the reception of these demands by state authorities to rule out a concern with domestic stability as a viable explanation. Cultural proximity fails as an explanation of the variation in policy toward Roms because relations between Muslim Roms and Orthodox Christian ethnic Macedonians are better than relations between Roms and their Albanian coreligionists. More convincing than explanations in terms of homeland nationalism, domestic political stability, and cultural proximity is the hypothesis that Romani political integration is a function of Communist policies toward Roms, but this explanation fails, too, when the absence of a consistent relation between Communist and post-Communist policies becomes apparent. Providing a fuller and more convincing account of Romani political integration than these other hypotheses, the explanation of Romani political integration which I espouse emphasizes Roms' political usefulness to other ethnic groups: threatened by rivals both Macedonian and Albanian, Macedonian authorities have granted rights to the Roms in the hope of securing loyal allies against other segments of the titular population and Macedonia's largest ethnic minority.

Endnotes

¹ Whereas 'Rom' is neutral, 'Gypsy' often has a pejorative connotation. For this reason, I use the latter term only in presenting policies and statements the declared targets of which are "Gypsies."

² Ordinary discourse in Slovakia and Macedonia provides an illustration of this distinction: whereas use of the phrase 'Romani problematic' is widespread in government as well as non-official circles in the Slovak Republic, ethnic Macedonians frequently describe Roms as "a peaceful people," often doing so in the context of broader statements which paint a negative picture of Macedonia's ethnic Albanian population.

³ As was the case in the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe, recognition as a "nationality" as opposed to an "ethnic group" by post-Communist regimes generally constitutes a group the members of which are entitled to enjoy certain rights not extended to the members of ethnic groups.

⁴ "Ustav na Republika Makedonija," *Služben vesnik na Republika Makedonija* 52/1991.

⁵ I am grateful to Sašo Klekovski of the Macedonian Center for International Cooperation for pointing this out. Also see Barany (1995: 527) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia (1997: 2).

⁶ Evidence used to measure Romani political integration falls into two broad categories: legal regulations and observed trends in state practice. Within the first category fall measures which directly fix the position of Roms in a state, including mention of Roms in the constitution, the place of Roms in an official hierarchy of categories ranging from

“ethnic groups” at the bottom to “nations” at the top, and provisions for Romani representation in parliament. Also included in the category of legal regulations are measures which deal with the representation of Roms in public life, such as state funding for Romani political parties, education in the Romani language and on Romani history and culture, Romani programming on state radio and television, support for Romani print media, and the use of the Romani language in official documents. Laws enforcing or prohibiting discrimination against Roms constitute the final subcategory of legal regulations used in measuring Romani political integration. Trends in the official treatment of Roms constitute the second general category of evidence. One indicator in this category is the presentation of Romani perpetrators in crime reports (i.e., Do state organs routinely single out Roms for identification by ethnicity? Is ‘gypsy’ itself a criminological category?). Another indicator of trends in state practice is the application (or non-application) of standing legislation on racially motivated crime in particular and on discrimination in general to cases in which the victims are Roms. Finally, public statements about Roms uttered by political representatives of the titular nationality and the reception of these statements by the national political elite provide a gauge of the country’s broader social climate.

⁷ In attributing the political integration of Roms to their political usefulness, I draw on and extend findings from the writings of the linguist Victor Friedman (1985; 1996a; 1996b; 1999; 2001). By documenting various manifestations of Macedonian authorities’ concern with the demographic and political activity of the Albanian population, my analysis elaborates Friedman’s insight about the motivations underlying Macedonian authorities’ support for Romani language and culture. My intellectual debt to Friedman notwithstanding, however, my research differs from Friedman’s in two important ways. First, in addressing political divisions within the ethnic Macedonian population which add to the saliency of the challenges posed by Macedonia’s Albanian population and which consequently make Roms attractive allies, I place greater emphasis than does Friedman on the domain of politics more narrowly construed. Second, the larger project from which this paper is an excerpt analyzes the case of Roms in the Slovak Republic, a country outside Friedman’s primary geographical area of concentration.

⁸ By ‘terrorism’, I mean acts of violence committed against putative symbols of oppression undertaken in order to draw attention to the plight of the putatively oppressed (cf. Perry 1988: 206).

⁹ The similar (in fact slightly higher) number of demonstrations by Roms in Slovakia (relative to the number of comparable demonstrations in Macedonia) provides further support for the contention that a concern with domestic stability does not underlie the higher degree of political integration of Roms in Macedonia.

¹⁰ The titular nationality is the nationality whose name an ethnoterritorial unit bears. Thus, Macedonians constitute the titular nationality of Macedonia, while Slovaks are the titular nationality of Slovakia.

¹¹ *The 1994 Census of Population, Households, Dwellings and Agricultural Holdings in the Republic of Macedonia, Book I: Population according to Declared Ethnic Affiliation*,

Religious Affiliation, Mother Tongue and Citizenship (Skopje: Statistical Office of Macedonia, 1996), page 50.

¹² Even leaving Roms aside for a moment, Huntington's account of civilizations comes apart quickly when applied to Macedonia and, more broadly, to the Balkans. On the one hand, Vlachs are ethnically closest to Romanians, such that they are not Slavs, yet their Orthodox Christianity (92.6% in Macedonia) seems to place them in Huntington's "Slavic-Orthodox" civilization. On the other hand, Macedonian Muslims (i.e., *Torbeši*) are ethnically Macedonian and therefore Slavs, but the importance Huntington attaches to religion in defining civilizations seems to mean that they, like Bosnians throughout the Former Yugoslavia, *Gorans* in Kosovo, and *Pomaks* in Bulgaria, are relegated to the "Islamic" civilization, its "bloody borders," and its conflict with "Western" civilization. Moreover, as Emilija Simoska (1993: 100) points out, Macedonia *qua* independent state has no historical friends among Orthodox countries, having once been partitioned among Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece under Russian supervision. In similar fashion, the Macedonian Orthodox Church has not been recognized by other national Orthodox churches.

¹³ The religious heterodoxy of many Roms constitutes a factor with potential to weaken an otherwise powerful refutation of the hypothesis that cultural distance accounts for differential treatment of Roms. In Macedonia, many (Muslim) Roms celebrate Orthodox Christian religious festivals such as Christmas and St. George's Day (cf. Barany 1995: 518; Puxon 1976: 128-129). Consequently, some non-Romani Muslims in Macedonia claim that Roms are not really Muslim, with a survey conducted in 2000 showing that both Albanian and Turkish children in Macedonia see Romani children as unlikely to go to mosque as adults (Najcevska et al. 2000: 13; cf. Kenrick and Puxon 1972: 21). There have also been reports of Roms being prevented from entering mosques. Nonetheless, the cultural distance hypothesis could be supported only if the Catholicism of Roms in Slovakia were more different from the Catholicism of Catholic Slovaks than is the Islam of Roms in Macedonia from the teachings of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. Insofar as this seems highly unlikely, we would do better to search elsewhere for an explanation of Romani political integration. Also worth noting is that religious heterodoxy among Roms (or, for that matter, any other population) poses a problem for Huntington's theory of intercivilizational conflict. According to Huntington (1993: 27), "[e]ven more than ethnicity, religion discriminates sharply and exclusively among people. A person can be half-French and half-Arab and simultaneously even a citizen of two countries. It is more difficult to be half-Catholic and half-Muslim." In Macedonia, however, where Roms mix Orthodox Christian and Muslim rituals, religious differentiation is not always as sharp as Huntington would have us believe.

¹⁴ "Ustav na Republika Makedonija," *Služben vesnik na Republika Makedonija* 52/1991.

¹⁵ Available online at http://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/law/bk00000_.html.

¹⁶ *Ustav Republike Crne Gore*, Article 67. Available online at <http://www.montenet.org/law/ustav.htm>.

¹⁷ See *Ustava Republike Slovenije* (available online at <http://www.us-rs.si/si/basisfr.html>); *Croatia – Constitution* (available online at http://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/law/hr00000_.html); *Ustav Republike Srbije* (available online at <http://www.srbija.sr.gov.yu/cinjenice/constitution>). The Slovenian Constitution of 1991 promised that Slovenia would become an exception in this regard by promising (in Article 65) a law (not issued at this writing) to regulate the status and rights of Romani communities residing on Slovenian territory, but guarantees the rights of only the “autochthonous Italian and Hungarian ethnic communities” (Article 5). Also worth mentioning is that Article 11 of the 1992 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia guarantees the “rights of national minorities to preserve, foster and express their ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and other peculiarities,” but makes no mention of specific minorities (available online at http://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/law/sr00000_.html). As the Serbian legal scholar Vesna Rakic-Vodinelic puts it, “the legal status of national minorities is insufficiently defined, and it cannot be reliably concluded which ethnic groups have the status of a national minority nor what are the basic elements of their legal status” (Rakic-Vodinelic 1998: 106).

¹⁸ In the Slovak Republic, on the other hand, the domination of the political scene by a single Slovak party and the relatively small share of the popular vote won by the Magyar minority’s political parties combined to allow the Magyars’ exclusion from government from 1992 until 1998 (with the exception of several months in 1994), while Slovak-Magyar relations remained cordial in comparison with Macedonian-Albanian relations (Bútorová, Gyárfášová, and Velšic 2000: 305; Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe 1997; Fisher 1995: 63; Kusý 1998: 65-66; Lord 1993: 9). There is accordingly little evidence that political parties of the Slovak majority view Magyars as a threat or that these parties see Slovakia’s Romani population as a potential ally.

¹⁹ Table 1: Ethnic composition of selected municipalities in Macedonia before and after the Law on Territorial Division of 1996

Municipality	% Albanians		% Macedonians		% Roms	
	before	-> after	before	-> after	before	-> after
	redistricting		redistricting		redistricting	
Gostivar	64.30	-> 55.06	18.20	-> 29.35	1.97	-> 4.12
Kicevo	49.60	-> 26.12	39.30	-> 58.55	2.65	-> 5.09
Kumanovo	36.91	-> 24.87	50.48	-> 60.05	2.44	-> 3.30
Struga	44.70	-> 36.63	45.40	-> 56.06	0.20	-> 0.30
Tetovo	74.90	-> 59.35	20.50	-> 31.74	1.41	-> 3.48

Source: *The 1994 Census of Population, Households, Dwellings and Agricultural Holdings in the Republic of Macedonia, Book I: Population according to Declared Ethnic Affiliation, Religious Affiliation, Mother Tongue and Citizenship; Book XIII: Total*

Population, Households, Dwellings and Agricultural Holdings according to the Administrative-Territorial Division from 1996 (Skopje: Statistical Office of Macedonia, 1997), page 26 and pages 64-66 (respectively). For the text of the law on redistricting, see “Zakon za teritorijalnata podelba na Republika Makedonija i opredeluvanje na podracjata na edinicite na lokalnata samouprava,” *Služben vesnik na Republika Makedonija* 49/1996.

²⁰ Interview conducted 29 January 2001 in Skopje.

²¹ Interview conducted 6 December 2000 in Skopje.

²² Most of the time, the campaigning involves the distribution of basic foodstuffs (e.g., flour, oil, sugar) to potential Romani constituents, as well as promises of infrastructural improvement and employment. Less frequently, campaigning in Romani settlements involves the distribution of money, in relatively rare cases in combination with physical coercion. This interest in Romani support seems not to be shared by the Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PPD) and the Democratic Party of Albanians (PDSH): in contradistinction to SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE, these parties do not campaign in Romani settlements. While representatives of PPD and PDSH told me in interviews (conducted 21 and 23 November 2000 in Skopje) that their respective parties appeal to Roms, both also admitted that they derive little support from Macedonia’s Romani population. Here, however, it should be noted that Macedonia’s Albanian parties campaign relatively little, presumably because they know which votes they can expect (cf. Hristova 1999a: 76, 85; 1999b: 66, 68; Krause 1999).

²³ “Ukinut romski program Radio Niša,” *B92 Vesti*, 3 January 2002. While Radio Niš is located in Serbia proper, its signal can be captured in Kosovo.

²⁴ Additional evidence from Bulgaria and Romania lends additional support for my contention that the extension of rights to stateless minorities stems from a concern with the capacity for minorities with a homeland state to impose unacceptable costs on the host state. Whereas the Bulgarian Communist regime established special boarding schools for Roms in order to prevent Muslim Roms from assimilating into Bulgaria’s Turkish minority (Crowe 1996: 20, 24-25; Poulton 1998: 14; cf. Popov 1992: 38-39), the appeals to Roms in post-Communist Bulgaria by the (ethnically Bulgarian) Union of Democratic Forces in order to reduce the influence of (ethnically Turkish) Movement for Rights and Freedoms provide a more recent example of the same phenomenon (Koinova 1998; cf. Popov 1992: 38-39). In similar fashion, Romania’s provisions for the representation of Roms (as well as other minorities) in parliament seem to have been designed for the purpose of trumping Magyar claims. I am grateful to Philip Roeder for this latter point.

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