

# **Democratic Transition in the Balkans: Romania's Hungarian and Bulgaria's Turkish Minority (1989–99)**

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This article is a comparative analysis of the Hungarian minority in Romania and the Turkish minority in Bulgaria during the first ten years of their transition to democracy. Despite austere assimilationist campaigns during the communist-era and the unstable political region of the Balkans in its post-communist-era, both countries have avoided protracted, inter-ethnic violence. This article examines three internal factors that have played an instrumental role in facilitating democratic transitions in these plural societies: (i) state control of minorities; (ii) political institutions chosen for their nascent democracies; (iii) and the accommodative role of each minority's ethnopolitical party.

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Democratization within 'deeply divided societies'<sup>1</sup> heightens ethnic tension. The storms of violence surrounding the final phase of Huntington's Third Wave of Democratization have jettisoned liberalism, magnifying outward expressions of ethnic solidarity and nationalism. Inter-ethnic wars in Russia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan, Bosnia, Croatia and, most recently, Yugoslavia have monopolized the attention of the world at large. In fact, egregious acts of ethnic strife have frequently associated democratic transitions in Asia and Africa too as communities scrambled against the backdrop of fear and uncertainty for a share of power and scarce resources in their newly competitive states. Empirical evidence makes it patently clear that democratic transitions worldwide produce an environment under which extreme ethnic violence can flourish.

It is by no means certain, however, that this inevitably heightened 'ethnic conflict' must result in ethnic violence. Indeed many governments within deeply divided societies have managed to maintain civil order during democratization. This article is a comparative analysis of two countries that, by all accounts, could readily have collapsed into prolonged ethnic bloodshed instead of ascending into civil co-existence as they have. Romania and Bulgaria, both Balkan countries, have democratized without any protracted violence despite the presence of significant minority populations with historic ties to the land. The entire Eastern Bloc, and

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Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, Vol.8, No.1, Spring 2002, pp.1–28

PUBLISHED BY FRANK CASS, LONDON

Balkan countries in particular, were subject to sincere warnings by journalists and academics in the years following the initial regime breakdowns as unrest publicly increased and nationalism heightened.<sup>2</sup> As pundits point out, 'there has never been a tradition of pluralistic democracy [in the Balkans] to begin with, and the dislocations of the post-communist era are not likely to produce one in such a short period of time'.<sup>3</sup> And they noted with the outbreaks in Yugoslavia that, 'the old order is resurfacing, and with a vengeance'.<sup>4</sup> So why have the plural societies of Romania and Bulgaria succeeded where others have failed? How has violent ethnic conflict in these nascent democracies thus far been avoided?

This article will examine what internal factors have enabled Romania and Bulgaria to avoid protracted inter-ethnic violence with their Hungarian and Turkish minority respectively, during the first ten years of their transitions to democracy (1989–1999). While external factors such as the European Union, global dominance of democracy, auspicious policies of neighbouring homeland countries, and effects of various intergovernmental organizations are recognized as significant, they are not within the scope of this paper.<sup>5</sup> In addition, despite what factors may have influenced internal decisions, this article is concerned with analyzing the effect of those decisions on inter-ethnic relations in order to build a greater understanding for future democratic transitions. It is also significant that many of these external factors were present in other Eastern Bloc countries but did not prevent the emergence of inter-ethnic violence.

This paper will analyze three dimensions of the transition that have played an instrumental role in mitigating the onset of protracted ethnic violence. The first dimension is the ability of the majority group to exercise 'control' on its ethnic minority. Benefiting from their communist periods, both states have been able to exert a controlling influence on their minorities through a complex interplay of fear, intimidation, monopoly of force, and manipulation. Second, the article will examine the inclusiveness of the political institutions. This section will review the countries' choices of executive institutions and electoral systems. Providing opportunities for power and permitting ethnic representation in the newly democratized state institutions has lent a degree of legitimacy to these states in the eyes of the minorities, helping to preserve inter-ethnic peace. And third, the accommodative role played by the minority ethnic communities' political parties. Maintaining moderation in the face of rampant nationalism and hostility has allayed some majority fears and prevented intransigence from crystallizing in an ethnic party system.

The conclusion will show that while protracted ethnic violence was averted, these factors alone were not sufficient guarantees. It appears that much depends on the ability of ethnic parties to obtain access to power,

which is far from a necessary outcome under their current political institutions. The other two internal dimensions – moderate ethno-political parties and control – have provided the state with greater safeguards within which to operate, but ultimately these will prove squandered opportunities unless the majorities prove more accommodative in the future. The risk of course is not only confined to the majority suppressing its minorities, but includes the potential for the minorities to engage in non-peaceful and hence non-democratic action themselves. Ted Gurr, commenting in 1993 on the situation of minority relations with their dominant states, said, 'What is clear is that, in the short course of six years, groups that had been designated minorities at risk have become politically empowered to the extent that now the formerly omnipotent states themselves may be considered most at risk.'<sup>6</sup> A chilling reality for any government with significant minorities.

### **Mechanisms of Control**

'Control' systems of governance have appeared time and again through historical records. In fact, McGarry and O'Leary suggest, 'Hegemonic control has been the most common mode through which multi-ethnic societies have been stabilized in world history.'<sup>7</sup> Despite its wide usage, however, the concept of 'control' has nevertheless received little attention until recent decades. While control is a notoriously broad mechanism and has been applied to situations as diverse as the ruthless Iraqi dominance over its Kurdish people to the less overtly violent form of ethnic rule as seen in Canada, they have always been used by a dominant group to monopolize power within 'deeply divided' or 'plural' societies.<sup>8</sup> Hegemonic control can be defined as, 'Coercive and/or co-optive rule which successfully manages to make unworkable an ethnic challenge to the state order.'<sup>9</sup>

Of the more recent developments within the control literature, Smooha's coining of an 'ethnic democracy' is the most valuable to Romania and Bulgaria. Using the example of Israel, Smooha claims to have discovered a 'viable' alternative political system for plural societies that fuses elements of democracy and hegemonic control.<sup>10</sup> 'Democratic control' is an oxymoron as Smooha readily admits,<sup>11</sup> yet the benefits accrued by simultaneously guaranteeing the liberal values that today form a normative ideal in the West while ensuring the collective dominance of one ethnic group has its advantages. In fact, following Ian Lustick's reasoning, the short-term sacrifice of minority equality in order to secure a peaceful transition may be beneficial given the alternatives of ethnic violence or civil war.<sup>12</sup> Given the social and economic uncertainty surrounding democratic transitions that 'often lead to disintegrative ethnic conflict',<sup>13</sup> and

particularly given the crises now apparent in many former Eastern Bloc countries, some mechanisms of control could indeed be justified.

Romania and Bulgaria each inherited control infrastructures from their communist period that were effectively maintained by members of the ancient regime during the initial years of transition. The residual effects of control, while significantly diminished, remain today.

Both countries have two distinct forms of control: (i) interference and intimidation used by the 'reformed communists' in the initial years of the transition and (ii) the fragmented nature of their minorities, a legacy of the communist era. Interference and intimidation refers to a state's organs acting in a way to minimize ethnic minorities from effectively mounting a challenge for state power. Fragmentation refers to the scattered position of a minority's community, in these cases especially their intelligentsia, which hinders their ability to mount a challenge for state power.

#### *The Situation in Bulgaria*

*Direct Interference and Intimidation:* 'The early post-totalitarian regime in Bulgaria initiated and never lost control of the transition.'<sup>14</sup> This quote from Linz and Stepan effectively summarizes the conditions facing the Turkish minority. While democracy was introduced, the mechanisms of control established during the communist regime did not disappear. First, there were the sycophantic Zhivkov supporters who were not removed from office after the communist collapse. In fact many of these, including the head of security, openly participated in the previous assimilation campaigns and as such proved threatening through both their policy pursuits and as a psychological strike against the Turks.<sup>15</sup> From the appointment of ultra-nationalist regional governors,<sup>16</sup> the appointment of a known pro-assimilationist to the sensitive Ministry of Education,<sup>17</sup> and the 1995 interference in the Chief Mufti election,<sup>18</sup> the government has continually exerted its campaign of intimidation and fear. The government went so far as to annul municipal elections in 1996 after a candidate from the Turkish minority party, the 'Minority for Rights and Freedoms' (MRF)<sup>19</sup>, emerged victorious.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, the country has made no provisions for the protection of minority interests through 'positive' collective rights.<sup>21</sup> When an interdepartmental 'Council on Ethnic Affairs'<sup>22</sup> was established in the Council of Ministers, it was closed down within a year and without a single meeting. This was replaced by the more vague and less ethnically specific 'National Council on Social and Demographic Issues' mandated to solve the problems of social groups. As one expert in the field of ethnicity said, far from improving the situation among ethnic minorities, 'it is feared that the new body may be used by the state and the ruling Socialist Party to tighten their control over civil society'.<sup>23</sup>

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The country's constitution is also controversial in its ability to control. There are various articles that have raised causes for concern,<sup>24</sup> but Article 11(4) is particularly instrumental. It states: 'There shall be no political parties on ethnic, racial, or religious lines.'<sup>25</sup> Far from preventing a Turkish party however, this has enabled a form of control over the type of ethnic party the state would like to see. Prior to the new constitution's promulgation, the predominantly Turkish MRF had participated in the 1990 elections. However, when the MRF attempted to register for the 1991 national elections, its constitutionality was challenged and the Bulgarian Supreme Court ruled that it could not participate. The MRF countered that it need not register as it had previously registered for the 1990 election. In a move that is widely accepted as a political decision, the Central Election Committee (CEC) accepted this argument and registered the party.<sup>26</sup> Other parties have indeed been banned,<sup>27</sup> including rival ethnic Turkish parties,<sup>28</sup> which has effectively anointed the MRF as the only party legally capable of representing the Turks – they have a 'quasi-official monopoly'.<sup>29</sup> In fact, its 'quasi-official monopoly' can also be seen as a veto by the state against any radicalism within the party; since the original decision by the CEC was political, it could also be revoked.<sup>30</sup> The role of the MRF will be discussed in greater detail in the third section of this article, titled 'Ethnopolitical Accommodative Behaviour'.

*A Fragmented Minority:* The initial communist period did not see explicit anti-Turkish policies but assimilation policies directed at the Roma and Bulgarian-speaking Muslims ('Pomaks').<sup>31</sup> By the 1970s, however, propaganda regarding the Turks as 'terrorists', 'separatists' and a 'fifth column of an enemy state [Turkey]' was underway.<sup>32</sup> By 1984 a brutal assimilation campaign, known euphemistically as the 'national renaissance' and aimed at 'the preservation of the national interest and unity of Bulgaria', reached its zenith.<sup>33</sup> All Turks were forced to adopt ethnically Bulgarian names, the use of Turkish was banned in public, and the practice of Islam was declared illegal. Georgi Atomasov, of the Bulgarian Communist Party, declared that any opposition to the campaign, 'will be eliminated by fire and sword'.<sup>34</sup> And indeed hundreds if not thousands were killed and imprisoned. By 1985, the 'renaissance' was deemed a success with the statement that 'There are no Turks in Bulgaria.'<sup>35</sup> While the exact reason for the campaign remains unknown,<sup>36</sup> the results are categorical: the once 'peacefully' co-existing communities had been ethnically polarized. A second wave of these assimilation campaigns began again in 1989, but this time amidst growing internal unrest and a regime crisis affecting the entire Eastern Bloc. To relieve themselves of their Turkish 'problem', Bulgarian officials opened the border with Turkey, and Europe experienced its largest

mass-exodus since the Second World War with the well-documented flight of over 350,000 Turks.<sup>37</sup>

This mass exodus has had three debilitating effects on the Turkish minority residing in Bulgaria. First, their aggregate numbers declined by 25 per cent.<sup>38</sup> While just under 50 per cent of those initial political refugees returned within a few months of leaving, the majority remained in Turkey reducing the effective voice of the minority in Bulgaria's parliament. Second, those Turks choosing to subsequently return were economically ruined. The original exodus was accompanied by a rush for Bulgarian Turks to liquidate their assets at heavily discounted prices, often forced by the government. Upon their return to Bulgaria, they often found themselves without jobs, pensions, housing, and other assets previously felt to be secure.<sup>39</sup>

Third, and most importantly to the political environment, the exodus has crippled the Turkish intelligentsia. Tomova stresses, 'the most serious damage inflicted ... was the loss of the Bulgarian Turkish intelligentsia, the majority of whom chose not to return'.<sup>40</sup> The minority has been intellectually impoverished. The results, while less in scale, are not too dissimilar to the Arab experience in Palestine during the formation of the Israeli state. Smooha has noted that those Arabs who stayed 'remained virtually without an elite and also without leaders. As a result, the local and national institutions, as well as the economy of the Arab minority ... collapsed during the transition to Israeli sovereignty.'<sup>41</sup> Bulgaria's Turks have therefore been controlled in numerous ways: direct intervention in its affairs politically, an active campaign of intimidation and fear, and indirectly through a fragmented and weakened community as a legacy of the previous regime.

#### *The Situation in Romania*

Control in Romania appears on distinctly similar lines to that found in Bulgaria. However, as the Hungarian minority did not experience the exodus, but rather dispersion under Ceausescu's Romania, the intelligentsia and financial resources of the minority were not damaged to the same degree. As a result, control has not played as significant a role during the transition. As we will see, this lack of control has contributed to the vastly more effective and vociferous political force for the Hungarian minority.

*Direct Interference and Intimidation:* It is widely accepted that the 1989 'revolution' in Romania was something more akin to a coup. There was, therefore, no effective democratization of state institutions, and the mechanisms of control created by the Ceausescu regime were effectively still intact for the post-communist regime to exploit. This resulted in

political and media appointments that promoted nationalism and the failure to remove local officials directly responsible for the previous oppression of Hungarians.<sup>42</sup> In the first few years particularly, the government continually failed to reverse many of the pre-1989 discriminatory policies on cultural rights,<sup>43</sup> and the Hungarian community has continued to view some policies as 'forced assimilation'.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the feared Securitate was not dismantled but rather served to galvanize anti-Hungarian sentiment.<sup>45</sup> Despite the promise in the constitution of greater decentralization,<sup>46</sup> some administrative officials are still centrally appointed which has resulted in further campaigns of control.<sup>47</sup>

*A Fragmented Minority:* The Hungarian minority's intelligentsia has also been subject to an indirect control mechanism through the legacy of Ceausescu. In addition to a communist-era assimilation campaign that forcibly relocated some members of the Hungarian minority to other towns and cities within Romania, Hungarian publications and other intelligentsia activity worked under extremely difficult conditions in the post-revolutionary period, even in relation to Romanian publications. Nevertheless, the Hungarian community has been able to maintain a much stronger infrastructure than Bulgaria's Turkish minority, and this has been consequential in the development of relations between itself and the ethnic Romanian majority. As the subordinate Hungarians did not face the upheaval of a mass exodus, the speed and strength of its demands were far more conspicuous and confrontational than those experienced in Bulgaria. While there are historic differences as well that have undoubtedly influenced the strength of Hungarian demands, the community's power and rapid ascension within post-Ceausescu politics relative to the Turkish minority had noticeable repercussions on the rise of nationalism in Romania.

As we can see, control, in its various forms, has been prevalent in these two countries. Bulgaria's situation was more extreme due to the legacy of the exodus, which left its minority fewer in number, economically impoverished, and lacking critical leadership; the Bulgarian state has also developed a de facto veto over the activities of MRF. Romania's Hungarians also experienced hardships and a great deal of intervention designed to stimulate fear and intimidation, but its fundamental base emerged far stronger than Bulgaria's Turks. In general, however, the various methods of control have had the effect of reducing the minorities' ability to organize effectively at the political level, especially in the critical early years of transition. While it would be premature to conclude that the greater control a state has on its subordinate ethnic group during transition, the less likely inter-communal violence will be, it does appear that some control may have

useful benefits.<sup>48</sup> Those benefits, however, come with risks. Depending on the level and mechanism of control employed, there is a danger that it could create the exact backlash of violence that it intends to prevent. Also, there exists a real danger that these 'controls' will become ensconced in majority-minority relations. Without a state committed to an open and equitable society, dominance could become institutionalized leading to a sense of exclusion and alienation among the minority populations. This could similarly lead to destabilizing inter-ethnic violence, as seen in Northern Ireland beginning in the late 1960s. One way to foster state commitment towards cooperative and conciliatory behaviour is through inclusive political institutions.

### **Political Institutions**

This section reviews the effect of Romania's and Bulgaria's electoral systems and executive institutions to assess their ability to moderate ethnic conflict. First and foremost, it cannot be overstated that ethnic relations in these two countries have benefited immensely from the fact that they are inclusive democracies.<sup>49</sup> Through the co-optation of their minorities within the legal framework of the state, ethnic relations can be dealt with 'as issues and democratically'.<sup>50</sup> As Janusz Bugajski states categorically, 'To prevent ethnic relations ... spiraling out of control and provoking ... violence ... minorities must be allowed to participate fully in the country's political system through involvement in national and local elections.'<sup>51</sup>

This article contends that a dominant parliament using a List-Proportional Representation electoral system (List-PR) has increased the inclusiveness of these political systems and, as such, is a critical factor in explaining the peaceful process witnessed thus far in Bulgaria and Romania.

#### *Bulgaria and Romania: Dominant Parliaments*

Presidential systems are generally inimical to ethnic conflict. While Horowitz has shown this need not be the case, virtually all presidential contests use plurality or majoritarian electoral systems and, as such, are not inclusive and do not foster inter-ethnic cooperation.<sup>52</sup> Due to a combination effect of presidentialism's 'winner-take-all' results and 'temporal rigidity', Juan Linz notes that the results leave winners and losers sharply defined for a protracted period of time, leading, statistically, to greater amounts of political violence.<sup>53</sup>

Parliamentary systems using List-PR, in contrast, play an important role in ethnic conflict reduction. First, they require conciliation and compromise to form coalition governments, thus forcing ethnically segmented parties to cooperate. Second, they have been shown to provide a key location for

mediating tension; they perform an important 'conflict management function'.<sup>54</sup>

As Agh has demonstrated, due to an 'overparliamentarization' during transition, all Central and Eastern European countries tended towards a dominant parliament.<sup>55</sup> Technically, both Bulgaria and Romania are termed 'Semi-Presidential' because they have popularly elected presidents with powers surpassing a ceremonial role.<sup>56</sup> As a result, heightened tension surrounding the 'winner-take-all' elections does occur. In fact, Bulgaria's first-ever direct presidential elections saw this effect when the trailing candidate began courting nationalist 'anti-Turkish' support.<sup>57</sup> Romania's Presidential powers however surpass that of Bulgaria's and have been described as 'significant'.<sup>58</sup> This also led to ethnically divided results such as Romania's first post-Ceausescu president, Ion Illiescu, whom the Hungarians avoided at the ballot box 'en masse'.<sup>59</sup> However, as neither president has direct control over their respective government's executive powers, these tensions are not as accentuated as in a traditional presidential system. The major engine of government remains the parliament and we will therefore explore the respective electoral systems that provide access to minority voices.

### *Electoral Systems*

The traditional divide in electoral systems centres on 'Majority/Plurality' versus 'Proportional' (PR). While there are advantages to both, proportional systems are infinitely superior for divided societies. As Arend Lijphart concludes:

For plural societies all of the empirical consequences associated with PR ... are preferable to the consequences of the plurality system. Thus, constitutional engineers in a segmented society do not face a difficult choice between the two types of electoral systems: the PR system is preferable.<sup>60</sup>

Proportional systems, particularly List-PR,<sup>61</sup> are far preferable for two major reasons. First, PR systems 'set out to minimize disproportionality'.<sup>62</sup> This translates into a greater likelihood that a minority will be represented and will receive seats highly proportional to their size – a strong reason the Hungarian minority party lobbied for PR in Romania's new legislature.<sup>63</sup> Ethnic groups, particularly those emerging from authoritarian regimes and fearful of past assimilation policies, must be allowed to represent themselves if they so desire; this is paramount for peace.<sup>64</sup>

Second, the system is more inclusive because it encourages multi-partyism and coalition governments. In fact, Blais and Carty's examination of electoral results in western democracies found that the probability of a

one-party government was 'close to nil' in PR systems but increases by 40 per cent using a single-member plurality system.<sup>65</sup> As parties fragment, there is a greater likelihood that a coalition cabinet will be needed and that the minority will participate. Two benefits ensue: one, the political system gains tremendous legitimacy in the eyes of the minority. This occurs either because it is, has or could play a role in the government:

This prospect of competing in accordance with the procedural norms of the system can be reassuring to minority interests; not only do they have a chance to advance their individual and collective interests but they are encouraged by the majority's commitment to the electoral contract. The effect is to pre-empt conflict, probably the best form of minority assurance available.<sup>66</sup>

In addition, all ethnic groups of significant size are encouraged to temper their nationalist rhetoric because they could be future partners in a coalition. This has been an important factor with both Bulgaria and Romania.

Two important caveats must be added here: first, this system provides no guarantees of a coalition with minority parties, and thus runs the risk of permanent minority exclusion. As we will see below, minority exclusion has occurred in both countries. There is also no guarantee that, even if a coalition with the minority is formed, that it will survive the tensions of governmental power.<sup>67</sup> The conclusion of this article will suggest that while this system may be a necessary first step towards reducing tension, it is not sufficient. Second, the List-PR model for multi-ethnic societies rests on an implicit assumption that political parties are interested in obtaining the power of government. This model therefore breaks down when parties, for nationalist or other reasons, refuse, on principle, to form coalitions with other parties deemed unacceptable. While this has not occurred with Romania and Bulgaria's ethnic minority parties, it did force one coalition in Bulgaria to remain at the 'unofficial' level.<sup>68</sup> Critical to the success of this model is, therefore, the presence of a popular, moderate ethno-political party that is both (i) willing to enter a coalition government and that (ii) is an acceptable partner to other political parties. As we will see in the third section, 'Ethnopolitical Accommodative Behaviour', moderate parties represent both minorities in Romania and Bulgaria.

### *The Bulgarian Transition*

Bulgaria began its transition with a mixed electoral system of single-member districts and List-PR. The 1990 election for the 18-month transitional Grand National Assembly had predictable results with the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP, the former communist party), receiving an absolute majority of seats. Bulgaria's ethnic minority, represented by the

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MRF, received just under six per cent of the total seats. These elections achieved one important step towards ethnic harmony: legitimacy. The Turkish minority had received political representation in the Bulgarian parliament. While conflict certainly remained, the stage had been set for those conflicts to be played out legally and openly through parliamentary institutions.<sup>69</sup>

As is often the case, Bulgaria's mixed-electoral system was transitory and by 1991 a pure List-PR system was in use.<sup>70</sup> The List-PR elections for the National Assembly (Sobranie) produced only partially expected results. While there was a proliferation of parties, not one of the new parties, including extreme nationalist parties, surpassed the four per cent electoral threshold to enter the parliament.<sup>71</sup> As a result, only three parties were represented in the country's unicameral system with the MRF coming third: BSP (44 per cent of the seats), UDF (46 per cent), and the MRF (10 per cent). Nevertheless, the results proved significant for the minority: as no party won a majority of seats, suddenly the MRF was placed in the enviable position of 'coalition-securing party'. Thus, not only had the Turkish minority gained legal representation, a feat unimaginable a few years previously, their party was suddenly in a position of power, being courted by the two other players. In terms of legitimacy in the eyes of the Turks, this was a boon to the system and provided a great deal of prestige to the MRF. The ensuing coalitions also enabled the MRF to prove to the Bulgarian people that Turkish interests were moderate and not threatening.

Neither the BSP nor the UDF were particularly desirous of an MRF coalition, as they feared punishment from the nationalist polity. Fear notwithstanding, both parties were forced to temper their nationalist rhetoric. The temptation for power was such that the UDF agreed to an unofficial coalition with the MRF.<sup>72</sup> The result was successful for inter-ethnic relations: a Bulgarian-Turk elected as Vice-President of the parliament and several MRF deputies elected to second positions in several ministries.<sup>73</sup> As one author has stated: 'Ethnochauvinism at the elite level has succumbed to political expediency and the need to stay alive in a fragmented political system.'<sup>74</sup> In a move that speaks volumes about reconciliation through parliament, the subsequent coalition government formed was effectively, but unofficially, BSP-MRF.

The 1994 and 1997 election results proved less auspicious for inclusive democracy as both the BSP and then the UDF were able to form majority governments. The environment, however, was still deemed satisfactory and one MRF parliamentarian in 1995 went so far as to suggest that the 'Bulgarian model' of ethnic relations would ensure that the conflict seen in Bosnia would never occur in his country.<sup>75</sup> As one academic has

summarized, 'Although conflicts remain between Bulgarians and Turks, those conflicts are being played out through parliamentary institutions. The MRF as well as ethnic Bulgarians consider this method to have been successful.'<sup>76</sup>

### *The Romanian Transition*

Romania emerged in 1990 with a pure List-PR electoral system for its parliament (Camera Deputatilor) with no electoral threshold initially. As a result, the Hungarian HUDR party<sup>77</sup> received proportional representation, finishing in second place with 7.5 per cent of the seats.<sup>78</sup> However, the 'transitional' government of the National Salvation Front (NSF, reformed communists) won a decisive majority and thus excluded the Hungarians from power; nevertheless, the HUDR had achieved a legal position within the new Romanian system, setting a comfortable precedent. But two distinct differences from Bulgaria can also be observed which help explain the greater nationalist sentiment expressed in Romania. First, the absence of any threshold enabled many more parties to enter the parliament – including some extremely nationalist parties – which supplemented the nationalist nature of the NSF. If the same four per cent threshold used in Bulgaria had been applied to Romania's electoral system, it too would only have had three parties in parliament. Instead a total of 15 parties were represented, and ultra-nationalist parties were able to establish themselves as political forces during an extremely vulnerable period in the transition. This nationalism helped to prevent the HUDR from playing a constructive role at the national level in the initial years because major parties denied them access.<sup>79</sup>

The PR system also encouraged further party proliferation at the 1992 election, including a split in the incumbent NSF. However, this only served ultranationalist interests as Illiescu's new party, the Democratic National Salvation Front (DNSF), was now forced to depend on ultranationalists for support in parliament, restricting any moves towards moderation.<sup>80</sup> Many predicted the outcome would 'virtually guarantee violence'.<sup>81</sup> In fact, a 1995 agreement between the DNSF and three other radicals, the infamous '4-Party Alliance', betrayed the emergence of ultranationalism in the Romanian government.<sup>82</sup>

This situation drastically changed after the 1996 elections. To force out the ancient regime, Romania's political parties were forced into a more conciliatory position as they needed the HUDR's seats to form a majority and oust Illiescu's supporters. An anti-communist alliance, called the Democratic Convention of Romania, was the victor with 30 per cent of the seats, (the HUDR placed fourth over-all).<sup>83</sup> Thus, the electoral system had produced an 'extrinsic reason' for some Romanian parties to cooperate or

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coalesce across the ethnic boundary in order to form a government.<sup>84</sup> While this was still a 'coalition of convenience' and thus not deliberately organized for the purpose of inter-ethnic compromise, the HUDR had finally been included in a three-way coalition to oust the ancient regime.<sup>85</sup> The results were tangible: after a mere seven years since the forced assimilation campaign had ended, the Hungarian minority had achieved two cabinet positions in a coalition government for the state of Romania. Policies more favourable to the Hungarian minority followed.<sup>86</sup>

Conclusions drawn from this analysis are mixed. While the regimes have chosen what appears to be the most inclusive electoral system, List-PR, and while they have avoided the ethnically divisive presidential system, coalition governments with the minority were not common. There are two possible explanations. One explanation could be that these are immature democracies. During the initial elections we saw huge seat percentages being won by the dominant political parties (NSF and BSP), uncharacteristic of a proportional system. Gradually, through fragmentation of those blocs, party proliferation, and the establishment of electoral alliances, we have seen a more 'normal' party system begin to develop. This would suggest that as time progresses, the minority parties will be included with greater frequency; perhaps the HUDR's inclusion in the 1996 Romanian governing coalition is symbolic of this. As stated earlier, there is no guarantee of such coalitions, and therefore perhaps being included once in a ten-year period is, in fact, quite successful. The second explanation is that nationalism has already ensconced itself in these democracies, perhaps partly as a result of the intra-ethnic competition among the majority group caused by List-PR. This nationalism may have prevented anything more than 'coalitions of convenience' from ever being achieved; the MRF's position as unofficial coalition member in the early 1990s could be symbolic of this. The latter explanation would suggest a calamitous future for inter-ethnic relations and might confirm Horowitz's warning that ethnic party systems, caused partly by PR systems among others, 'tend to foster rather than to moderate ethnic conflict'.<sup>87</sup> Only time can answer this question.

Nevertheless, it cannot be overemphasized that both the representation of these minorities in parliament and then the tangible access to power that both parties attained as coalition members, did encourage moderation by adding legitimacy to the system in the eyes of the minority communities. Still today, inter-ethnic disputes are carried out openly and legally through constitutionally sanctioned channels. One important reason for this, as stated at the beginning of this section, is the existence of moderate ethnopolitical parties, which are crucial for the possibility of coalition building. While the desire for government power plays one role in

moderating behaviour, Bulgaria and Romania have other factors that have led to accommodative behaviour.

### **Ethnopolitical Accommodative Behaviour**

So far, we have analyzed two environmental variables that have influenced inter-ethnic relations: the inherited communist legacy with the states' ability to exert control on their minority and the inclusiveness of the political system. We will now delve into the third and final topic: the accommodative role played by the ethnic minority political parties, known as 'ethnopolitical parties'. Ethnopolitical parties 'primarily represent the interest of an ethnic group, rather than primarily seek to broaden their appeal to other groups'.<sup>88</sup> By avoiding the term 'nationalist' the emphasis is on the cooperative nature often held by such parties, many of which do not contend that 'the political and the national unit should be congruent'.<sup>89</sup> It is a widely held belief that ethnic party systems, if left unchecked, begin an inexorable process towards a natural extreme destined to heighten tension if not destroy ethnic relations altogether. Horowitz contends:

By appealing to electorates in ethnic terms, by making demands on government, and by bolstering the influence of ethnically chauvinist elements within each group, parties that begin by merely mirroring ethnic divisions help to deepen and extend them.<sup>90</sup>

Yet, many ethnopolitical parties continue to prove visibly accommodative and willing to work within their state to achieve peace. So what conditions conduce to accommodative behaviour within an ethnic party system, even where the majority proves unaccommodative, if not hostile?

As we have seen, both ethnic majorities in Romania and Bulgaria, despite the extreme crimes of the previous regimes, did not actively seek reconciliation; the majority, in the initial years, neither bestowed collective guarantees on their minority communities nor proved in any way beneficent in their approach to redress grievances or reassure the minority's future position.<sup>91</sup> While one might expect this to increase extremism, the opposite has generally been true: both ethnopolitical party goals not only began with modest aims but these have remained essentially non-escalating throughout. Significantly, the ethnopolitical party that has been more demanding and more ambiguous in its goals, the HUDR, has seen some of the most virulent and anti-ethnic sentiment emerge from the ethnic majority. How one defines 'modest' is, of course, at once both important and subjective. By modest, it is meant 'non-extreme', that is, 'non-threatening' to the territorial integrity of the state and its ethnic majority's rights.<sup>92</sup> To help identify how moderate the two minority parties are, there are some useful typologies.

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According to Raphael Zariski's categorization, neither party would be labelled an 'ethnic extreme'.<sup>93</sup> Joseph Rudolph and Robert Thompson's four 'ethnoterritorial movements' would place the Bulgarian Turks in the first, and most moderate, category of 'output-oriented parties' while the Romanian Hungarians would qualify for the second category of 'anti-authority'.<sup>94</sup> Meanwhile, Janusz Bugajski's useful typology of five ethnopolitical positions would have the Turkish minority rank again under the first, and most modest position of 'Cultural Revivalism', while the Hungarian's similarly fall under the second, 'Political Autonomism'.<sup>95</sup> Thus these parties can comfortably be described as 'moderate'.

The argument behind this section is simple: a moderate stance, even if not reciprocated, will rarely end in violence. Furthermore, by maintaining open channels of communication and accommodative behaviour, the opportunity for future reconciliation remains significant as the poisonous force of dual ethnic intransigence is eliminated. During a transition, sensitivities are extreme and susceptibility is high; an initially 'distrusted' minority, through its own forbearance and patience will help allay majority fears and permit a maturation of the democratic system opening the prospects for compromise in the future. Moreover, the moderate tones adopted are of such significance because, 'the danger persists that almost every manifestation of even non-separatist ethnic aspiration among minorities ... can be interpreted as proof of deliberate subversion'.<sup>96</sup> This is all the more salient with the transitions of Eastern Europe as their polity has emerged from a 'monopoly of information' leaving them particularly susceptible to sensational claims made by politicians and others.<sup>97</sup> In fact, even the establishment of the Hungarian minority party provoked the creation of Romania's still leading anti-Hungarian organization and political party, which was directly implicated in Eastern Europe's first major act of inter-ethnic violence.<sup>98</sup>

There are two reasons why moderation and accommodation have prevailed among Bulgaria's and Romania's ethnopolitical parties. First, the lack of intra-ethnic competition among the minorities: each community has but one party to represent them. Second, the internal dynamics of each party, for different reasons, have led to the predominance of moderation.

### **Lack of Intra-Ethnic Competition**

Intra-ethnic competition causes conflict. As Horowitz asserts: 'Nothing is as responsible for the conflict-promoting character of ethnic party systems as [the] configuration of competition.'<sup>99</sup> Ethnic parties, once divided, are often forced into a process of 'ethnic outbidding'<sup>100</sup> where they try to 'position

themselves as the best supporters of a group's interests, each accusing the others of being too weak on ethnic nationalist issues'.<sup>101</sup> This helps explain why 'ethnic party systems are so often conflict prone'.<sup>102</sup> Brendan O'Duffy has stressed the need for 'intra-segmental stability' to induce accommodative behaviour which he defines as, 'a lack of competition for votes within each communal segment'.<sup>103</sup>

While it is common for ethnic parties to originate as cohesive units,<sup>104</sup> they are fissiparous by nature. The two ethnic parties under consideration, however, have maintained their monopolies. There are three reasons for this, all of which are likely to perpetuate these monopolies in the future. First, electoral thresholds have proved a restrictive force to alternative ethnic entrepreneurs seeking representation. Second, the size of the respective minorities has meant splinter factions would be debilitating to the ethnic group's cause as a whole. And third is the Bulgarian state's effective control over the Turkish minority's ethnic party system, as discussed under the section of 'Mechanisms of Control' above.

### *Thresholds*

The connection between thresholds and intra-ethnic competition is straightforward. As Horowitz maintains, one factor likely to prevent ethnic party fragmentation is, 'the effect of the formal incentive structure on party proliferation'.<sup>105</sup> While List-PR is designed to cause multi-partyism, the thresholds in each country have effectively prohibited this outcome for minority parties. The higher the threshold, the more difficult it becomes for smaller parties to gain representation in parliament. For Romania and Bulgaria's relatively small ethnic minorities, the threshold prevents them from maintaining two parties.

The MRF receives approximately seven per cent popular support.<sup>106</sup> Bulgarian electoral law stipulates a four per cent threshold indicating that a direct split would translate into no representation at all. Any alternative party contending the election would almost invariably be excluded; in fact, two de facto ethnic parties that registered illegally fell to just such a fate.<sup>107</sup> The HUDR likewise receives just over seven per cent popular support. With Romania's three per cent threshold, a direct split could conceivably create two parties, but this would be precarious at best. While very restrictive, thresholds cannot be interpreted as deliberately punitive against minorities; thresholds are effectively 'standardized' across the post-communist world.<sup>108</sup> Even Poland, one of the most ethnically homogeneous of the post-communist world, has a three per cent threshold.<sup>109</sup> Nevertheless, they have been an effective deterrent against intra-ethnic competition for those minorities.

### *Population Size*

The threshold levels do not, on their own, prevent a split; unsatisfied leaders may still create new parties in the hopes of weaning supporters away in the future. Here, another of Horowitz's conditions for preventing ethnic party fragmentation is important: 'the collective sense of how many parties an ethnic group can afford without weakening itself in ethnic conflict.'<sup>110</sup> The size of each minority in question is such that the adult voting population would find it difficult to support two competing parties capable of maintaining a sufficient number of seats to be included in a governing coalition.<sup>111</sup> The minorities simply cannot 'afford' a party split. The Turkish minority experienced this lesson in 1994 when the two illegal rival factions, who did not gain representation, nevertheless reduced the MRF's vote enough to lower its seat total from 24 to 15.<sup>112</sup>

What these countries have experienced is intra-ethnic competition among the majority ethnic groups, and the results showed an expected increase in nationalist sentiment. Even those elites from the majorities who wished to engage in ethnic reconciliation could not do so while remaining serious contenders in the competitive political climate.<sup>113</sup> This has prevented moderation among the majority from prevailing and, hence, prevented any serious progress on ethnic accommodation programmes. The question remains then as to why the minority parties did not begin with greater demands and how they have, even as unitary blocs, resisted the temptation and pressure within the party to become more extreme. As we outlined above, the minority populations do not have alternative parties to choose from; even if dissatisfied, they do not have an 'exit' option.<sup>114</sup> As one academic put it: a party that 'does not have to worry about a supporter exiting, does not have to worry as much about alienating them'.<sup>115</sup> This does not mean, of course, that the MRF or HUDR need not tailor their programmes to the community's needs or demands but rather that the party's leadership has greater leeway within which to establish its programme.

### *Internal Dynamics: Broad Support and Elite Moderation*

Given the outrageous treatment of these two minorities during the communist period – treatment that equated to assimilation and expulsion – party extremism was a distinct possibility. In fact, as Bugajski points out, any form of 'forced assimilation or expulsion of minority groups ... can in turn transform moderate minority autonomists into radical separatists'.<sup>116</sup> Even though within all minority populations there will be a 'spectrum of related yet distant and even mutually antagonistic stances',<sup>117</sup> this section will analyze the overarching 'stance' its ethnopolitical party has presented.

There are two reasons why these ethnic parties have maintained relatively moderate goals. First, both parties must maintain a broad-based appeal for its supporters. V.O. Key has commented that 'political parties ... must play down group interest by conciliating conflict, by compromising issues, by seeking formulas for the combination of many groups into a bloc strong enough to win'.<sup>118</sup> And second, there is the importance of elites. Eric Nordlinger has stated that 'conflict group leaders play a critical role in the process of conflict regulation. They, and they alone, can make a direct and positive contribution'.<sup>119</sup> Despite the negative images of Balkan politicians conjured up by the likes of Milosevic, Tudjman, and Karadzic, the popular belief that 'the Balkans constitute a region with an unusually rich heritage of tribalist myth as well as political leaders willing and able to use them for their own purposes',<sup>120</sup> has proven inaccurate for these ethnopolitical elites.

### *Hungarian Minority*

The Hungarian minority's ethnopolitical party, the HUDR, represents an alliance of multifarious Hungarian organizations with disparate objectives.<sup>121</sup> As Key would expect, the HUDR has had to adopt a relatively moderate tone to appeal to all interests. Symbolic of the party's measured path, the elites representing its variegated factions have repeatedly re-elected Beta Marko, from the moderate wing, as its President. O'Duffy stresses the need for elite compromise in conflict regulation which he says is 'usually facilitated by the existence of a common enemy or threat shared by the communities in conflict'.<sup>122</sup> Tom Gallagher confirms this effect on Romania's elite when he claims, 'the threat to Hungarian interests from influential Romanian nationalists and an unsympathetic government allowed very dissimilar persons to cooperate inside [the party]'.<sup>123</sup> The HUDR's initial goals included: an education system guaranteeing minority-language instruction; mandatory bilingualism in Transylvania; a Ministry of Nationalities; and the re-establishment of Cluj's independent Hungarian university.<sup>124</sup> They have called for neither outright secession, territorial autonomy, nor the repatriation of any smaller regions to Hungary, despite dire warnings from some of Romania's political parties.<sup>125</sup>

To be sure, there have been deep divisions within the party as it attempts to find a direction and create a programme palatable to all members. This proved particularly important during the initial years as protracted delays and failed promises on the part of the state led to greater radicalization among some HUDR members who, since 1992, have unofficially 'upped the ante' to demand 'territorial autonomy' and the status of 'co-nation'.<sup>126</sup> During these critical years the party began adopting ambiguous terminology to provide a platform agreeable to at least the mildly radical elements within

the HUDR.<sup>127</sup> These occurrences have been highlighted by nationalists and interpreted as the 'thin end of the wedge' towards secession.<sup>128</sup> Furthermore, the 1995 education law, deemed by the HUDR as discriminatory, saw the party threaten to wage a campaign of 'civil disobedience'.<sup>129</sup> Such acts only serve to provoke nationalists, with predictable results of heightened tension and greater proximity to violence: the current mayor of ethnically divided Cluj-Napocja, in Transylvania, is the 'rabid chauvinist' Gheorghe Funar who has advocated 'population exchanges' with Hungary.<sup>130</sup> Moreover, recent events suggest this struggle to maintain moderation inside the party will continue for some time.<sup>131</sup>

The importance of the HUDR in the 1996 coalition government, in light of these issues, has been recognized as particularly helpful in the strengthening of the moderates; the coalition, it was said, 'has taken the wind out of the [HUDR] nationalists' sails'.<sup>132</sup> This once again emphasizes the need for political inclusion as its ramifications are far-reaching. In general, through its annual Congress meetings<sup>133</sup> and Party Platforms,<sup>134</sup> and their famously modest 'step by step' approach to policy,<sup>135</sup> the HUDR has maintained their broad base by ultimately choosing a non-confrontational official path.

#### *Turkish Minority*

The original programme of the Turkish minority of Bulgaria, the MRF, displayed great restraint, focusing on the reinstatement of basic civil rights stripped during the Zhivkov era.<sup>136</sup> It soon broadened its stated goals to become a party for all national minorities and opposed any 'manifestation of national chauvinism, revenge, Islamic fundamentalism and religious fanaticism'.<sup>137</sup> As discussed earlier, however, the MRF benefits from a de facto monopoly and, as such, has had greater leeway in the face of dissension to pursue its accommodative strategy. Its leader, Ahmed Dogan, has vigilantly proclaimed anti-separatist and anti-autonomist positions and has skilfully managed an independent course within Bulgarian politics, magnanimously prepared to keep any option open.<sup>138</sup> The thread of his policy was stated in an interview to promote 'human and community rights' and to avoid 'bloodshed of the type seen in Bosnia'.<sup>139</sup> When extreme elements have threatened to envelope the party, Dogan has simply threatened, as leader, to resign the party's board – an effective veto as this would force the party into the precarious position of needing to re-register.

There are many reasons to suggest that radicalism should emanate from the Turkish minority. These include the striking economic gap between the Turkish minority and ethnic Bulgarians,<sup>140</sup> persistent threats against the Turks by extreme and moderate nationalist parties,<sup>141</sup> and the failure of the

post-communist administration to originally prosecute those officials implicated in the assimilationist campaign of the Zhivkov era.<sup>142</sup> Additionally, the dominant BSP has been described as 'assiduously courting nationalist sentiment'.<sup>143</sup> To be sure, there have been radical elements advocating national self-determination and recognition of a Turkish national minority, but these elements have been functionally silenced.<sup>144</sup> Much to the surprise of most analysts, the party continues on its modest path and has been described as having, 'demonstrated a sense of balance, moderation, perspective, pragmatism, and common sense'.<sup>145</sup> Its unerring champion of moderation – Ahmed Dogan – has been at the heart of the MRF's success in this respect.

We can conclude this section with three general remarks. First, the ethnopolitical parties from both the HUDR and the MRF have maintained moderate tones. However, the HUDR has witnessed increased levels of extremism within its ranks and, unsurprisingly, has seen increased nationalist responses from among the majority. Second, both parties have been able to avoid intra-ethnic competition through a combined effort of an electoral threshold and a population base that makes it difficult for the minority to 'afford' a split. And finally, both the need to appeal broadly and the strength of dedicated, moderate leaders have helped temper extremist demands among the minority itself.

### **Conclusion**

Romania and Bulgaria have succeeded, during the initial stages of their democratic transitions, to avert protracted inter-ethnic violence in their plural societies. This on its own deserves both merit and research, for the world is awash with ethnic wars spawned during democratic transitions. This article has reviewed three internal dimensions that have facilitated the prevention of violent inter-ethnic confrontations. First we looked at the use of control and examined features of both states that resembled that of an 'ethnic democracy'. Romania and Bulgaria have benefited from a strong centralized state and an impoverished minority community, both economically and intellectually, which were inherited from its communist past. Interference and intimidation were found to be commonplace, especially during the initial years of the transition. It was argued that the economic and intellectual impoverishment of these communities along with their fragmentation left them disoriented and in a disadvantageous position organizationally. The exceptional case of the Bulgarian state's de facto control over the MRF was also highlighted. However, while this has helped prevent ethnic violence, it has also served to aggravate ethnic conflict. It is not clear that all mechanisms of control explored here did in

fact help prevent ethnic violence. As was noted earlier, some control mechanisms in other conflict zones in the world have actually caused the violent backlashes they seek to prevent. Without more research in this field, it is dangerous to conclude how advantageous control mechanisms are. Those mechanisms that maintain moderation among communities are desirable, but engineering this through control is a high-risk endeavour and certainly not supported by mainstream liberal-democratic theory. Fortunately, as internal divisions continue to fragment the ancient regime in Romania and Bulgaria, it is likely that hard-line apparatchiks will have fewer opportunities to exercise control to the same degree as during the initial years of democracy.

Second, we reviewed the inclusiveness of the political institutions established soon after the communist collapse. The two countries chose strikingly similar paths and managed to avoid the most conflictual institutional framework. In fact, while neither government placed inter-ethnic relations as a priority, Lijphart's preferred electoral system for plural societies was chosen. As we saw, however, this did not guarantee inclusion in government; frequently political parties either did not need the minorities' political seats to form a coalition or else opposed cooperating with the minority parties for fear of being 'ethnically outbid' by other nationalist parties. This presents grave concerns for the future and emphasizes the need for 'consociational' solutions, forms of 'electoral engineering', or other guarantees to produce more cooperative and inclusive ethnic alliances.

Third, the article examined the two ethnopolitical parties and they were shown to have demonstrated remarkable restraint and moderation. Due to a complex interplay including astute leadership and an all-important lack of intra-ethnic competition, the HUDR and the MRF were able to maintain moderate monopolies. While these monopolies are likely to continue, the moderation did exhibit signs of growing radicalism when compromises on the part of the state were not forthcoming. This fear of radicalization was more apparent in the case of Hungary's minority.

All three elements have been important for the peaceful transitions experienced in Romania and Hungary. It is the author's opinion that moderation on the part of the minorities was the single most significant factor. Moderation resulted from both those factors discussed under 'Ethnopolitical Accommodative Behaviour', and 'Mechanisms of Control'. Moderation also cannot be untangled from the democratic political institutions chosen after 1989. The legitimacy of being genuinely represented in parliament cannot be overstated, while being included in government as a genuine coalition partner has reaped incalculable benefits for moderates within both ethnopolitical parties.

These case studies provide lessons for other plural societies embarking on transitions to democracy. Politicians and academics often speak or write about the need to support moderates, and the past decade of Romanian and Bulgarian history demonstrates some options available to policy-makers. It is significant, however, that while coalition governments including the minority parties formed in both countries, this was more by chance than by design. This research thus posits that the institutional designs and moderation of minority parties were necessary but not sufficient factors for guaranteeing peace.

The future for multi-ethnic Romania and Bulgaria is auspicious as both countries enjoy more favourable inter-ethnic relations than at any time previously. What we must glean from these and other examples is how they successfully passed through the delicate period surrounding their initial transitions. While this is only a modest contribution to the field of ethnic conflict management, these lessons learned can be set against other transitions to provide the international community with a more comprehensive set of guidelines for this current era of democratization. If a state can take advantage of and reinforce moderate minority leaderships, it might be able to seize a critical window of opportunity to negotiate a permanent solution palatable to the majority of all its ethnic groups.

#### NOTES

1. Various terms are employed to label such societies which are characterized, generally, by antagonistic segments of society based on terminal identities/ascriptive ties (usually ethnic, linguistic, racial, or religious identities) sustained over a substantial period of time and a wide variety of issues (Ian Lustick, 'Stability in Deeply Divided Societies: Consociationalism versus Control', *World Politics*, Vol.31, No.3 (1979) pp.325-44, see p.325). The term 'deeply divided' comes from Eric Nordlinger but other terms include 'vertically segmented' or Milton Esman's 'communalism'.
2. For an example of Bulgaria, see S. Ashley, 'Ethnic Unrest During January', *RFE/RL Report on Eastern Europe*, Vol.1, No.6 (1990); for Romania, see V. Socor, 'Forces of Old Resurface in Romania: The Ethnic Clashes in Tirgu-Mures', *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol.1, No.15 (1990), pp.36-43.
3. T. Gilberg, 'Ethnic Conflict in the Balkans: Comparing Ex-Yugoslavia, Romania and Albania', in K. Christie (ed), *Ethnic Conflict, Tribal Politics* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press 1998), p.62.
4. Ibid.
5. For a discussion of European Union influence on Romania see Melanie H. Ram, 'Minority Relations in Multiethnic Societies: Assessing the European Union Factor in Romania', *Romanian Journal of Society and Politics*, Vol.1, No.2 (2001), pp.63-90; for a more general discussion of external influences see M. Tamarkin, 'Ethnonational Discourse and Political Accommodation: The case of the Romanian majority and the Hungarian minority in post-communist Romania', unpublished paper, Tel Aviv University.
6. Ted Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington, D.C.: Unites States Institute of Peace, 1993), p.174.
7. John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary (eds.), *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation* (London: Routledge, 1993), p.23.

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8. For an account of control measures used in Canada, see S.J.R. Noel, 'Canadian Responses to Ethnic Conflict: Consociationalism, Federalism and Control', in McGarry and O'Leary, pp.41–61.
9. McGarry and O'Leary, p.23.
10. Sammy Smooha 'Minority Status in an Ethnic Democracy: the Status of the Arab Minority in Israel', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol.13, No.3 (1990), pp.389–413.
11. 'There is certainly an inherent contradiction between control and democracy.' Sammy Smooha, 'Control of Minorities in Israel and Northern Ireland', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol.22, No.2 (1980), pp.256–280, see p.257.
12. Lustick, p.336
13. Quoted from J.T. Ishiyama and M. Breuning, *Ethnopolitics in the New Europe*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), p.7.
14. J. Linz and A. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p.333 (italics in original).
15. Ashley, p.6, describes Lilov's report which effectively protected senior officials from criminal implication in the assimilation programme.
16. Ishiyama and Breuning, p.43
17. Ilcho Dimitrov was named Education Minister in 1995. From A. Eminov, 'The Turks in Bulgaria: Post 1989 Developments', *Nationality Papers*, Vo.27, No.1 (1999), pp.31–55, p.49.
18. M. Opalski and P. Dutkiewicz (eds.), *Ethnic Minority Rights in Central Eastern Europe* (Ottawa: Canadian Human Rights Foundation and the Forum Eastern Europe, 1996), p.105.
19. Dvisenie za Pravata Turchite I Bulgarija (DPS).
20. Eminov, 'The Turks in Bulgaria: Post 1989 Developments', p.39.
21. The state instead emphasizes only Human Rights, visible with, for example, the permanent Commission on Human Rights of the Bulgarian Parliament.
22. A consultative body but with a mandate to implement the state's nationality policy and regulate inter-educational relations.
23. I. Tomova, 'Ethnic Minorities in Bulgaria', in M. Opalski and P. Dutkiewicz (eds.), p.106.
24. Some points of contention include: Article 3 has Bulgarian as the only official language; there are also no articles guaranteeing freedom of worship or separation of church and state.
25. Bulgaria Constitution, [www.uni-wuerzburg.de/law/bu00000\\_.html](http://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/law/bu00000_.html)
26. Private discussion with Krassimer Kanev, Head of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee: Sofia, April 7, 1999.
27. 'Ilinden' is a group purporting to represent the interests of a Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. From R. Crampton, 'Bulgaria', in S. Whitefield (ed.), *The New Institutional Architecture of Eastern Europe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993).
28. Other banned Turkish parties include 'The Turkish Democratic Party' and the 'Party for Democratic Changes' as cited in Ishiyama and Breuning, p.33.
29. Ibid, p.30.
30. Private discussion with Krassimer Kanev, Head of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee: Sofia, 7 April 1999.
31. A. Zhelyazkova, 'The Social and Cultural Adaptation of Bulgarian Immigrants in Turkey' in A. Zhelyazkova (ed.), *Between Adaptation and Nostalgia: The Bulgarian Turks in Turkey* (Sofia: International Center For Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations, 1998), p.17.
32. Ibid., p.18.
33. A. Eminov, *Turks and Other Muslim Minorities in Bulgaria* (London: Hurst and Company, 1997), p.85.
34. Ibid., p.103.
35. J. Fox, *Turks in Bulgaria* (Centre for International Development and Conflict Management, 1995), available at [www.cidcm.und.edu/mar/bulturk.html](http://www.cidcm.und.edu/mar/bulturk.html).
36. P. Krastev, 'Understated, Overexposed: Turks in Bulgaria – Immigrants in Turkey', in A. Zhelyazkova (ed.), p.144; for an analysis of possible causes, see V. Dimitrov, 'In Search of a Homogeneous Nation: The Assimilation of Bulgaria's Turkish Minority, 1984–1985',

- Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe*, European Centre for Minority Issues, 2000), available at [www.ccmi.dc/publications/jcmic/data.dimitrov.pdf](http://www.ccmi.dc/publications/jcmic/data.dimitrov.pdf).
37. For a detailed account of the exodus and return, see D.Vasileva, 'Bulgarian Turkish Emigration and Return', *International Migration Review*, Vol.26, No.2 (1992), pp.342–52.
  38. Eminov, 'The Turks in Bulgaria: Post 1989 Developments', p.32.
  39. Tomova, p.102.
  40. Ibid, p.103.
  41. Smooha (1980), p.269.
  42. For example, Adrain Motiu's appointment in 1990 as Minister Secretary of State for Transylvanian problems, a man reputed to be a supporter of the nationalist *Vatra Romaneauscu* party. M. Shafir, 'The Romanian Suthoritie; Reaction to the Violence in Tirgu-Mures', *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol.1, No.15 (1990), pp.43–7, see p.44.
  43. Shafir, 'The Romanian Suthoritie; Reaction to the Violence in Tirgu-Mures', p.43.
  44. This was the community's description of the 1995 Education Law. M. Opalski, 'National Minorities in Post-Ceausescu Romania' in M. Opalski and P. Dutkiewicz (eds.), p.88.
  45. J. Pataki, 'Free Hungarians in a Free Romania: Dream or Reality?', *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol.1, No.8 (1990), p.23.
  46. Article 118; also found in the 1991 Law on Public Administration.
  47. While an auspicious beginning did in fact see two Hungarians appointed in the two counties with large ethnic Hungarian majorities, by 1992 they had been dismissed in favour of ethnic Romanians.
  48. See for example Jack Snyder who cautions strongly *against* unfettered democratization unless certain preconditions are met; Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2000).
  49. A. Przeworski comments on the legitimating factor a democratic regime receives provided the various players have an incentive to participate; A. Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.26.
  50. S. Heisler, 'A Comparative Perspective on the Underclass: Questions of Urban Poverty, Race, and Citizenship', *Theory and Society* Vol.20 (1991), p.46.
  51. J. Bugajski, 'The Fate of Minorities in Eastern Europe', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.4, No.4 (1993), pp.85–101; see p.98.
  52. D. Horowitz, 'Comparing Democratic Systems', in L. Diamond and M. Plattner (eds.), *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), esp. p.149. An example is the Nigerian 2nd Republic's Presidency that proved to be a uniting force through intricate electoral engineering.
  53. J. Linz, 'The Perils of Presidentialism', in Diamond and Plattner (eds.).
  54. A. Agh, 'The Experiences of the First Democratic Parliaments in East Central Europe', *Communist and Postcommunist Studies*, Vol.28, No.2 (1995), pp.203–14; see p.212.
  55. Agh, p.212.
  56. J. Linz expresses exasperation over the difficulty to define semi-presidential systems; see pp.3–4 of 'Introduction' in R. Taras, *The Presidency in Post-Communist States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
  57. The losing candidate was Veiko Valkanov (47 per cent) next to Zhelm Zhelev. R.Taras, 'Leadership and Executives', in S. White and J. Batt P. Lewis (eds.), *Developments in East European Politics* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), p.173.
  58. The country's new constitution afforded the President powers including the position as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and the ability to appoint the country's Prime Minister. Taras, p.181.
  59. J. Eyal, 'Romania', in S. Whitefield (ed), *The New Institutional Architecture of Eastern Europe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), p.129.
  60. A. Lijphart, 'Electoral Systems, Party Systems and Conflict Management in Segmented Societies', in Schrire (ed), *Critical Choices for South Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.8.
  61. The two main proportional systems are List-PR and STV, the former of which is preferred

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- for three main reasons. See Lijphart, 'Electoral Systems, Party Systems and Conflict Management in Segmented Societies', p.11.
62. M. Gallagher, 'Proportionality, Disproportionality and Electoral Systems', *Electoral Studies*, Vol.10, No.1 (1991), pp.33–51; see p.49.
  63. J. Pataki, 'Free Hungarians in a Free Romania: Dream or Reality?', *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol.1, No.8 (1990), p.21.
  64. A. Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: a comprehensive exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), pp.83–87.
  65. A. Blais and R.Carty, 'The Impact of Electoral Formulae on the Creation of Majority Governments', *Electoral Studies*, Vol.6, No.3 (1987), pp.209–18; see p.216.
  66. D. Lake and D. Rothschild, 'Containing Fear: The Management of Transnational Ethnic Conflict', in D. Lake and D. Rothschild (eds.) *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict* (USA: Princeton University Press, 1998), p.209.
  67. As Horowitz has emphasized, many coalition governments comprised of ethnic parties have broken down soon after entering office because policy preferences are too dissimilar. He calls this the danger of 'coalitions of convenience' (see endnote 85). D. Horowitz, 'Electoral Systems for a Divided Society', in D. Horowitz (ed.), *A Democratic South Africa? Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
  68. Bulgaria's 1991 Parliamentary elections where an unofficial coalition between the UDF and MRF was formed.
  69. L. Troxel, 'Bulgaria and the Balkans', in C.P. Danopoulos and K.G. Messas (eds.), *Crises in The Balkans: Views from the Participants* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), p.207.
  70. Blais and Massicotte suggest mixed systems have usually 'paved the way for straight PR'. A. Blais and L. Massicotte, 'Mixed Electoral Systems: An Overview', *Representation*, Vol.33, No.4 (1996), pp.115.
  71. Examples include the Father Party of Labour, later to join the BSP
  72. Crampton, p.31
  73. Eminov, 'The Turks in Bulgaria: Post 1989 Developments', p.37.
  74. Gilberg, p.75.
  75. Troxel, p.77.
  76. Ibid, p.77.
  77. Uniunea Democratica Maghiara din Romania (UDMR), the political representative body of Romania's Hungarian minority.
  78. The HUDR and the National Liberation Party each received 7.5 per cent of the seats but the former received 7.2 per cent of the popular vote giving it 2nd place while the NLP received 6.4 per cent.
  79. Gilberg, p.75.
  80. Ibid, p.75
  81. Eyal, p.129.
  82. F. Veiga, 'On the Origins of Ultrnationalism and Radicalism in Romania', in L.Stan (ed), *Romania in Transition* (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1997).
  83. [www.agora.stm.it/elections/romania.htm](http://www.agora.stm.it/elections/romania.htm)
  84. D. Horowitz emphasizes the benefits of 'extrinsic reasons' to force conciliation and further shows how such coalitions help to 'temper responses to constituency demands' due to the responsibilities of governing. D. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p.348.
  85. See D. Horowitz, *A Democratic South Africa? Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society*, where he states these are coalitions that are 'arranged merely to aggregate the number of parliamentary seats to more than 50 per cent, in order to form a government – and for no other purpose, such as interethnic compromise'.
  86. Examples range from amendments to the Education Law in 1997, giving national minorities the right of education in their mother tongue at all levels of education, to the government's Emergency Ordinance on local administration in 1997, allowing the use of minority languages in public institutions in those regions where the minority exceeds 20 per cent.

87. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p.346.
88. Ethnopolitics is a broad category describing politics among ethnic groups and, as such, avoids the often ambiguous nature associated with term 'nationalism'. Ishiyama and Breuning, p.4.
89. E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), p.1.
90. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p.291.
91. Some legislative changes did take place in the latter part of the decade, such as the Education Law and Emergency Ordinance on local administration in Romania mentioned above after the HUDR came to power in 1996.
92. For a description of various types of 'collective demands' ranging from 'modest' to 'extremist' and various other stances, see R. Brubaker, 'Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.60-1
93. R. Zariski, 'Ethnic Extremism among Ethnoterritorial Minorities in Western Europe: Dimensions, Causes, and Institutional Responses', *Comparative Politics*, Vol.21, No.3 (1989), p.261.
94. J. Rudolph and R. Thompson, from Ishiyama and Breuning, who define the four categories as, '*output-oriented parties* [are] less concerned with achieving self-rule than with expanding their region's share of government outputs; *antiauthoritarian parties* ... are primarily concerned with affecting who makes decisions; *antiregime parties* focus on changing the constitutional principles and political structures regulating the manner in which decisions are made; *anticommunity parties* ... challenge the fundamental legitimacy of the multinational political community ... and champion independence': p.5
95. J. Bugajski, 'The Fate of Minorities in Eastern Europe', *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.4, No.4 (1993), pp.85-101; see pp.88-98; the third fourth and fifth categories are: territorial self-determination; separatism; and irredentism.
96. Bugajski, p.86
97. G. Evans and S. Whitefield, 'Identifying the Bases of Party Competition in Eastern Europe', *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol.23, No.4 (1993), pp.521-48; see p.538.
98. The founder of *Vatra Romaneasca*, Radu Ceantea, stated specifically that his movement emerged in response to the creation of HUDR; the ethnic violence was in Tirgu-Mures in 1990 (T. Gallagher, 'Vatra Romaneasca and Resurgent Nationalism in Romania', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol.15, No.4 (1992), pp.570-98; see p.573). Its political wing, the Party of Romanian National Unity, has also seen astonishing success and was actually included in a coalition government in 1995 (Veiga, p.127).
99. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p.342.
100. For a detailed look of 'ethnic outbidding', see J. Rothschild, *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).
101. S. Saideman, 'Is Pandora's Box Half Empty or Half Full? The Limited Virulence of Secessionism and the Domestic Sources of Disintegration', in Lake and Rothschild (eds.), p.133.
102. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p.298.
103. B. O'Duffy, 'Containment or Regulation: The British approach to ethnic conflict regulation in Northern Ireland', in McGarry and O'Leary (eds.), p.132.
104. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p.349.
105. Ibid.
106. While in 1990 this was as low as 6 per cent, (R. Crampton, 'The Bulgarian Elections of 1990', *Representation*, Vol.29, No.108 (1990) p.35) by 1994 this had increased to 7.5 per cent.
107. Both the Democratic Party for Justice and the Party for Democratic Changes contended the 1994 elections and neither surpassed the 4 per cent threshold (Eminov, 'The Turks in Bulgaria: Post 1989 Developments', p.38).
108. L. Holmes refers to an 'east-euro arrangement'. L. Holmes, *Post-Communism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997) p.152.
109. D. Mason, 'Poland' in White and Batt and Lewis (eds.), p.50.

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110. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, pp.349–360, especially p.353 with his discussion of Nigeria's ethnic parties.
111. Bulgaria: the MRF receives approximately 6 per cent of the popular vote, thus even an equal split would prevent both parties from the *Sobranie* with its 4 per cent threshold; Romania: the HUDR receives approximately 7 per cent of the popular vote, meaning an equal split could survive the three per cent threshold but this would be undependable at best.
112. Eminov, 'The Turks in Bulgaria: Post 1989 Developments', pp.38.
113. Gilberg, p.68.
114. Saideman, p.132.
115. Ibid, p.133.
116. Bugajski, p.86–7.
117. Brubaker, p.61.
118. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p.297.
119. E. Nordlinger, 'Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies', *Occasional Papers in International Affairs*, Vol.29 (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for International Affairs Harvard University, 1972), p.118.
120. Gilberg, p.65.
121. Recognized elements are: Liberal, Christian, Radical Democrat, Independent, Moderate, Transylvanianist.
122. O'Duffy, p.132.
123. T. Gallagher, *Romania After Ceausescu* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), p.182.
124. G. Schopflin and J. Poulton, *Romania's Ethnic Hungarians* (London: Minority Rights Group International, 1990), p.20.
125. The election campaign of 1990 had the National Salvation Front consistently warned of the Hungarian 'danger' (Eyal, p.129); the *Securitate* had also spread rumours that Hungarians might try to take advantage of the early chaos to occupy Transylvania (Pataki, p.19) The Party of Romanian National Unity aims for a homogeneous Romanian society (M. Bran, 'Romania: Using Nationalism for Political Legitimacy', in Å. Baumgart and A. Favell (eds.), *New Xenophobia in Europe* (London: Kluwer Law International, 1995), p.284.
126. Îdalski, p.94.
127. See for example Shafir where language used by HUDR could be interpreted as 'self-administration' or 'self-government'. The latter term contains 'federal structure' implications, thus accommodating both moderate and mild-radical factions. M.Shafir, 'The HUDR Congress: Confrontation Postponed', *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol.2, No.9 (1993), p.35.
128. Another example was the 'Cluj Declaration' adopted in late 1992 by the HUDR which requires local self-administration.
129. R. Weiner, 'Democratization in Romania' in L. Stan (ed), *Romania in Transition* (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1997), p.16.
130. Gilberg, pp.81–2.
131. In April, 1999, the moderate minister for ethnic minorities, Gyorgy Tokay, was replaced by the more radical Ekstein Kovacs – a sign of increased pressure on the moderates. The Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report, 3rd Quarter, 1999 (London: EIU, 1999), p.13.
132. T. Carothers, 'Romania – The Political Background', in L. Tindemans (ed.), *Democracy in Romania* (Sweden: International IDEA, 1998), p.14.
133. HUDR Congress proclaiming that 'moderation prevailed' in 1993 Congress (Bugajski, p.94), and again in 1995's re-election of 'moderate' leadership (Weiner, p.16).
134. Their programme of 1993 states, 'The Hungarian minority belongs to Romania' (Bran, p.283).
135. Bran, p.283.
136. These demands included the use of Turkish names, Turkish language, the practice of Islam, and the right to emigrate to Turkey. Ishiyama and Breuning, p.26.
137. Ibid.



138. Dogan has even been seen lurching with Todor Zhivkov, a move which prompted many rumours that he is covertly controlled by state authorities.
139. Ishiyama and Breuning, p.39.
140. Tomova, p.109; while Bulgaria has been one of the worst hit countries of the Eastern Bloc, the agricultural sector in particular has suffered where the majority of Turks are employed. Ishiyama and Breuning also emphasize the economic dimension of the Turkish minority (p.27).
141. The Fatherland Party of Labour (which later joined the BSP) and the Bulgarian National Radical Party attempted to galvanize political support stating that Bulgaria would be the battleground of Europe versus Islam, placing the Turks as a 'fifth column'.
142. Aleksander Lilov's report on ethnic policy exonerated many local officials (who remained in place during the initial period of transition) and senior politicians (Ashley, p.6).
143. Crampton shows how the BSP was forming alliances, prior to the 1991 election, with ultranationalists, such as the Fatherland Party of Labour. Crampton, p.31.
144. The Turkish Democratic Party and the Party for Democratic Changes.
145. Eminov, 1999, p.51.

