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PECULIARITIES OF POLITICAL CULTURE IN POST-COMMUNIST SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES: THE CASES OF MACEDONIA, SERBIA, MONTENEGRO, AND BULGARIA

Does Zero-Sum Social Reasoning Affect Political Culture in Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Bulgaria? ²

One of the most widespread definitions of political culture describes it as “a people’s predominant beliefs, attitudes, values, ideas, sentiments, and evaluations about the political system of its country and the role of the self in that system” (L. Diamond, 1994: 7). The concept is usually used as an explanatory variable in politics. However, I believe that “political culture” is not an explanatory concept by itself but a construct that needs to be explained.

Cultural explanations have recently been used to elucidate the relative failures of building democracy in Russia and some other post-communist countries. Indeed, why were some post-communist countries more successful in their transformation than others when the starting point for all was seemingly equal – the demolition of the institutions of the communist party-state? So, why did the point of arrival of the post-communist systemic change turn out to be different for various countries? And is it accidental that there are regional divisions in the success of post-communist transformation, the Central European countries being more successful than the Southeast European states or some of the former Soviet republics? Can it be explained in terms of the “wrong” democratic institution building in the unsuccessful countries, or are there other factors responsible for their relative failure to democratize? Can the concept of culture be satisfactory enough to explain the differences, and how can we verify a cultural explanation? And how could we explain the very cultural differences and similarities of regions and countries?

I argue that the cultural explanation of political change should be reinforced by a historical explanation – otherwise the specifics in regional and national political cultures would be viewed as unexplainable substances, as inextricable and unchangeable characteristics of the people inhabiting these regions and countries.

So, political culture will be defined in this study as an historically shaped popular perception of politics, a set of political loyalties, beliefs, values, and expectations (modes of social reasoning) that are the product of the specific historical experience of nations and groups. The political culture of Southeast Europe will be viewed as a subject that cannot be described in a straightforward manner but only in a step-by-step manner, thus revealing different levels and elements. Therefore, rather than using cultural explanation, I will employ a historical explanation in order to elucidate the peculiarities in the political cultures of the four Southeast European countries being in question.

The purpose of the project is twofold:

1. To provide a *picture of public attitudes and mental modes of reasoning* of the population in the four post-communist Balkan countries in relation to democracy and inter-ethnic understanding;
2. To try to *explain* the historical and cultural *roots* of these modes of social reasoning.

The *main goal of the analysis* is to find out whether there is a trace of some specific historical legacies of the region, reflected in the way of social reasoning of the population, and whether these legacies of social reasoning affect the level of democratic support and inter-ethnic tolerance in the countries under examination. Thus, the *main object* that will be studied is the impact of a prevailing cultural norm in the region which determines perception of social relations as a zero-sum game. The tradition of a zero-sum perception of social and economic relations has perpetuated the belief that ‘your acquisition of goods, rights, etc. is equivalent to my (potential) loss of these goods and rights’ (see Shopflin, 2000; Offe, 1997). The idea that both parties could gain is considered naïve and impossible. Actually, zero-sum social reasoning has its sources in pre-modern societies where it appears to be the main principle of resource distribution. It is, also, a characteristic of social reasoning in economically backward societies with long-existing patriarchal social structures.

I am going to examine to what extent and in what way this particular cultural norm influences inter-ethnic perception in the region and support

for the market economy and democracy. Also, I will try to verify whether the 'zero-sum game' perception of politics and inter-ethnic relations is accompanied and strengthened by the same pattern of zero-sum economic reasoning.

Between-country difference will not be presupposed on the theoretical level of the study. Thus, keeping in mind the differences between Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro I will not account for them at the level of hypotheses. Therefore, the between-country differences will be expected as a probable result of the analysis of empirical findings.

In order to understand the peculiarity of Southeast European political culture we have to define the main differences between the Western and the Southeast European models of historical development.⁴ The West European case will be used as a frame of reference through which the processes in Southeast European countries will be analyzed and which determines the way in which the comparison is made. The contrast with some Western historical peculiarities will highlight the differences that are considered significant for the purpose of the study, revealing the formation of the structural features that are decisive for the characteristics of political culture in the region. No axiological superiority or inferiority will be presumed during the analysis of the historical features of the two regions.

Peculiarities of Southeast European Cultural History

I will first try to clarify some of the most salient features of Southeast Europe's cultural history which are significantly different from those of Western Europe. The two regions have had different types of Christian tradition since the medieval period: the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox forms of Christianity. They have molded two cultural models, which have had important impact on the value systems of the populations under their influence. These two different civilizational orbits have created distinct popular understandings of the meaning of life and death, the role of action and its purpose in people's lives, the degree of solidarity between people, the way of life and the peculiarities of moral norms.

The distinct religious models have had significant consequences for the very mode of the relationship between the Church and the state, which was constitutive for the medieval society. Balkan religious culture was developed under the direct influence of Byzantine Orthodox culture

that relied on the Caesar-Pope principle organizationally connecting the Church with the secular political authorities. Hence, the Byzantine cultural model powerfully influenced the formation of Southeast European statehood. Not only Orthodox Christianity, but also the socio-political structure of the Byzantine Empire was taken as a chief model in the foundation of the medieval states in the region. These religion-based cultural features formed the consequent socio-structural and political peculiarities key to understanding attitudes towards political authorities, which have been reproduced and transmitted for centuries.

There were some peculiarities of the socio-political system of the Byzantine Empire which were different from West European models. The main aspects of the Western political tradition lay in the separation of religious and secular legitimization. The competition between the ruler and the Church made it possible for third parties to emerge with their own sources of power. Thus, autonomy and the separation of spheres and division of power remained a crucial feature of West European political patterns and became the foundation for the extension of liberties (see Schopflin, 1990). The Eastern cultural and political archetype was much more hierarchical than that of the West. One of its peculiarities was that religion and its institution, the Church, were subordinate to the state. The state itself was highly centralized. There were no landowners independent of the central authorities, and possession of land was arranged through a system of emperor's gifts. These were awarded to aristocrats who behaved in accordance with the emperor's will, and thus reinforced their obedience to him. This socio-political system of strong centralized state power with permanent mobility of the social strata was 'borrowed' by the newly formed Balkan states after the mid 9th century AD.

Thus, the state was the leading factor within the whole system of political, social and cultural relations. This feature defined property relations as well as the relation to property of the highest social stratum – the aristocracy. The aristocracy did not rely on private property, but on state distribution and redistribution. This maintained the position of state bureaucrats who depended entirely on the central power in the hands of the emperor. If an aristocrat at some time was a landowner, it was because he was in power at that moment – but he was not in power because he was a landowner, as in the case of classic feudalism typical of Western Europe. There was no feudal property with guaranteed immunity and, consequently, there was no feudal hierarchy, but state or political

hierarchy. The Balkan aristocracy of the medieval period was a political rather than economic category.

Like the aristocracy, culture and, in particular, religion, with its chief institution, the Church, were also subordinate to political power. Every change the political power relations influenced the Church and the clergy. What was true about the land gifts to aristocracy applied equally to the Orthodox clergy. Therefore, the model of Church power in the region during medieval times was also borrowed from Byzantium. Following the spirit of the Byzantine political conception, the authority of the Church was similarly subordinate to the Tsar, who appointed not only the high priests but also the very head of the Orthodox Church. Those who dominated politics also dominated culture. The state was that institution which determined the strength and the fate of culture (see N. Genchev, 1988). These peculiarities of the Byzantine socio-political model drove historians to speak about two different types of feudalism – the economic feudalism of Western Europe, and the political feudalism of the East European cultural model, which had its roots in the Byzantine cultural and political model.

The East European cultural model influenced to a significant degree the model of social and political relations in Southeast Europe. Contrary to the widespread argument about the interruption of the political history of the region due to the Ottoman invasion, recent studies underline the continuity between the Byzantine and the Ottoman Empire in respect to exercise of power and the centralized role of the state (see M. Mazower, 2000).

The institutionalized Balkan culture of the Middle Ages was destroyed as the only institutions of Orthodox culture, the churches, were ruined. The specific Caesar-Pope principle of close connection between the church and the state authorities meant that the destruction of state power by the Ottoman Turks was, at the same time, a cultural incident that destroyed the official cultural system and altered culture in its every-day forms, restricting elitist cultural creativity to a minimum. The religious centers, the churches, were destroyed during the beginning of the Ottoman conquest, and this caused deep changes in popular cultural life. Thus, for centuries, Balkan cultures lacked a stable cultural and ideological center (see N. Genchev, 1988). The dominant role of the Orthodox religion on the level of official structures was thus substituted by popular and every-day level Balkan culture. That culture of the low social strata perpetuated for centuries a strange mixture of the Balkans-Turkish mentality where

the cultural sphere coincided with every-day practice. As a result, the family appeared to be the main transmitter and protector of Balkan culture in its forms of native language and the Christian religious tradition. The latter was maintained only on the level of every-day morality. Thus, family structures carried out the functions of the whole cultural system, but on the level of archaic patriarchal every-day relations. The connection between individual and society was performed through low-level patriarchal institutions – peasant community and family, rather than through the high-level clerical cultural institutions as was the case in Western and Central Europe. For centuries, Balkan populations lived without national states and national churches. This has produced some important features in the meaning system and the social behavior of the Balkan people which can still be seen today. For all these reasons, both structural and cultural, after the Ottoman conquest, Balkan populations were formed and existed for five centuries as exclusively peasant in nature, with prominent egalitarian cultural characteristics which were enforced by the lack of hierarchical social stratification.

The exercise of power in the Ottoman Empire can be described using Weber's patrimonial type of rule. The distinctive characteristic of patrimonialism is highly personalized exercising of power, the absence of clear distinction between the state and the ruler's household, and of official from private affairs, the unmediated exercise of power, the personal obedience of officials to the ruler, the tendency to regard the state as a source of provisions for the ruler, and the use of tradition as a main principle of legitimization (see P. N. Diamandouros and F. S. Larrabee, 2000: 29-30). Therefore, in contrast to Western Europe, the legacies of Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire in respect to political power and state, on one hand, and civil society creation, on the other, were much more unfavorable.

Inter-ethnic Relations

The peaceful inter-ethnic relations enjoyed during Ottoman rule were due to the *millet* system – administrative structures containing subjects of the same religion and thus separating one religious group from another. The main pillar of identity was, therefore, religion. This peaceful inter-ethnic coexistence came to an end with the rise of the nationalist movements, which eroded the primacy of religious identity. Thus, in

contrast to the image of the 'ancient hatreds' often ascribed to the region, the inter-ethnic problems of Southeast Europe appear to be rooted in the relatively recent development of the region – that of the beginning of 20th century.

Zero-sum Social Reasoning and its Sources in the Southeast European History

As mentioned above, zero-sum social reasoning has its source in pre-modern societies where the zero-sum game appears to be the main principle of resource distribution. It is also a characteristic of social reasoning in economically backward societies with long-existing patriarchal social structures and a predominant peasant population. Peasantry is a permanent and overwhelming social category in the history of Southeast European societies. The most striking feature of Balkan peasantry was lack of the experience of serfdom during Ottoman rule (see P. Sugar, 1977). The system of serfdom was unknown here, in contrast to the Western, Central European, and Russian regions. The Ottoman political system was sustained by political and military power, but not through economic mechanisms, as it was in the Western Europe. However, the complicated system of ownership and the numerous taxes and restrictions on possession of land by peasants, along with some features of the peasant inheritance law, made impossible the maintenance of larger land holdings. This fact perpetuated the predominance of peasant petty landholders almost until the communist takeover. As a result of distinct property and power relations, the social structure of the region was quite different from that of Western Europe. It included a large peasantry and no indigenous aristocracy, features which fostered strong egalitarian attitudes among the populace.

The Ottoman conquest interrupted the elitist cultural line for a long time in Bulgarian, Macedonian and Serbian history. The old aristocracy was eliminated and, with it, the mechanism of transmission of the old cultural experience was abolished and the continuity of cultural production disrupted. The disappearance of the elitist line in Southeast European culture for several centuries caused irreducible consequences for its culture and popular social reasoning. It created a totally new condition in which these societies entered the modern period during the late 18th and 19th century (see N. Genchev, 1988). The lack of the intermediate body of

aristocracy and the lack of a religious-ideological center independent from the Ottoman state deprived Southeast European peasantry for centuries of an institution which could unite people and create the idea of a common virtue and a common good. Thus, it was very difficult for a peasant to go beyond his individual (close community defined) interests and to find the connection between the private and the public, or to be more precise, to see the link between the habitual perception of what is good for the community and the self, on the one hand, and the state, on the other hand.

High levels of distrust and vague idea of public good and public virtues facilitate zero-sum reasoning. It is reinforced by negative (Shopflin) or leveling (Diamandouros) egalitarianism that tends to cause the downfall of all that is different. The leveling character of the region's egalitarianism and the personified exercising of power within the Ottoman Empire contributed to the creation of a profoundly vague and suspicious perception of political power and of its most powerful institution – the state. Due to the highly personal and unmediated exercising of power, these societies were characterized by a weak capacity of formal structures (institutions) to protect subjects from the arbitrary exercising of power.

One additional feature of these societies is their strong antipathy towards political divisions (Diamandoulos and Larrabee, 2000: 35). Fear of political divisions is actually a pre-modern phenomenon and is usually a characteristic of societies with large peasant populations. For centuries, local peasant communities (whatever their criteria for distinction – religious or ethnic) existed in opposition to the Ottoman state and state-dependent institutions. The result was perpetuation of the conditions hindering the emergence of pluralist societies and the preservation of the zero-sum perception of power relations, limiting the acceptance of interests, compromise and positive-sum logics as constitutive attitudes required by modern politics (see Diamandoulos and Larrabee, 2000).

Thus, the overwhelmingly peasant character of Southeast European societies furthered the emergence of powerful collectivist attitudes and practices including the distrust of political division. Due to the belated and weak modernization of the region, which started at the end of 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, Balkan populations remained predominantly rural until the communist takeover. The economic backwardness of the region did not allow for the emergence of dense and numerous working class populations or a strong bourgeoisie. The social status of hired labor in agriculture and industry during the capitalist period

was also somewhat peculiar. A 'pure type' of people totally deprived of property, of the means of production, including land, existed in very limited numbers during the whole pre-war period. For a century, Balkan workers maintained the mixed consciousness of workers and petty owners. This peculiarity even survived communist modernization during which "the worker will continue to feed and revive the petty owner rather than the opposite" (N. Genchev, 1986: 153). Thus, weak class identification has remained a typical feature of the region because of the predominantly peasant nature of local societies until the communist takeover and even after it.

The bourgeoisie in the region also differs significantly from the classical Western capitalists in its genesis, scope of activity, and mentality. During the period of Ottoman rule, the egalitarian social structure was retained due to a lack of conditions necessary for the appearance of wealthy upper classes and economically independent social groups. Therefore, the bourgeoisie of the region was born from the peasantry and petty craftsmen through a difficult process and had no connection to the old aristocracy. It began its social life from a very low economic and cultural level (with the exception of Romania and to some extent of Greece). This meant that all characteristics of the peasants' social reasoning were applicable for the new Southeast European bourgeoisie as well.

The two principles of political legitimization in pre-modern society – imperial and religious – were quite weak in the region (see Diamandourous and Larrabee, 2000). From country to country, there are differences and peculiarities, which, however, do not change the main picture of pre-modern political legitimization. So, the tradition of weak political loyalties is deeply rooted in social consciousness within the region. The most widespread type of political allegiance is that of client-patron networks (originating from the political structure of Byzantium and then reinforced during Ottoman rule). This kind of allegiance is primarily based on informal and even family relations and is reward oriented. It is determined by zero-sum reasoning and additionally supports it.

The strong ethnic bases of state and nation-building processes as compared to civic processes in Western Europe presuppose a dominance of ethnicity-based national identities over political or class-based identities. This fact predetermined the leading role of culture (mainly folk culture) and language for nation and state-building as compared to the strong role of institutions in West European societies. Thus, national homogenization during the nation-formation period was primarily based on vernacular

ethnicity and not on the concept of citizenship, as was the case in Western Europe. Therefore, the very genesis of nation and state-building in the region presupposes the leading role of ethnicity for national and state cohesion. As a result, ethnicity, rather than formal institutions became the main component of national identities in the region. The ethnic foundation of the Balkan states is reinforced by language as the main indicator of ethnic belonging and thus the ethnic nature of the nation-state. Due to the lack of institution-based identity it is difficult to develop a civic dimension of nationhood. As Schopflin rightly points out, in the region civic virtue is collapsed into cultural virtue and is identified with mono-lingualism (Schopflin, 2000: 125). Language-oriented national identity is strengthened by the absence of developed high culture (replaced by traditional folk culture) which could serve as a useful ground for national identification.

Therefore, zero-sum game social reasoning supported by political loyalty organized around informal client-patron relationships, as well as a zero-sum understanding and exercising of political power in the period between the two world wars resulted in a very weak civic dimension of Southeast European societies. State-society relations in the region were characterized by the weak organizational ability of the social actors and a low level of interest articulation. The lack of historically produced intermediate bodies in the exercising of power undermined the ability of civil society to define itself actively in relation to the state and to develop and articulate a sense of collective civic identity. These peculiarities made difficult the appearance of a set of shared public values which form the basis of citizenship. It is almost impossible to construct citizenship on the basis of ethnic mobilization. Identification of the state with patron-client relationships reinforced suspicious attitudes towards the state and made problematic the development of a civil society in which the relationships between the public and private sphere are clearly regulated and transparent. Rather, an understanding of the public sphere as a privatized sphere has remained predominant in the region and has reinforced the patrimonial line in its development up to the present day. The communist regimes after the Second World War built upon the aversion of the Balkan population towards politics, and post-communist political practices in the region have tended to revive old "patron-client" relationships.

Communist Experience

The communist experience reinforced zero-sum social reasoning through the shortage economic system based on soft budget constraints and limited resources, material and symbolic goods (see Janos Kornai, 1985). That system bolstered the common understanding that resources and goods are given in unchanged quantities, so that one person's gain is another person's loss. It encouraged once again patron-client networks based on the illegal exchange of goods and statuses.

The communist state was successful in the creation of a rationalized etatic identity strongly dependent on the communist party-state as a substitute for civic identity. The modernizing attempts of the communist regime established a direct linkage of each person as an individual to the state, allowing collectivities to exist primarily at the level of socialist enterprises. Thus, the communist system did create a specific socialist identity with its own career patterns and public achievements. Within this type of socialist-etatic identity, each individual and community directly depended on the state for the redistribution of both material and symbolic goods.

Therefore, despite the forced modernization of the region during the communist period, there were two factors which reinforced zero-sum social reasoning. One is the shortage economic system, a limited goods system that turned family and friendship circles and even the communities of ethnic minorities into channels for the distribution of scarce material and symbolic goods. The other factor determining the strength of zero-sum thinking under communism is the forced atomization of society and the opaqueness of the public sphere over which the individual had no control. Thus, the public sphere itself exercised power over the individual. The fear and distrust created by the overwhelming 'public' sphere represented by the party-state was damaging to the emergence of a civic identity, a characteristic of developed democracies. Etatic identity was accompanied by the total lack of civil society. Additionally, the forced migration to the cities of large numbers of peasants, rather than dilute their way of life and social reasoning, turned cities into semi-urbanized areas (see Schopflin, 2000).

The unending zero-sum social reasoning typical of the region reinforced in turn the existing weak civic identity and was supported by common public distrust. Political distrust broke down only within close communities like the family and friendship circles. Thus, the communist system, which

aimed to exclude society from political power, in fact fostered its far-reaching de-politicization. It also strengthened the old Southeast European belief that nothing could be achieved through political action. This understanding is reinforced by the habitual belief born within the patrimonial state that those in power are substantially and principally uncontrollable, that they run society for their own private interests and that they are *a priori* amoral. Thus, the state and exercising of power by political authorities are evaluated by the moral criteria of good and evil. These tendencies of social reasoning concerning politics were intensified during the post-communist period. All communist deficiencies turned out to be counter-productive in the development of a stable democracy and civil society.

Post-Communism

The strength and the political role of ethnic identity depends on the strength of the state and civil society – *the weaker the state and civic identity, the stronger the ethnic identity* (see Schopflin, 2000). Post-communism in its early stage could be defined as a society where a weak state meets a weak civil society. Some authors even argue that the states disappeared along with the collapse of the communist states in 1989-1990. Thus, post-communism is characterized by the simultaneous construction of a new state, together with a new civil society. The degree of success differs from country to country, but it is least successful in the South East European post-communist countries, partly due to the long-term historic heritage of the region described above. Therefore, ethnic identity remained the only identity that could create a feeling of stability. The weakness of the state and of civil society leaves room for a strong ethnic identity after communism, not only in Southeastern Europe but also in the whole post-communist world.

Of central importance in this context are the conditions for the reproduction of zero-sum social reasoning. Two factors have strengthened it: first, the way in which political power is exercised, and second, the changed economic logic behind the redistribution of material and symbolic resources. These factors are strongly interrelated. From the perspective of political power, the client-patron relation in state governance has increased the level of popular distrust. There have been numerous attempts to build new party structures on the basis of client-patron networks, efforts

which follow pre-communist political traditions. Due to inexperience with civil society and democratic principles,

the existing rules tend to be weakly regarded and seen as facades for the pursuit of private interests. In effect, there is a very marginal sense of the public sphere and the public good. They do exist but they are destroyed by distrust, disbelief, and the conviction that the exercise of power is taking place 'elsewhere' beyond the cognition and control of the individual. (G. Schopflin, 2000: 179).

In the economic sphere, the low level of law enforcement and the undefined rules of the economic and political game have created conditions for frightening 'mafia'-type interests. Z. Bauman uses Turner's notion of *liminality* to express exactly that kind of absence of clear-cut rules (Z. Bauman, 1994). The prolongation of the *liminality* period, especially in Southeastern Europe, has made possible the political representation of 'mafia'-type interests through different political lobbies represented at governmental level. These lobbies have been able to control to their benefit, not only economic but even political processes in different countries. These post-communist economic and political developments have increased popular distrust of the post-communist economy and politics and reinforced once again the conspiracy way of thinking that looks for simple explanations in moral terms of good and evil.

Thus, political zero-sum reasoning, characterized by a low level of trust and suspicion that the country is run on behalf of a small number of people at the top of the political and economic pyramid (reasoning in terms of moral criteria of good and evil), is accompanied by zero-sum reasoning in terms of interests – my gain is your loss and vice versa. These trends reinforce the lack of co-operation in the economic sphere.

Basic Questions

The main question addressed by this study is whether the pre-modern cultural norm of zero-sum game reasoning that was enforced during the communist period still *dominates mass understandings* of politics, inter-ethnic relations, and economy in the region.

1) I Will examine to what extent and in which way that particular cultural norm influences the tolerance to ethnic minorities in the region, and support for the principles of a democratic regime.

2) I will also try to verify whether this cultural norm of 'zero-sum' perception of politics and inter-ethnic relations is accompanied and strengthened by zero-sum economic reasoning. In this context, I will also verify whether there *is an interrelation* between zero-sum economic reasoning and the same type of perception of politics and inter-ethnic relations.

3) The effect of zero-sum thinking on support for market principles will also be studied. I am interested to discover whether a rise in support for a democratic regime and market principles is accompanied by a corresponding decrease of zero-sum game reasoning.

4) Additionally, I want to verify whether the type of political representation of ethnic groups (corporative vs. civic) in the examined countries is based mainly on inter-ethnic social distances or if there are other factors that account for the choice of a preferred model of ethnic political representation over another.

I consider the corporate or power-sharing solution of ethnic political representation as a manifestation of zero-sum reasoning. This view is based on strong local arguments concerning the nature of inter-ethnic relations in the four countries where surveys were conducted. These relations have been formed by centuries-long peaceful multi-ethnic coexistence in the region, which came to an end with the start of modernization processes in the region in the late 19th and early 20th century. Thus, I do not aim to reject the conciliatory power of the corporate approach to ethnic cleavages. What I argue is, instead, that this approach to ethnic political representation does not offer a proper solution to inter-ethnic cleavages in Southeast Europe and could cause more harm than good.

The power-sharing solution to ethnic cleavages is based on the assumption that ethnic conflicts are created by contact between groups holding irreconcilable culturally rooted values, so what is needed is a separation of ethnic groups from one another through disconnected networks of social and political organizations. Thus, inter-group contacts are restricted to elites, and the leaders of each group exercise decision-making on issues of common interest (see S.L. Burg and P.S. Shoup, 1999: 6). The civic approach to ethnic political representation, which I

consider as most appropriate for the four examined countries calls for the avoidance of the definition of the state or state institutions in ethnic terms and the resolution of interethnic cleavages on the basis of civic solidarity and citizens' integration – irrespective of ethnic group belonging – into the common whole of a democratic and tolerant national community (see O. Minchev, 2000). I argue, therefore, that the more developed the civic identity in the four countries examined, the less profound the inter-ethnic cleavages – a correlation which I will try to test with the data collected.

I would like to note that the hypotheses I propose will not be focused on between-country differences. These differences (if any) would be a result of the data analysis.

Hypotheses:

1) Our first hypothesis is that there is an *interrelation* of 'zero-sum game' perceptions of the economy, politics, and inter-ethnic relations (Hypothesis 1).

2) Support for democratic regime principles is accompanied by non-zero-sum game reasoning about the economy, politics, and inter-ethnic relations. So, non-zero-sum reasoning will be one of the main determinants of support for a democratic regime (Hypothesis 2). I expect the same to be valid for the support for market principles – the stronger the market-oriented thinking, the stronger will be the non-zero-sum perceptions of the economy, politics, and ethnic cleavages (Hypothesis 3).

3) Zero-sum game perceptions are one of the main determinants of ethnic intolerance – the higher the ethnic social distances, the stronger the zero-sum political and economic reasoning (Hypothesis 4).

Empirical Findings

My first hypothesis states that there is an interrelation between zero-sum perceptions of the economy (both as general principles at the foundation of economic relations, and as a real result of the construction of the social matters in the country), politics and the model of representation of the interests of different ethnic groups in society. I have used factor analysis in order to check posited interrelationships (see Table

5-1). As a result of the factor analyses carried out for each country, I can conclude that there is a clear connection between zero-sum perceptions of politics and zero-sum perceptions of economic reality in Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro.

It is important to note that there are interesting differences between the Macedonian case and all the others. There is a clear connection between the non-corporate or civic vision of ethnic political representation and zero-sum perceptions of the real economic relationships where the two examined variables (48.1 and 48.5) compose one factor. In all other countries except Macedonia, zero-sum perceptions of ethnic political representation form one factor in combination with inter-ethnic social distances and are thus unconnected to other forms of zero-sum thinking.³

Therefore, we can conclude that in Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro there is a close connection between zero-sum perceptions of politics and zero-sum perceptions of economic relations as a current socio-economic reality. No connection between them and zero-sum perceptions of ethnic political representation is observed in these countries. On the other hand, in Macedonia, zero-sum perceptions of existing economic relations are accompanied by non-zero-sum perceptions of ethnic political representation.

Thus, we can accept Hypothesis 1 with the qualification that there are between-countries differences. In any case, we can conclude that probably in times of deep inter-ethnic cleavages what is reinforced is not so much the connection between politics and inter-ethnic relations, but that between perceptions of economic matters in the country and the concepts of ethnic political representation.

Determinants of Support for Democratic Regime Principles

With the exception of Bulgaria, the data (Table 1-1->1-4) corroborate Hypothesis 2 on the effect of non-zero-sum thinking upon support for a democratic regime. The more the respondents believe that the enrichment of the state implies the enrichment of its citizens, the more supportive of a democratic regime they are. This connection is observed in the case of both Macedonia (0.145) and Serbia (0.08), but in Macedonia, it is the strongest of all. There is no effect of non-zero-sum thinking upon support for a democratic regime in Montenegro.

While there tends to be strong non-zero-sum reasoning about politics among supporters of a democratic regime in Bulgaria, support for democracy is accompanied by zero-sum reasoning about the current rules of the economy and its principles as developed in the country in the years of post-communist transformation. This needs additional clarification. A discrepancy between political and economic post-communist reforms is the main aspect of Bulgaria's systemic transformation that should be taken into account when analyzing that period. Political reforms there started before economic reforms. Due to the lack of economic reforms, old socialist-type egalitarian and collectivist interests were kept alive during the whole period of post-communist transformation. The illegal and even criminal redistribution of national wealth has additionally strengthened zero-sum perceptions of post-communist economic rules among the Bulgarian population and weakened support for democracy itself, being as it the lowest among the countries examined. This can be observed when comparing the means of the indexes of support for a democratic regime in the examined countries (Bulgaria 6.43; Montenegro 7.75; Serbia 7.50; Macedonia 6.85).

In all the countries examined (with the exception of Montenegro), there is an effect of non-zero-sum political thinking upon support for a democratic regime which is more powerful than the effect of non-zero-sum economic thinking. We can make the general conclusion that, with the exception of Montenegro and to some extent Bulgaria, non-zero-sum thinking about politics and economy increases support for a democratic regime.

Inter-ethnic acceptance and lower social distances among different ethnic groups is another powerful determinant of support for democracy, though Bulgaria is again exception. The higher the acceptance of minority ethnic groups, the higher the support for democratic regime principles in Serbia (0.115), Montenegro (0.17) and Macedonia (0.08). There is no such connection in the case of Bulgaria. As far as there are no predominant inter-ethnic cleavages in Bulgaria and inter-ethnic tolerance is a natural and self-evident state of social relations, there is no causal relationship between support for a democratic regime and inter-ethnic social distances.

Thus, in all other cases, there is a direct connection between acceptance of minority ethnic groups and support for democracy – the higher the social distances between different ethnic groups, the lower the support for a democratic regime. Differences in the strength of this

correlation are due to the experience of ethnic conflict of the respondents in different countries.

Determinants of Social Distances between Ethnic Groups

The data (Table 2-1 -> 2-4) show rather interesting results, which may provoke some thought on the causes of ethnic conflict in the Balkans. They indicate that the most powerful determinant of minority group acceptance in Bulgaria and Macedonia is the belonging of the respondents to the minority groups themselves – it is the representatives of minority groups who are most tolerant to such groups (Bulgaria +0.30; Macedonia +0.25). This result indicates that there are serious inter-ethnic social distances among the ethnic majority and the minority ethnic groups in these two countries. However, in the Bulgarian index of inter-ethnic social distances this effect results from the very low acceptance of the Roma minority. Studies on the recent development of inter-ethnic tolerance show that in recent years there has been growth in anti-Roma prejudice, while negative attitudes towards Turks and Bulgarian Muslims have decreased (see A. Zhelyazkova, 2001b). The same effect of minority group belonging upon inter-ethnic social distances can be observed in Montenegro but is not so strong (0.15). There is no such connection in Serbian.

Support for democratic regime and market principles are the other powerful determinants of the acceptance of ethnic minorities (regression coefficients of support for democratic regime index: Serbia (0.11); Montenegro (0.12); Macedonia (0.10); regression coefficients of market thinking index: Serbia and Bulgaria (0.08); Montenegro (0.09); Macedonia (0.10). The support for the democracy index does not appear to affect social distances among ethnic groups in Bulgaria, however, for the reasons explained above.

There is an effect of non-zero-sum economic thinking upon inter-ethnic acceptance in the case of Serbia only. Therefore, we can accept Hypothesis 2 in this case. In Bulgaria, the zero-sum perception of the existing economic rules in the country (0.09) increases the acceptance of minority ethnic groups. This is due to the peculiarity of Bulgaria's post-communist transformation mentioned above. The rules of the economic game are perceived to be so corrupt and unfair that the very perception of the economic rules as corrupt fosters inter-ethnic tolerance. Zero-sum

economic thinking is accompanied by zero-sum political reasoning. Thus, low trust in politicians increases inter-ethnic tolerance (0.08) rather than decreasing it. This effect of zero-sum perceptions of economic and political practices upon higher inter-ethnic acceptance proves the existence of a deeply rooted culture of ethnic toleration 'from below', independent of the often contradictory interests of political elites and the poor economic results of their policies. On the other hand, suspicions of the fairness of economic and political practices in Bulgaria strengthens inter-ethnic acceptance. These results confirm Zhelyazkova's arguments that the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups in Bulgaria is rooted in the traditions of communal life and thus, is communal level determined. For these multi-ethnic communities

cooperative effort to resolve local problems is often a strategy for neutralizing policies initiated at the highest national level and thus diffusing their potentially explosive and destructive impact (Zhelyazkova, 2001b).

We observe very interesting results in relation to non-zero-sum perceptions of political representation of different ethnic groups as an independent variable. ("The leaders of our country should serve the interests of all the people in the country regardless of ethnic origin or religion" vs. "the leaders of our country should mostly serve the interests of their own ethnic community".) This variable is considered as an indicator of the respondents' non-acceptance of the corporate principle in inter-ethnic relationships. The strongest effect of non-zero-sum perception of the political representation of ethnic groups upon inter-ethnic social distances is observed in Bulgaria (0.14, Table 2-1). It also exists in Serbia (0.10), but there is no such connection to be found in the results for Macedonia and Montenegro. If we consider inter-ethnic social distances as deeply rooted and historically formed attitudes towards 'the others' which cannot be easily changed, we can say that the civic model of ethnic political representation is naturally connected to low interethnic social distances – traditional for Bulgaria and in Serbia, a result of the traumatic experience of war (see Zhelyazkova, 2001a).

Determinants of Market Oriented Thinking (Table 3-1 -> 3-4)

Of our dependent variables – the support for democratic regime, inter-ethnic social distances, and market-oriented thinking indexes – it is upon the latter that non-zero-sum reasoning has the strongest effect. In all the cases examined, non-zero-sum economic and political thinking appears to be a characteristic of the very market reasoning of respondents. Bulgaria is not an exception in this respect, although the effect of the variables of non-zero-sum reasoning is weakest in comparison to the other three cases (see Table 3-1).

There is an interesting relationship between the degree of development of the market thinking of respondents and zero-sum reasoning about ethnic political representation. This effect is observed only in the case of Macedonia – the more accepting of market principles the respondents, the more of a zero-sum oriented vision of ethnic political representation they have. Thus, they prefer the power-sharing solution to inter-ethnic cleavages, that is, they are in favor of ethnically-based political representation instead of civic-based (see Table 3-4). This finding provokes serious thought on the resolution of the inter-ethnic conflict in Macedonia. The civility of the economic reasoning of respondents there, which includes market-oriented thinking, does not suppose a choice of the civic model of ethnic political representation. This empirical result might be affected by the higher level of market-oriented thinking among the minority ethnic groups in Macedonia (Roma and Albanians) in comparison with the Macedonian majority. This disparity can be observed by comparing means of market thinking indexes within each ethnic group – in the Albanian community, the mean is 12.74, while in the Macedonian community, it is 10.73. However, even if this is the main source of that empirical result, it can only prove that ethnic minorities in Macedonia prefer the corporate representation of ethnic groups. There is no connection between the zero-sum vision of ethnic political representation and market thinking in all the other cases examined.

Another interesting result is the effect of inter-ethnic social distances upon market thinking – the more tolerant to ethnic minorities the respondents in Serbia (0.085), Macedonia (0.07) and Montenegro (0.13), the more developed market reasoning they have. Again, the only exception is Bulgaria, where there is no such connection. This again proves that ethnic peace in the country is deeply rooted and relatively independent from recent developments in social thinking.

Additionally, we should note the impact of socio-structural variables upon market thinking – the type of ownership of the enterprises in which the respondents and their families are employed and their occupational status are powerful determinants of market thinking in Bulgaria and Macedonia where economic reforms started earlier than in Serbia and Montenegro. In Serbia, socio-structural determinants on market reasoning are not connected to the type of ownership (private vs. state ownership) but to family incomes and the amounts of savings – the higher the income and the savings of the respondents, the more developed their market thinking. This is due to the lack of economic reforms during Slobodan Milosevic's rule.

Determinants of Ethnic Political Representation as a Zero-Sum Game (Tables 4-1 -> 4-4)

Hypotheses: I hypothesize that the main determinants of zero-sum ethnic political representation will be the low support for a democratic regime (H1a) and low inter-ethnic tolerance (H1b). Additionally, I propose that zero-sum reasoning about politics (H1c) and the economy (H1d) will foster a zero-sum vision of ethnic political representation.

This hypothesis (H1a) is proved correct for all cases examined. The same is true of H1b with the exception of the case of Macedonia. Inter-ethnic social distances have no impact upon the choice of ethnic political representation (civic vs. corporative) in Macedonia, that is, the acceptance/non-acceptance of ethnic minorities does not have a direct impact upon the choice of ethnic political representation. What matters in Macedonian is the perception of the economic game in the country as a zero-sum game. Thus, economic factors are more tightly connected with the choice of an ethnic political representation model than inter-ethnic social distances are. This finding means that the vision of ethnic political interest representation depends on other factors, independent from the deeply rooted and historically molded patterns of the perception of ethnic minorities and their acceptance/non-acceptance.

There is another interesting connection to be found in the case of Macedonia – that of civic self-identity and rejection of ethnic political representation as based on corporate ethnic political rights. The more respondents in Macedonia define themselves in terms of profession, the more supportive they are to civic rather than ethnically-based political

representation (-0.11). Here I find empirical support for my general theoretical conception of the way inter-ethnic cleavages can be overcome and controlled. I have stated that the more developed civic identity is in a country, the less profound inter-ethnic cleavages will be. The connection between civic self-identity and a non-corporative vision of political representation of ethnic groups is confirmed in the case of Macedonia.

Hypothesis (H1d) is partially proved by the cases of Bulgaria and Serbia – zero-sum thinking about ethnic political representation depends on zero-sum reasoning about economic principles. However, there is no connection between zero-sum ethnic political representation and perception of politics in terms of zero-sum game in all cases examined. So we can reject the hypothesis (H1c). Thus, the choice of ethnic political representation – corporate vs. civic – does not depend on the degree of political trust in the four countries examined .

Conclusion

On the basis of these results, we can infer that there is indeed a connection between, on the one hand, the cultural norm of zero-sum thinking about politics and economy, and on the other hand, the level of support for a democratic regime, inter-ethnic tolerance and the market economy. Generally, the non-zero-sum reasoning of respondents increases support for a democratic regime and a market economy in the countries examined and decreases inter-ethnic social distances.

This study thus proves that the political culture of a country or a region can indeed be better understood by looking at the historically formed construction of the modes of social reasoning in that country. It discovered that there is a connection between zero-sum social thinking and the degree of support for democratic regime principles, the market economy, and inter-ethnic tolerance. As a whole, the less profound the zero-sum reasoning of the respondents in the countries under consideration, the more supportive of democracy and the market and more tolerant to ethnic minority groups they are. Of course, there are deviations from this general tendency due to the deviations in the very social reality caused by the way post-communist transformation is implemented, Bulgarian being a case in point.⁸

We can infer that, in general, the development of non-zero-sum reasoning and of civic and individualized consciousness among Balkan

populations could foster democratic tendencies in the countries examined and could decrease inter-ethnic tensions and conflicts. The data analysis proves that the roots of ethnic conflict in the region could only be removed through the development and encouragement of modernization processes in the region. The findings also provide an argument against the corporate approach to the resolution of ethnic conflicts in the four countries examined and for the prevention of inter-ethnic conflicts on the basis of citizenship.

Appendix 1 - Data and methodology

The data-source of the analysis is an empirical survey based on a representative cluster sample of the whole population in Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro, and Macedonia of over 18 years of age conducted between February and May 2001. For Bulgaria, it included 1200 respondents, for Serbia – 1000, Montenegro – 500, and Macedonia – 820.

I created additive scales, used as indexes, for some of those dependent variables in order to include a larger number of items as indicators for the mentioned synthetic dependent variables. These additive scales were made on the basis of the Cronbach's alpha coefficients (reliability item analysis). The received alpha coefficients are as follows:

	Serbia; Montenegro; Macedonia; Bulgaria			
Support for democracy index ->	0.60	0.59	0.63	0.63
Specific support index->	0.79	0.77	0.86	0.84
Market thinking index ->	0.85	0.73	0.70	0.86
European Union integration index ->	0.80	0.74	0.81	0.88
Inter-ethnic social distances->	0.96	0.96	0.92	0.93

The support for democracy index includes variables that measure some basic democratic principles, such as freedom of speech and freedom of association, multiparty system, need for free elections and parliament. The specific support index includes variables measuring support for the ruling government and for the main political figures ruling the country. The market thinking index consists of variables measuring acceptance of the withdrawal of the state from the economy. The European Union index represents the popular acceptance of the EU and support for membership in that organization. The index of inter-ethnic social distances consists of E. S. Bogardus scale.

I use factor and regression analyses in order to identify those variables which have the greatest effect on the dependent variables – support for the principles of democracy, inter-ethnic social distances, market oriented thinking and the vision of ethnic political representation.

8) Operationalization of the hypotheses

Zero-sum perceptions of politics:

Q20 – the country is governed in the interest of a small number of people, who pursue their own interests, or for the common good of all people;

Q38.5 – better not to trust politicians;

Q 38.7 – ordinary people are always excluded from power;

Q 38.8 – nowadays only people who want to get rich go into politics.

These variables could also be used as a measurement of the degree of political trust. I use it from a slightly different point of view – zero-sum perceptions of politics. It is well known that this type of reasoning is initially low-trust oriented and suspicious to all forms of political activity.

Zero-sum perceptions of economy:

There is one major distinction that should be made – I distinguish between zero-sum perceptions of the actual state of the relationships and transactions in the economy of the society the respondents live in, and zero-sum perceptions of the general principles underlying economic transactions.

Thus, zero-sum perceptions of the actual state of economy are measured by:

Q 47.5 – in our country when some people get rich, others necessarily get poor;

Q 48.1 – in our country a person can achieve a good life by involvement in illegal affairs and theft.

Perceptions of the very principles of the economy as a zero-sum game are measured by the following variables:

Q 47.6 – the enrichment of the state implies the enrichment of all citizens;

Q 47.4 – economic conflicts can be resolved in such a way that all parties concerned are winners;

Q 47.3 – in the economy some people's gain is a gain for the entire economy;

Q 47.2 – in business affairs there are not necessarily losers in all cases.

Zero-sum perceptions of interethnic relations

Interethnic social distances could not be used as a measurement of zero-sum perceptions of interethnic relations but rather as a consequence of that type of thinking. So, I use one variable to measure that kind of perception.

Q 48.5 – the leaders of our country should mostly serve the interests of their own ethnic and religious community vs. the leaders of our country should serve the interests of all people in the country, regardless of ethnic origin or religion.

As stated above, there are two ways of viewing the resolution of inter-ethnic cleavages – the corporate approach which emphasizes collectively defined rights (collective rights for minorities), and the pluralist or citizenship-defined approach which stresses civic solidarity and the citizens' integration irrespective of ethnic group belonging. The variable is designed to measure that type of vision of a preferred model of ethnic political representation.

Table 1-1: Linear regression results, dependent variable support for democratic regime index, Bulgaria

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	2.939		1.327
1. European Union integration index	0.114	0.16	4.581
2. Market thinking index	5.476	0.15	4.493
3. Satisfaction with the communist regime	-7.401	-0.135	-3.944
4. Parties serve leaders' interests	-0.238	-0.12	-3.593
5. Compare with economic situation of previous government	6.439	-0.10	2.938
6. Zero-sum economic principles	-0.146	-0.10	-2.699
7. Trust politicians	-0.142	-0.09	-2.446
8. Zero-sum actual economic situation – in our country some people get rich, others necessarily get poor	0.153	0.08	2.263
Observations: 1072	Adjusted R2: 0.42		

Table 1-2: Linear regression results, dependent variable support for democratic regime index, Serbia

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	1.225		1.872
1. Comparison with previous government	5.067	0.16	4.728
2. Sociotropic economic attitudes – future 10 years	0.316	0.14	2.440
3. Parties serve leaders' interests	-0.122	-0.14	-3.881
4. Place of residence	6.296	0.125	3.365
5. Inter-ethnic social distances index	8.598	0.115	3.525
6. Market thinking index	1.755	0.09	2.595
7. Relative deprivation – compared with parents	7.958	0.09	3.012
8. Enrichment of the state implies enrichment of citizens	7.482	0.08	2.658
9. Trust politicians	-7.487	-0.07	-2.185
10. Ordinary people excluded from power	6.801	0.07	2.011
Observations: 1000	Adjusted R2: 0.30		

Table 1-3: Linear regression results, dependent variable support for democratic regime index, Montenegro

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	2.697		3.467
1. Inter-ethnic social distances index	9.721	0.17	3.004
2. Religiosity	-0.101	-0.15	-3.179
3. Choose own country	9.980	0.14	2.713
4. Trust politicians	8.574	0.10	2.039
Observations: 500	Adjusted R2: 0.23		

Table 1-4: Linear regression results, dependent variable support for democratic regime index, Macedonia

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	6.199		4.718
1. Support for NATO membership	-0.590	-0.24	-6.621
2. European Union membership index	0.145	0.175	4.941
3. Place of residence	0.182	0.17	4.580
4. Enrichment of the state implies enrichment of citizens	0.234	0.145	4.424
5. Specific support	-0.225	-0.11	-2.557
6. In economy some people's gain is a gain for entire society	0.172	0.10	3.125
7. Education	0.170	0.09	2.611
8. Inter-ethnic social distances index	2.399	-0.09	-2.536
9. Go into politics to get rich	0.178	0.08	2.113
10. Monthly income	-0.120	-0.08	-2.057
11. Private entrepreneur in family	-0.291	-0.07	-2.192
12. Market thinking index	3.641	0.07	2.027
Observations: 820	Adjusted R2: 0.37		

Table 2-1: Linear regression results, dependent variable inter-ethnic social distances index, Bulgaria

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	4.891		0.602
1. Ethnic group belonging	3.634	0.30	7.780
2. Political representation of ethnic groups	0.570	0.14	4.268
3. Proud to be Bulgarian citizen	-1.054	-0.12	-3.595
4. Proud to be Bulgarian	3.039	0.12	2.896
5. Family income now compared with two years ago	-1.273	-0.11	-2.649
6. Place of residence	-0.609	-0.105	-2.676
7. Prosperity in Bulgaria through illegal affairs or honesty	0.292	0.09	2.461
8. Education	0.803	0.09	2.408
9. Market thinking index	0.165	0.08	2.207
10. Trust politicians	-0.855	-0.08	-2.414
11. In economy some people's gain is a gain for the entire society	0.818	0.08	2.471
Observations: 1072	Adjusted R2: 0.28		

Table 2-2: Linear regression results, dependent variable inter-ethnic social distances index, Serbia

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	-6.176		-0.709
1. Security – only through good relations of different ethnic groups	0.555	0.12	3.413
2. Place of residence	0.800	0.12	3.212
3. Support for democratic regime principles index	1.521	0.11	3.525
4. Choose own country	1.178	0.11	3.175
5. Self-identification	-2.207	-0.11	-3.569
6. Satisfaction with the rule of Slobodan Milosevic	-0.455	-0.11	-3.169
7. Political representation of ethnic groups	0.466	0.10	2.936
8. Specific support index	1.439	0.09	2.260
9. Parties serve interests of their leaders	-1.029	-0.09	-2.453
10. Market thinking index	0.212	0.08	2.359
11. Enrichment of the state implies enrichment of citizens	0.903	0.075	2.410
12. Proud to be Serb	0.580	0.065	2.001
Observations: 1000	Adjusted R2: 0.29		

Table 2-3: Linear regression results, dependent variable inter-ethnic social distances index, Montenegro

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	-2.207		-0.189
1. Proud to be Yugoslavian citizen	1.892	0.18	3.811
2. Cooperative thinking	0.624	0.17	4.000
3. Ethnic group belonging	1.264	0.15	3.200
4. Support for democratic regime principles index	2.127	0.12	3.044
5. Market thinking index	0.564	0.09	2.307
Observations: 500	Adjusted R2: .35		

Table 2-4: Linear regression results, dependent variable inter-ethnic social distances index, Macedonia

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	7.408		1.457
1. Ethnic group belonging	1.875	0.25	6.298
2. Trust Church	-0.767	-0.14	-3.592
3. Support for democratic regime principles index	0.350	0.10	2.536
4. Choose own country	0.577	0.09	2.567
5. Religion	0.677	0.08	2.177
6. European Union integration index	0.237	0.08	2.096
7. No differences between political parties	0.257	0.07	2.143
Observations: 820	Adjusted R2: 0.25		

Table 3-1: Linear regression results, dependent variable market thinking index, Bulgaria

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	12.671		3.698
1. Support for NATO membership	-0.970	-0.15	-5.140
2. Support for democratic regime principles index	0.368	0.13	4.493
3. Private entrepreneur in family	-1.694	-0.12	-4.325
4. Employment status	-0.308	-0.10	-2.848
5. In our country when some people get rich other get necessarily poor	-0.593	-0.09	-3.390
6. Satisfaction with the communist regime	-0.152	-0.09	-3.109
7. In economic affairs, one person's gain is always another's loss	-0.501	-0.09	-3.346
8. Trust politicians	-0.445	-0.085	-2.963
9. Age	-1.825	-0.07	-2.331
Observations: 1072	Adjusted R2: .037		

Table 3-2: Linear regression results, dependent variable market thinking index, Serbia

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	20,080		6.509
1. In our country when some people get rich other get necessarily poor	-0.819	-0.145	-4.726
2. Not proud of being Yugoslavian citizen	0.551	0.13	3.731
3. Choose own country	-0.512	-0.12	-3.825
4. Family income compared with the average for the country	0.794	0.12	3.773
5. Support for NATO membership	-0.661	0.11	-3.490
6. Saving abilities of the family	-0.909	-0.10	-3.092
7. Support for democratic regime principles index	0.406	0.08	2.595
8. Ordinary people excluded from power	-0.399	-0.08	-2.457
9. Inter-ethnic social distances index	0.2778	0.07	2.359
10. In economy some people's gain is a gain for entire society	0.263	0.06	2.058
Observations: 1000	Adjusted R2: 0.36		

Table 3-3: Linear regression results, dependent variable market thinking index, Montenegro

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	16.461		7.752
1. Country run by few interests	-0.702	-0.16	-2.710
2. In our country when some people get rich others necessarily get poor	-0.345	-0.14	-2.579
3. Inter-ethnic social distances index	2.124	0.13	2.307
4. Trust politicians	-0.259	-0.11	-2.144
5. Non-cooperative thinking	-6.153	-0.10	-2.006
6. Place of residence	-0.199	-0.10	-2.084
Observations: 500	Adjusted R2: 0.22		

Table 3-4: Linear regression results, dependent variable market thinking index, Macedonia

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	13.221		5.002
1. In economic affairs, one person's gain is always another's loss	-0.595	-0.17	-5.049
2. Specific support index	0.531	0.13	3.003
3. Vision of political representation of ethnic groups	-3.386	-0.12	-2.101
4. The enrichment of the state implies enrichment of citizens	-0.453	-0.11	-3.242
5. Ordinary people excluded from power	-0.401	-0.10	-2.790
6. Choose own country or not	-0.331	-0.09	-2.788
7. Type of property of the working place	0.284	0.09	2.018
8. Inter-ethnic social distances index	4.854	0.085	2.545
9. Support for democratic regime principles index	0.148	0.07	2.027
10. Have a private entrepreneur in family	-0.538	-0.07	-2.010
Observations: 820	Adjusted R2: 0.36		

Table 4-1: Linear regression results, dependent variable vision of political representation of ethnic groups – Bulgaria

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	6.262		3.267
1. Sociotropic comparison 10 years ago	-0.702	0.18	-5.555
2. Inter-ethnic social distances index	3.578	0.15	4.499
3. Conflict between people speaking different languages	0.394	0.14	4.581
4. Religion	0.373	0.14	3.424
5. The enrichment of the state implies enrichment of citizens	0.320	0.14	4.528
6. Ordinary people excluded from power	0.322	0.11	3.067
7. Saving abilities of the family	0.904	0.09	3.016
8. Self-esteem of social class	-0.379	-0.09	-2.335
9. Ethnic group belonging	-0.241	0.09	-2.001
10. Support for democratic regime principles index	9.754	0.08	2.008
Observations: 1072	Adjusted R2: 0.215		F-statistic: 5,113

Table 4-2: Linear regression results, dependent variable vision of political representation of ethnic groups – Serbia

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	6.242		3.256
1. Dissatisfaction with regime of Slobodan Milosevic	0.166	0.18	5.141
2. Inter-ethnic social distances index	3.625	0.17	4.943
3. Support for democratic regime principles index	0.194	0.14	3.551
4. Choose own country or not	0.201	0.09	2.362
5. The enrichment of the state implies enrichment of citizens	0.176	0.07	2.119
Observations: 1000	Adjusted R2: 0.18		F-statistic: 3,897

Table 4-3: Linear regression results, dependent variable vision of political representation of ethnic groups – Montenegro

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	8.418		3.221
1. Inter-ethnic social distances index	3.210	0.16	2.819
2. Support for democratic regime principles index	0.215	0.14	2.467
3. Choose own country or not	0.263	0.11	2.019
4. Place of residence	-0.258	-0.105	-2.178
Observations: 500	Adjusted R2: 0.185		F-statistic: 1,916

Table 4-4: Linear regression results, dependent variable vision of political representation of ethnic groups – Macedonia

Independent variable	Coefficient estimate	Standardized coefficient Beta	t-statistic
Constant	-1,802		-0.164
1. No differences between political parties	1.452	0.20	5.608
2. Conflict between people speaking different languages	-1.296	-0.11	2.550
3. Self-identification	-2.373	-0.11	-2.986
4. Support for democratic regime principles index	0.675	0.09	2.227
5. Conflict between nationalists and those who are not nationalists	1.297	0.09	2.232
Observations: 820	Adjusted R2: 0.135		F-statistic: 2,252

Table 5-1: Factor analyses results
Bulgaria

Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
*Trust politicians *Ordinary people excluded from power *Only people who mean to get rich go into politics *In our country when some get rich others necessarily get poor	*In business there are not necessarily losers in all cases *In economy some people's gain is a gain for the entire society *It is possible for an economic conflict to be resolved so that all are winners. *The enrichment of the state implies the enrichment of all citizens	*Inter-ethnic social distances index *Political representation of ethnic groups	*In our country one can achieve good life through illegal affairs or hard work (-) *Relative deprivation (comparison with parents when being the same age)

Serbia

Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
*Trust politicians *Ordinary people excluded from power *Only people who mean to get rich go into politics *In our country when some get rich others necessarily get poor	*In economy some people's gain is a gain for the entire society *It is possible economic conflict to be resolved so that all are winners. *The enrichment of the state implies the enrichment of all citizens	*Inter-ethnic social distances index *Political representation of ethnic groups	*In business there are not necessarily losers in all cases	*In economy one person's gain is always another's loss *Relative deprivation (comparison with parents when being the same age)

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Montenegro

Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
<p>*Trust politicians *Ordinary people excluded from power *Only people who mean to get rich go into politics *In our country when some get rich others necessarily get poor *In our country one can achieve good life through illegal affairs or hard work (-)</p>	<p>*In economy some people's gain is a gain for the entire society *It is possible for an economic conflict to be resolved so that all are winners. *The enrichment of the state implies the enrichment of all citizens</p>	<p>*Interethnic social distances index *Political representation of ethnic groups</p>	<p>*In business there are not necessarily losers in all cases *In economy one person's gain is always another's loss</p>	<p>*Relative deprivation (comparison with parents when being the same age)</p>

Macedonia

Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
<p>*Trust politicians *Ordinary people excluded from power *Only people who mean to get rich go into politics</p>	<p>*In economy some people's gain is a gain for the entire society *It is possible economic conflict to be resolved so that all are winners. *The enrichment of the state implies the enrichment of all citizens</p>	<p>*Relative deprivation (comparison with parents when being the same age) (-) * In economy some people's gain is always another's loss *In our country when some get rich others necessarily get poor</p>	<p>*In our country one can achieve good life through illegal affairs or hard work *Political representation of ethnic groups</p>	<p>*Inter-ethnic social distances index *In business there are not necessarily losers in all cases</p>

NOTES

- 1 This study is based on a cross-national representative comparative survey, which I designed and commissioned in four Balkan post-communist countries – Macedonia, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro.
- 2 When referring to South East Europe or the Balkans I will mean the four countries being examined, with the exception of Romania which has some distinct historical peculiarities.
- 3 I assumed that relative deprivation would be closely tied with the index of inter-ethnic social distances. However, there is no such trend for all countries examined. Only in Macedonia and Bulgaria is relative deprivation is connected with zero-sum perceptions of economic realities.
- 4 The only peculiar case is that of Bulgaria, where zero-sum perceptions of economic reality and economic principles increase support for democracy. This peculiarity was explained in the study by the difficulties of the post-communist transformation in the country, the impact of ‘mafia’ type lobbies upon the slow economic reforms, and the persistence of ill-defined rules of the economic game for a long time during the transformation period. Thus, support for the democratic regime in Bulgaria is increased not only by zero-sum perceptions of the rules of the current economic reality, but also by the very zero-sum perception of the economic principles as such. Hence, the understanding of the general economic laws as a zero-sum game is influenced by the economic practices in the country during the 12 years of post-communist transformation. Here we cannot explain the zero-sum economic attitudes among Bulgarians by their ‘stupidity’ or ‘underdevelopment’ because there is nothing in the heads of the individuals that does not reflect the social reality they inhabit. The increased perception of economic rules in the country as a zero-sum game raises support for a democratic regime and inter-ethnic tolerance. This means that the low support for democratic regime principles and low inter-ethnic acceptance are defined by non-zero-sum economic thinking. Thus, the evaluation of economic reality as fair presupposes an anti-democratic vision of the socio-political system in Bulgaria and low tolerance to ethnic minorities.

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