

**Competition Between Minority Ethnic Parties in Post-conflict Countries:
Performance of Minority Parties in Croatia and Macedonia**

by

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Submitted to Central European University

Department of Political Science

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Budapest,

September 2014

ABSTRACT

Academic and policy studies argue that an inclusive approach is needed for sustainable peacebuilding. This justifies the inclusion of former combatants into political parties, but some argue that it can have negative consequences for democratization. Institutional engineering is proposed to forge cross-cutting parties; however, it is puzzling to find that parties from rebels often dominate in the post-conflict period. To address this puzzle I look at minority ethnic parties in post-conflict Croatia and Macedonia. SDSS dominates the competition between Serb parties in Croatia and DUI dominates between Albanian parties in Macedonia. To answer why this is so, I first look at the process of their formation and functioning and second I compared them to other minority parties.

Despite the common history in Yugoslavia, the inter-ethnic conflicts, the post-conflict conditions and institutional environments for minority politics were very different in Croatia and Macedonia. My level of analysis is the competition between minority parties in each country. Because of the similar outcomes, under varying conditions, I consider that the finding in one country control for the other. Using process tracing I analyzed data from 78 interviews, party content, media and archival sources. The findings were corroborated with quantitative analysis of electoral data from national and sub-national elections in the entire post-conflict period.

I find that SDSS and DUI became most successful minority parties because they institutionalized legacies from the conflict. The parties were built on war time networks. They utilized these networks as micro social units for communication with voters and electoral mobilization. They also transferred symbolic capital from the conflict, initiated social practices to preserve it and used it as part of their electoral appeal. They channeled the post-conflict reconstruction process and gained political control over instruments for minority inclusion which gave them possibilities to extend patronage. Institutionalization of conflict's legacies in conjunction with patronage explains their electoral dominance in the post-conflict period. Other parties able to copy this model, albeit on sub-national level or to a lesser degree, were able to win or to improve their electoral support. These findings improve the understanding about post-conflict party politics, and in particular performance of parties from rebels, and contribute to literature about minority ethnic parties in competition.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the end of this long journey, filled with professional and personal challenges, I feel obliged to express my utmost gratitude to several people for all of their support. First and foremost I want to thank my supervisor András Bozóki, for giving me enough freedom to pursue my ideas, and yet guiding me steady to the end. Without his support, understanding, comments and suggestions I would certainly lose my way. I feel the same about Zsolt Enyedi and Erin Jenne, my supervisory panel members. They helped me to clarify my work and gave me intellectual and academic guidance. I am also deeply grateful to Susan Woodward. Her comments were essential to raise the quality of my work and had a profound impact on my scientific reasoning. I want to thank the professors at CEU, and the overall staff, for creating an extraordinary and vibrant academic environment which helped me to grow as a political scientist. I also thank my peers and scholars that commented my work, but retain full responsibility for the mistakes.

My research in Croatia and Macedonia would not be complete without the indispensable support from Goran Čular, Karolina Leaković, Zhidas Daskalovski, Viktor Dimovski and Bashkim Bakiu. I thank them all. And I thank all persons within the Serb and Albanian communities that shared their personal accounts with me. I am humbled by their experience and I hope my work helps to promote tolerance and understanding.

I cannot imagine going through the challenges and frustrations, vividly present in any doctoral program, without the support of my friends and colleagues at CEU. Elena, Elene, David, Sanja, Jana, Dato, Andreea and Bojana, I cherish our friendship and feel privileged to have had your support. The support and love of my family gave me inspiration in crucial moments. I am thankful to my father, Dimitrija, mother, Violeta, and brother, Filip, for believing in me and supporting me when challenges seemed insurmountable. Most of all I want to thank my wife Ljupka for her unconditional love and for her understanding and patience. She shared my struggles and breakthroughs, and gave me the best gift in the world. This dissertation is hers as much it is mine.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that no parts of this thesis have been accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions. This thesis contains no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgment is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

Dane Taleski

17 September 2014

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List of Abbreviations

“Flash”	Croatian army operation in May 1995
“Storm”	Croatian army operation in August 1995
ANA	Albanian National Army
ASH	Action of Socialdemocrats in Croatia
DAAM	Democratic Alliance of Albanians
DPA	Democratic Party of Albanians
DPS	Democratic party of Serbs
DUA	Democratic Union of Albanians
DUI	Democratic Union for Integration
EU	European Union
HDZ	Croatia Democratic Party
HNS	Croatian People's Party Liberal Democrats
HOS	Croatian Defense Forces
HSLs	Croatian Social Liberal Party
HSP	Croatian Party of Law
JNA	Yugoslav National Army
KFOR	NATO's mission in Kosovo
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army (UCK in Albanian)
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps
MANU	Macedonian Academy of Science and Arts
Monarhist	United Serb democratic party “Monarhist”
NA	National Alternative
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
ND	New Democratic Party
NDP	National Democratic Party
NDS	New Democratic Forces (renamed to NDU)
NDU	New Democratic Union
NLA	National Liberation Army
NS	Our Party
NSS	New Serb Party
OFA	Ohrid Framework Agreement
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PDP	Party for Democratic Prosperity
PPS	Party of Serbs in Podunavlje
RDK	National Democratic Revival
RSK	Republic of Srpska Krajina
SAO	Independent Autonomous Area
SDF	Serb Democratic Forum
SDP	Socialdemocratic Party
SDS	Serb Democratic Party
SDS for SDS	Serb Democratic Party for Unification of Serb States
SDS Krajina	Serb Democratic Party Krajina
SDS SSZ	Serb Democratic Party of All Serb lands
SDSM	Socialdemocratic Union of Macedonia

SDSS	Independent Serb Democratic Party
SEEU	South East European University
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
SIOFA	Secretariat for Implementation of OFA
SNV	Serb National Council
SNS	Serb National Party
SP	Alliance for Change
SPS	Serb Socialist Party
SRS	Serb Radical Party
SRS in RSK	Serb Radical Party in RSK
SSS	Independent Serb Party
UCPMB	Liberation army for Preshevo, Medvedja and Bujanovac
UN	United Nations
UNMIK	UN mission in Kosovo
UNPA	UN protected areas in Croatia
UNPROFOR	United Nations Protection Force
UNTAES	UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium
VMRO-DPMNE	Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity
VSNM	Council of Serb national minority
ZSH	Association of Serbs in Croatia
ZSR	Association of Serbs in Rijeka
ZVO	Joint Council of Municipalities

THE PUZZLE

Most of contemporary conflicts have been intra-state conflicts, either labeled as civil wars or inter-ethnic conflicts. To sustain peace and build democracy major policy documents advocate inclusive, participatory and holistic security transitions, and argue for inclusion of warring parties in peace processes (USIP, 2009; Dudouet et al, 2012). International actors support the disarming and demobilizing of guerrillas and support the capacity building of new parties (Kumar and Zeeuw, 2008). The logic behind this is that ex-combatants are sometimes seen as “potential 'spoilers' of peace” (Dudouet et al., 2012: 23). If warring groups are not included in peace agreements, then they might continue to fight and destabilize the peace process (Nilsson, 2008). Rebels that are included in the political process do not return to fight even if they do not come to power in the post-conflict period; which does not necessarily hold for armed groups that did not sign the peace agreement (Jarstad, 2009). On the other hand, in post-conflict cases it is still uncertain what the long term impacts are (Woodward, 2012) and what really sustains durable peace (Sisk, 2013).

For some the involvement of rebels in politics is an unintended negative consequence. The claim is that if such a consequence is dominant, then it can create a warlord democracy (Wantchekon, 2004).

Guerrilla-to-party transformation could have negative consequences and hamper the democratization process because dubious actors are given the chance to shape and influence the post-conflict agenda (Kovacs, 2008). On the other hand parties in post-conflict settings are seen “as the mediators or filters of democratic transition, [that] constitute a “missing link” necessary for understanding how and why narrow electoralism sometimes promotes the establishment of democracy and sometimes does not” (Manning 2008: 8). Some authors argue that “one of the key factors defining the success of civil war endings is the ability of former rebel movements to transform themselves into “normal” political

organizations” (Zeeuw 2008: 1); which implies that armed groups need to become parties in post-conflict societies (Randall, 2008). The main point is to decrease the likelihood of conflict in the post-conflict period and parties are expected to play a positive role. For that purpose, the argument goes, institutional engineering is needed to forge broad based, cross-cutting and aggregative parties (Reilly, 2013).

From that perspective it is puzzling to see why such parties are not emerging in the post-conflict period or if they emerge, why are they not successful? Or to look at it differently why are parties from rebels the most successful parties in the post-conflict period? To address this puzzle one needs to move from formal liberal institutions (i.e. electoral rules and party regulations) and look more closely into the formation and functioning of political parties in post-conflict settings. Notwithstanding the rich research about political parties,¹ parties in post-conflict cases, (i.e. their formation and performance) are a black box in most post-conflict democratization studies. Post-conflict party politics is treated as *tabula rasa*. There is an implicit assumption that once the conflict is finished, and rebels are transformed to parties, then party politics will function as in any other multiparty setting. However, this assumption misses a sociological perspective that is essential for political parties. Rules do not make parties. People come together to form parties. Parties adapt to their institutional environment and use the resources which they have at disposal. To study parties in post-conflict settings one should give more weight to contextual and historical explanations (i.e. legacies and path dependence, political and socioeconomic environment) and to the role of agency. This does not escape an institutionalist view. If one defines institutions as standard operating procedures, then legacies and social institutions merit

1 Political parties have been under close examination in political science, starting from the famous quote from Elmer E. Schattschneider (1942) that parties are essential for representative democracy to function. For an argument why parties matter for democracy, among others see, Lipset and Rokkan, 1967; Sartori, 1976; Aldrich, 1995; Mair, 1997; Diamond and Gunther, 2001; Dalton, Farrell and McAllister, 2011; Janda and Kwak, 2011. Also, for parties' role in aggregating and articulating social demands and serving as conflict drivers in polarized societies, see Kumar, 2005; Burnell, 2004; Gerchman, 2004.

more attention.

In my research, I looked at minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings. It is important, after any inter-ethnic conflict, to have an understanding of the political dynamics within the minority group. I studied Croatia and Macedonia, two countries from former Yugoslavia. The competition between minority ethnic parties is the valid level of my analysis. Minority ethnic parties appeared in both countries before and after the conflict. Several of the new parties, formed in the post-conflict period, included or were built on war time networks and other parties had no direct relations to the inter-ethnic conflict. The electoral results of Serb parties in national legislative elections are shown in table 1 and the results for Albanian political parties are shown in table 2.

Table 1. Results of Serb parties in national legislative elections in Croatia (2000-2011)

	2000	2003	2007	2011
SDSS	35.3	46.96	59.45	58.91
SNS	47.72	17.31	4.63	-
PPS	-	7.24	11.75	-
Srpska sloga	-	-	-	14.91
ZSH	5.65	-	6.92	-
ZSR	-	2.57	-	-
SP	-	-	-	2.64

Table 2. Results of Albanian parties in national legislative elections in Macedonia (2002-2011)

	2002	2006	2008	2011
DUI	15.38	11.8	15.11	12.2
DPA	6.76	7.3	9.9	7.03
PDP	2.82	-	0.86	0.03
NDR	2.76	0.42	-	-
NA	-	0.36	-	-
NDS-DAAM	-	0.43	-	-

NDU	-	-	0.19	0.05
DUA	-	-	0.78	0.43
RDK	-	-	-	3.18
ND	-	-	-	2.11

The results pose the question why SDSS in Croatia and DUI in Macedonia are the most successful minority ethnic parties in the post-conflict period. To answer the question I first looked at what happened after the conflict and how these parties came to be. Second I compared them to other minority ethnic parties to see how they perform. My argument is that SDSS and DUI managed to utilize the legacies of the conflict. They used war time networks as local social units for aggregation of interests and mobilization of electoral support. They transferred the symbolic capital, which their members attained during the conflict, to electoral capital in the post-conflict period. They initiated social practices to sustain their symbolic capital. SDSS and DUI also had political control of the post-conflict reconstruction process and political control over institutions which provide greater minority inclusion and thus had possibilities to extend patronage to attract electoral support. The conjunction of utilizing conflict's legacies along with possibilities to extend patronage accounts for the electoral success of minority ethnic parties in Croatia and Macedonia. Other minority ethnic parties which were able to create a conjunction similar to SDSS and DUI, albeit on sub-national level, were relatively more successful than their competitors.

In the first chapter, I elaborate my theory. I present the theoretical approach, my argument and the expectations, and the research design. I have a mixed method approach. I mainly rely on process tracing in the analysis, but I corroborate my findings with quantitative analysis of electoral data. In the second chapter, I review the literature and present the competing explanations.

The third chapter contains the empirical research of Serb parties in Croatia. One section is largely dedicated to SDSS, while in the others I show a statistical analysis of electoral data and discuss the strategies of other Serb parties. The fourth chapter contains the empirical research of Albanian parties in Macedonia. Again the first section is focused more on DUI, while the results of the statistical analysis from the elections and strategies of other Albanian parties are in the other sections.

The fifth chapter provides the comparative results. I checked the empirical evidence from Croatia and Macedonia against my expectations and against the competing explanations. I discuss the differences and similarities between the countries and highlight the limits of my approach. The sixth and last chapter summarizes the findings and presents the theoretical and policy implications.

I. THEORY

1.1. The approach

My theoretical approach is focused on local actors, and gives less weight to formal liberal institutions and international actors. My approach is also more sensitive to the local context and the post-conflict environment for minority ethnic parties. My understanding of the local context and environment was informed by studies looking at the implementation of peace agreements and war economy. I was largely influenced by the work of Marc Ross (1993) about the consequences of the conflict. I took his concepts of structural and symbolic consequences and applied them to minority parties. I further used sociological and ethnographic studies to better show the relevance of symbolic legacies. Finally, the work of Kanchan Chandra (2004) and Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson (2007) were important to show practices of political parties and ethnic parties in extending patronage. Using these studies I developed a framework for analyzing the competition between minority ethnic parties in post-conflict context. The framework is based on two causal mechanisms. The first is the possibility to extend patronage and utilization of conflict's legacies is the second one.

1.1.1. Patronage

During a conflict, patronage networks are used to create military alliances and local power base (Reno, 1998). After civil wars, extra-legal networks and economies function in parallel with formal economies and coalesce into hybrid forms of governance (Nordstrom, 2004; Kaldor 2007). After the conflict, the socioeconomic conditions are dire and people become dependent on political actors who can provide spoils (Dudouet et al, 2012). For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina unemployment after the conflict was at 40 per cent and many people were “dependent on a variety of illegal or informal activities

which, up to now, have received 'protection' from the nationalist parties” (Kaldor, 2007: 71). Deep ethnographic research shows that “militarized networks are critical to understanding postwar transformation and development” (Nordstrom, 2004: 197). Armed/political networks which controlled the war economy to sustain the conflict can also control the economy in the post-conflict period. Patron-client networks challenge formal liberal institutions; however, they are “not exogenous, but often integrated by design into power positions at the state level (or in close contact with it) out of a political calculus based on stability and stabilization imperatives” (Strazzari, 2012: 581).

In post-conflict countries “state institutions are subordinate to social affinities and patronage networks” (De Waal, 2009: 99) and social and political organization are “operationalized and dominated by informal, socially-ruled systems of patronage and clientelism” (Roberts, 2009: 149). If patronage and clientelism were rooted social practices within the political culture before the conflict, then they are likely to remain strong in the post-conflict period (Taylor, 2009). Elites seek to remain dominant and they use “common social patronage” (e.g. essential human security provisions and/or state employment, tenancy, charity and/or feasts) to obtain and retain political support (Roberts, 2009). And the clientelistic networks in post-conflict cases are wide and pervasive (Reilly, 2013).

Possibilities to extend patronage are an important point to consider when analyzing political parties' performance (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007). If there is a clientelistic relationship, then politicians target benefits directly “*only* to individuals or to identifiable small groups who have already delivered or who promise to deliver their electoral support to their partisan benefactor” (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007: 10). The goods that politicians offer can be private (e.g. public sector jobs, access to subsidies goods such as land, public housing, education, utilities and/or social insurance benefits), public (e.g. external and internal security, economic growth, low inflation and/or clean environment), or club good

(e.g. income redistribution through taxes and social policy insurance schemes). Politicized economic governance structures are a necessary component for clientelism. Politicized allocation of private goods and discrete powers to allocate club goods form the basis for clientelistic relationships. Clientelistic practices are built through instrumental exchanges and frequent social contacts. These are “webs of exchange, obligation, and reciprocity sustained over a longer period, in which patrons provide *private goods* or *club goods* to their clients” (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007: 19). For clientelism to work, parties need to have a system of monitoring and enforcement. This is most easily done with local level social contacts and precinct or ward level knowledge of the electorate. Politicians will find it easier to extend patronage if they have a strong party organization, if they have access or control of resources, and if their constituency is homogeneous. For example, dense ethnic networks and ethnocultural mobilization and competition increase the demand for patronage (Hale, 2007; Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007: 33) which could lead to “patronage democracy” and “patronage politics” (Chandra, 2004, 2007). However, the relevance of patronage in new democracies, including post-conflict cases, for party mobilization should be taken with a grain of salt (Lindberg and Morrison, 2008).

Patronage and clientelism seem to be established practices of political parties under different conditions. However, it would seem that the post-conflict environment, both institutional and socioeconomic, is conducive for patronage and clientelism. In the post-conflict environment minority ethnic parties have the institutional instruments and the socioeconomic opportunities to use patronage and clientelism to mobilize voter support. Abilities to extend patronage would constitute a significant explanation for success of minority ethnic parties in the post-conflict period. This would mean that the most successful minority ethnic party is the one that can extend most patronage.

Parties from rebel groups seem to be better equipped than others to extend patronage in the post-

conflict period. If they developed a network for delivering humanitarian assistance and social services during the conflict, then they can also extend patronage through such networks in the post-conflict period or they can extend patronage if they have political control over resources in the post-conflict period.² However, if parties from rebels do not have political control over spoils and resources, then they are not able to extend patronage. And if the success of minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings depends only on patronage, then any other ethnic party can develop a matching network and try to extend more patronage. So there is something more for accounting in the success of minority parties from rebel groups. They have other resources to count on. And these resources come from legacies of the conflict.

I.1.2. Legacies of the conflict

There are empirical observations that point out the importance of legacies for post-conflict party politics. For example, RENAMO in Mozambique mainly attracted voters among its war time constituencies in the central and northern part of the country (Manning, 2004). However, in the peacebuilding literature legacies of the conflict are mentioned mainly in passing. On the other hand, parties from rebels draw heavily on indigenous values, traditions and symbolism in the electoral campaign and strongly capitalize on the history of the resistance fight.

To understand theoretically the relevance of legacies, I find the book of Marc Ross (1993) *Culture of Conflict: Interpretations and Interests in Comparative Perspective* important. Ross argues that to understand the consequences of conflicts one needs to understand the competitive interests, and also

2 For example, Hamas in Palestine is known for “extensive social services network” which is “swung into action to become a highly efficient electoral team” (Turner, 2006) and a report about the rural development agency controlled by Hezbollah shows that “the selection of projects undertaken is also based on political consideration that serve the overall objectives of Hezbollah” (Palmer Harik, 2004: 92).

the interpretations of the conflict. In other words, “it is necessary to recognize the importance of interests rooted in social structure as well as psychocultural dispositions in understanding conflict management outcomes” (Ross, 1993: 12). In post-conflict countries, both social structures and perceptions of the warring sides matter in politics.

On one side of this argument is the structural conflict theory. It presupposes that interests are shared by individuals and groups in the same structural positions. In that respect issues “such as concerns with security, material resources, or power are easily equated with those of groups” (Ross, 1993: 36).

However, on the other side of the argument is the psychocultural conflict theory. It presupposes that the motives for action are rooted in culturally shaped images and perceptions of the external world. They form the basis of an interpretive framework that strongly influences how individuals and groups understand and respond to each others actions. In other words, “shared, deep seated fears of threats to identity” can form the basis of psychocultural explanations and they offer “a link between the ways in which groups and individuals perceive social action and the larger cultural setting in which behavior occurs” (Ross, 1993: 67). To understand better what it means for post-conflict party politics, I posit that there are two types of legacies of the conflict that are relevant: first are structural legacies and second are symbolic.

The first applies to the armed group structures and their war time networks. War time networks are made of armed groups' members and members of affiliated supporting social and political structures. If armed groups are transformed to political parties, then these structures and networks will become the basis of the new party. I think that this is a rather logical and clear claim. Also, studies of guerrilla-to-party transformation and studies about terrorism and political violence point out the structural continuity between armed groups and political parties. The impact of structural legacies is not

surprising, but it is taken for granted. Authors do not consider structural continuity with war time networks to be a competitive advantage for the new parties. For example, some claim that: “Most new parties emerging out of former rebel movements possess neither the organizational culture nor the experience to participate in a democratic system” (Kumar and de Zeeuw, 2008: 278). Authors claim that parties in post-conflict countries are elite, centralized and personalized, with no clear ideological focus, weak organizations and dependent on the state (Randall, 1998; Salih 2003). Therefore, the claim is that parties in post-conflict cases are organizationally thin, functioning only at elections, with no ideology or policy agenda; they are not disciplined to ensure collective action and fail to manage social conflicts and to deliver public goods (Reilly, 2013).

Contrary to that, I take a different view. Structural continuity of war time networks is strength for the new parties, not their weakness. War time networks provide wide and deep social penetration for the party. They are important resources for the political party. The existing networks facilitate aggregation of interests. They are used to represent the party in the local community, to communicate with voters and to mobilize support. War time networks are also instrumental in providing patronage. Furthermore, if networks existed during the war – and provided social services or humanitarian assistance, then in the post-conflict period they have higher credibility and legitimacy among the voters.

This brings me to the second legacy, the symbolic ones. The symbolic legacy of the conflict is built through the interpretations and understanding of the conflict. Introducing these elements, one accepts that the conflict is an evolving phenomenon. As such, the influence of the conflict does not stop with the end of violence or with the peace settlement. Memories of the conflict are strengthened through commemorative events and interpretations. They comprise the symbolic legacy of the conflict. Such understanding of the symbolic legacy of the conflict is close to sociological explanations of cultural

and social capital and to studies which show the importance of warfare for strengthening identities. For example, Bourdieu (1983) brings attention to cultural capital. He claims that cultural capital can be accumulated “quite unconsciously... It cannot be accumulated beyond the appropriating capacities of an individual agent; it declines and dies with its bearer” (Bourdieu, 1983: 245). In his view, cultural capital functions as “symbolic capital” and is acquired by individuals because of their individual attributes. For example, former combatants have acquired cultural/symbolic capital during the conflict. They can also maintain and increase their symbolic capital if they have intensive contacts with their group through which they constantly reaffirm their symbolic capital. This is done “through the alchemy of *consecration*, the symbolic constitution produced by a social institution and endlessly reproduced in and through the exchange which it encourages and which presupposes mutual knowledge and recognition” (Bourdieu, 1983: 250).

On the other hand, scholars argue that symbolism is used to strengthen confronting identities in post-conflict settings; notwithstanding the fact that there are strong commonalities between the identities (Harrison, 2003). Conflict gives rise to incompatibilities between identities and groups engage in social practices “more or less self-consciously” to construct and express their identity (Harrison, 1999:240). Social practices that preserve the memory and interpretations of the conflict are important for shaping post-conflict identities. “Without memory, there is no identity, and warfare is significant as one of the major contributors to the stock of collective myths and memories” (Hutchinson, 2007: 47). Therefore, it is important to understand social practices that institutionalize the symbolic capital from the conflict, like “the institutionalisation of commemorations around monuments to the dead” (Hutchinson, 2007: 44). The question to ask is “who controls what is recorded and celebrated in official ceremonies” (Hutchinson, 2007: 48). This places focus on the agency in the post-conflict period.

The symbolic legacies of the conflict provide combatants with a possibility to claim symbolic capital and if they are institutionalized in social practices they strengthen the group's identity. The utilization of symbolic legacies gives combatants an instrument to aggregate political support. This means that parties from rebels have a *diferencia specifica* compared to other competing parties. First, the symbolic capital legitimizes former rebels. Second, social practices (e.g. commemorations, dirges) increase identity based politics and strengthen ethnic divisions in the post-conflict period. Also, social practices allow former rebels to sustain their symbolic capital. Their identification with the conflict and preserving the memory of the conflict brings them political points. In that respect, parties from rebels have something which other parties do not have in their electoral appeal; and which is important for their group. For example, combatants are “immersed in their communities” (Dudouet et al, 2012: 23). They regard themselves to hold moral high ground; they are considered freedom fighters and are “looked upon like heroes” by their local constituency (Dudouet et al., 2012: 30).

There is some evidence that legacies of the conflict are important for political divisions in the post-conflict period. For example, in Ireland after the civil war in 1922, Fianna Gail and Fianna Fail had structural continuity with the confronting armed groups and diverging interpretations of the conflict resolution; while social differences between them were minuscule (Garwin, 1981). Nowadays, political parties in post-conflict Kosovo are proud to highlight their structural continuity with former armed and resistance groups (Schwandner-Sievers and Ströhle, 2012). They want to show that they earned symbolic capital during the conflict and “this identification becomes transformed into political capital for rival political factions” (Schwandner-Sievers and Ströhle, 2012: 504). Social practices, such as annual commemorations of KLA battles and of civilian casualties, and other commemorative events serve to institutionalize the symbolic capital. Former combatants recognize the value of the symbolic capital and make efforts to utilize it for political support.

Therefore, I claim that structural and symbolic legacies form the causal mechanisms that explain the success of minority ethnic parties in post-conflict Croatia and Macedonia. The conjunction of these factors forms the basis of my approach and sets my expectations.

1.2. The argument

At the end of the conflict there can be a victor or a peaceful conflict resolution. In the case of the latter, there is usually some type of a peace agreement which entails changes to the existing institutional design or prescribes a new design all together. The importance of the peace agreements cannot be underestimated and it is no wonder that they have a central position in the post-conflict democratization. Some peace agreements have specific provisions for inclusion and power divisions between the warring parties. After inter-ethnic conflicts peace agreements prescribe power-sharing arrangements (e.g. grand coalitions, minority veto points, public sector employments, representation quotas). Power-sharing arrangements include the warring parties and help tame radicals. However, there are positive and negative aspects from power-sharing, understood as a political pact to share power in legislative and executive (Jarstad, 2008). When former guerrillas transform to parties (e.g. ANC in South Africa, IRA/Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland, CNDD-FDD in Burundi, UNITA in Angola, and RUF in Sierra Leone) they have the capacities to make or break power-sharing in the post-conflict period. They have power-sharing instruments at their disposal and they use them for their political benefits. Formal institutions are weak and former armed groups are strong in the post-conflict period. One of the power-sharing criticisms is that it creates an “electoral and political economy incentives that it produces in terms of patronage politics within groups”, which then means “lack of flexibility for the

emergence of integrative political parties that transcend group identity over time” (Sisk, 2013: 14).

These are important conditions for minority ethnic parties in the post-conflict period. First, if there was a peaceful conflict resolution, then rebel groups will be allowed to transform to political parties.

Second power-sharing arrangements will provide the institutional environment in which they operate.

Minority ethnic parties will adapt to the institutional environment and will seek to use the resources which they have at their disposal. If former combatants are transformed into political parties and they are included in the peacebuilding, then they will have power-sharing arrangements at their disposal.

This point is already made in the literature, but the actors remain black boxed. I argue that it is crucial to unpack the political actors because of their important role during and after the conflict.

In my approach I claim that the causes and characteristics of the conflict are not so relevant to understand the political dynamics within the minority group in the post-conflict period. I posit three factors that explain the performance of minority ethnic parties which derive from armed groups in the post-conflict period. One factor is linked to the political and socioeconomic environment in the post-conflict period. I hold that the political and socioeconomic environment is especially conducive for patronage. Patronage is a minimal condition for any minority ethnic party to win elections. It means that the minority ethnic party which can extend the most patronage is most likely to win majority votes within their ethnic group.

However, in post-conflict cases there are two other factors which are relevant for the performance of minority ethnic parties. These factors are a function of the legacies of the conflict. The first is a structural factor. This means that parties from rebels are built on armed groups and their war time networks. The second factor is symbolism. This means that former combatants have symbolic capital

which they can use as political capital. The utilization of conflict's legacies (e.g. war time networks and symbolic capital) is the main condition for minority ethnic parties from rebel groups to win most votes within their ethnic group.

It is possible that armed groups will not transform to political parties. It is possible that former combatants will not enter politics. However, empirical studies (Dudouet et al, 2012) show that this is rarely the case. The opposite is true and that constitutes the main condition for my research.

Theoretically it is possible that several parties will derive from rebel groups. Theoretically it is also possible that a party will be based on war time structures, but will have low symbolic capital. If this is the case, then the party which has the most of the combatants and prominent war time leaders that have the highest symbolic capital will be most successful. Also, usage of symbolism is not exclusive. New parties which are not based on armed groups and war time networks can also appropriate symbolic capital. However, their symbolic capital can come only from taking part in social practices which institutionalize the memory of the conflict, while the symbolic capital of former combatants derives directly from participation in the conflict and conflict resolution. Therefore, the conjunction of former combatants and symbolic capital will yield the strongest political effects.

Usage of conflict's legacies as resources for the new party can depend on how the conflict ended.

Former armed groups, acting as opposition organization in intrastate conflict with government, after the conflict can be victors, defeated or be included in negotiated resolution. If they are victors or included in peaceful resolution, then they can freely utilize the war time structures and symbolic capital in the post-conflict period. However, if they are defeated, it will be more difficult to rely on war time networks and/or symbolic capital. This is not to say that war time networks and symbolic capital will not be important in cases where former armed groups were defeated. Quite the contrary and somewhat

counter-intuitively, I hold that war time networks and symbolic capital will be necessary resources regardless of how the conflict ended. The point is in the usage of these resources. If armed groups won or were included in peaceful resolution, then structures and symbolism will be open, public and manifest. On the other hand, if armed groups were defeated by government, then parties from rebels will again rely on war time networks and symbolism in the post-conflict period, but their usage will be closed, secret and covert. Regardless of how the conflict ended, war time networks and symbolism will have strong meaning and will influence the voters. In the post-conflict period, within their ethnic group they will be regarded as 'our heroes, our protectors and our saviors'.

In post-conflict settings, there are different types of political parties: some derive from rebel groups and have links to war time networks, others do not – they existed before the conflict or are newly formed. The links between the armed groups and post-conflict parties are given in table II.1.

Table I.1. Conceptualizing the links between political parties and armed conflicts

	Party members participated in the armed conflict		
		Yes	No
The party existed before the armed conflict	Yes	Actors in the conflict	Old parties
	No	Former rebels and supporters	New parties

The table gives four possibilities. First, the party existed before the conflict and their members participated in the conflict. For example, the party organized paramilitary groups or party members joined some of the armed groups. Second, the party did not exist before the conflict, but their members took part in the conflict. For example, these are parties built on former rebels and their war time networks. Third, the party existed before the conflict and their members did not participate in the

conflict. And fourth, the party is a newcomer, it did not exist before the conflict and their members did not participate in the armed conflict.

Table 1 presents the set of options for the relations between the armed groups and the parties. Parties whose members took part in the conflict will have access to war time structures and symbolic capital. Utilization of war time structures and symbolic capital are main conditions for the minority ethnic party to win most of the votes within its ethnic group and to get representation in the local or national legislature. Furthermore, it may be included in executive power-sharing. The institutional environment in post-conflict cases gives opportunities to minority ethnic parties to get access to resources. The post-conflict power-sharing usually prescribes instruments for minority integration. The political control of these instruments provides minority ethnic parties with opportunities to extend 'club' and/or 'private' goods to their electorate. The socioeconomic environment in post-conflict cases invites practices of patronage and clientelism. The party which can extend most patronage has high chances to win in elections; however, extending patronage would be less influential than utilization of conflict's legacies.

In that respect legacies of the conflict, structures and symbols, form the basis of power for minority ethnic parties. They allow some minority ethnic parties to get access to resources which they can extend as patronage to their voters. In this process whichever minority ethnic party combines the three factors, structures, symbols and patronage will be most successful in getting support within its ethnic group. This argument is summarized in table 2. Table 2 presents my main argument and also offers a framework for analyzing the performance of minority ethnic parties which derive from armed groups in the post-conflict period.

Table I.2. Factors of competition between minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings

	Party can extend patronage to voters		
		Yes	No
Party utilizes war time networks and symbolic capital	Yes	Highest chances for success	Less likely to succeed
	No	More likely to succeed	Lowest chances for success

Based on the table I deduce several hypotheses. The main one is that if a minority ethnic party is based on war time networks, uses symbolical capital, and can extend patronage to voters, then it has the highest chances to be the most successful minority ethnic party within its group. In the post-conflict period one should take a closer look at the dynamics of minority politics. A minority ethnic party from former rebels could be a newly entering party, without possibilities to extend patronage, competing against an incumbent minority ethnic party which has possibilities to extend patronage. If this is the case, I expect that the minority ethnic party from former rebels will be more successful than the incumbent minority ethnic party. The first will rely mainly on support mobilized through the war time networks and utilizing their symbolic capital. The second will rely mainly on patronage. In this case, I expect that former rebel structures and symbolic capital to be more important than patronage.

However, it could be the case that there are more than one minority ethnic parties built on war time networks which compete. This is not contrary to my expectation, but would confirm it. If there is more than one party from former rebel groups, I expect that the party which has the highest conjunction of structures, symbolic capital and possibilities to extend patronage to be the most successful. Minority ethnic parties which are not based on war time networks and do not have symbolic capital or cannot extend patronage to voters will have lowest chances for success.

1.3. Definitions and operationalization

There is a conflation of the terms civil war, rebellion and ethnic conflict in historical sociology and political science literature (Kalyvas, 2008). I look primarily at ethnic conflicts, and more precisely at the post-conflict developments. I use ethnic conflicts and conflicts interchangeably, notwithstanding that large part of the literature that informs and shapes my understanding is about civil wars.

For conflict and armed groups I take definitions from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP).

They define intrastate conflicts as “contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year”, where the opposition group may or may not have support from a foreign actor (UCDP, 2014). UCDP defines “opposition organization” as “any non-governmental formally organized group of people having announced a name for their group and using armed force to influence the outcome of the stated incompatibility”. In my writing about opposition groups I use rebels, belligerents, guerrillas and armed groups interchangeably. By this I understand the organizations opposing the government and using armed force to influence the outcomes of the conflict. These definitions capture the conflicts and non-state armed groups, along with their war time networks, both in Croatia and in Macedonia and it can also be extended to other cases as well.

Other key terms for my work are ethnic groups and minority ethnic parties. I take Johanna Birnir's definition of ethnic group and understand that “an ethnic group is defined by members of the group who consider themselves ethnically distinct from other groups in society” and where “this

identification centers on a characteristic that is difficult to suppress, such as language, location, or race” (Birbir, 2007: 24). Hence, it is the self expression of individuals who find commonalities among themselves that identifies the ethnic group. This definition can be used to identify any ethnic group, and can be extended to Serbs in Croatia and Albanians in Macedonia. Individuals within these groups identify their ethnic group as being distinct from others most commonly on the basis of language and religion. In this respect it is possible to use census data from Croatia and Macedonia since in both countries ethnic affiliation is taken as self expressed identity.

Most important for my work is the definition of minority ethnic party. I take the definition of ethnic party from Kanchan Chandra (2004). Chandra defines ethnic party as “a party that overtly represents itself as a champion of the cause of one particular ethnic category or set of categories to the exclusion of others and that makes such a representation central to its strategy of mobilizing voters” (Chandra, 2004:3). Hence, an ethnic party is one that appeals exclusively to members of one ethnic group, and mobilizes their support in elections. It is possible that voters from other ethnic groups, or voters who are not ethnically defined, will support such a party. However, the bulk of support for an expressively ethnic party is most likely to come from the ethnic group to which it appeals. Last, but not least, I use patronage and clientelism interchangeably to label “a transaction, the direct exchange of a citizen's vote in return for direct payments or continuing access to employment, goods and services” (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007: 2).

I operationalize the structural legacies by looking at the war time networks. These are the members of armed groups and members of affiliated supporting social and political structures; for example, members of political parties which supported the armed group or social groups/organizations which supported the armed group during the conflict. Rebel groups have military leadership, but they also

always have a political leadership. These are necessarily not the same people. Membership in armed groups and an affiliated organization may overlap during the conflict, but not necessarily. For my research it is important to be able to trace the individuals from the period of the conflict, including their roles and involvement, to the post-conflict period. I map war time networks in the structures of the political party to show to what extent the new party is built on war time networks. The more individuals there are in the structures of the party from the war time networks, then the more the party is built on those networks. For example, if the party president, other members of the wider party leadership, candidates for elections come mainly from war time networks then I take that the party is utilizing war time networks.

I operationalize the symbolic legacies by looking at symbolic capital and social practices. Symbolic capital is ascribed to individuals. Think of war heroes and peace makers. These are individuals who had leadership roles and responsibilities during the conflict and in the initial period of peaceful resolution. They enjoy popular support and easily translate their symbolic capital to political capital and harness votes. Other individuals from the war time networks can also have symbolic capital. For example, there are prominent war time commanders and combatants. However, if they were lower in the hierarchy of the war time network, then they will have less symbolic capital. Social practices (e.g. commemorative events, dirges and war time monuments) instrumentalize the legacy of the conflict and sustain the symbolic capital. Parties from rebels are more likely to engage in such social practices. They would feel obliged to pay respects to lost comrades and civilian casualties, but it would also be beneficial for their popularity to maintain the memory of their participation in the conflict. I trace the formation of symbolic capital, look at the initiation of social practices (e.g. when and by whom) and check how were they used in the political competition.

I operationalize the ability to extend patronage by looking at the political control of spoils and resources. I mainly focus on the post-conflict institutional instruments for integration of minorities and advancement of their rights and status (e.g. public sector employments and reconstruction aid). Such institutional instruments often derive from peace agreements and subsequent power-sharing arrangements. In a post-conflict context they are highly necessary to sustain peace and give democracy a chance. They also create the institutional environment in which minority ethnic parties operate. If there are institutional instruments for minority integration and if they are left at the disposal of minority ethnic parties, then it is very likely that minority ethnic parties will use them as a means to extend patronage and built clientelistic networks. This is applicable for all minority ethnic parties, not only the ones from former armed groups. Parties from former rebels are more likely to request specific post-conflict policies (e.g. support for refugee return, integration and re-socialization of former combatants and/or social benefits for casualties of war). Hence, my focus is on post-conflict policies and instruments which ethnic minority parties can use to extend patronage. To measure which parties and to what extent they control these instruments, I look at how the policies and instruments were made, who has political control of their implementation, and whether the implementation was targeted or unbiased.

To operationalize the success of minority ethnic party, I follow the approach of Kanchan Chandra (2004), and look at the votes that minority ethnic parties obtain in elections. The votes are a clear indicator of success. I take votes for national legislative elections for all post-conflict elections, from the first post-conflict elections to the present. But I also look at results of sub-national legislative elections. I do this for two reasons. First, minority ethnic party competition in sub-national elections can be strong if some ethnic groups are territorially concentrated. If I focus only on national legislative elections, I would miss that. Second, switching between the two levels of analysis, national and sub-national, I can check for the reliability and validity of my findings. Taking into account the two levels

of analysis, I can see a greater variation in my dependent variable: success of ethnic minority parties. My argument is about the political dynamics of minority ethnic parties in post-conflict countries. Even though there might be some unique and idiosyncratic explanations on the sub-national level that I can not account for, I expect that, most of the time, my explanation for the success of minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings will hold both on the national and sub-national level.

1.4. Research design

Croatia and Macedonia were part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and had intrastate ethnic conflicts between the government and opposing organizations formed by the biggest minority ethnic group. However, they are not interdependent. They do not border each other and there are no relations between the conflicts. Following a military defeat of Serb armed forces in 1995 Serb and Croat representatives, under international auspices, signed the Erdut agreement to end the conflict and to start a process of peaceful reintegration. The leaders of the main Macedonian and Albanian parties, under the auspices of the President of Macedonia and facilitated by EU and US, concluded the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA), as a peaceful resolution to the crisis, in August 2001.

The Erdut agreement and OFA provided for demilitarization and demobilization and paved the way for peacebuilding. The agreements also introduced power-sharing arrangements. Institutional changes were made to improve the status and rights of minorities. For example, Serbs got guaranteed proportional representation and *Zajedničko Vijeće Opština* (Joint Council of Municipalities, ZVO) in the area of former *Samostojna Avtonomna Oblast* (Independent Autonomous Area, SAO) Eastern Slavonia, which became two counties in Croatia: Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-srijemska, was formed. ZVO got resources and competences to improve the rights and status of Serbs in the area where it was formed.

In Macedonia, OFA secured greater usage of minority languages, national symbols, veto and equitable representation (e.g. affirmative action employment) in public administration for members of minority communities. The changes to the institutional environment for minority politics were done without prejudice or preference for political parties. That is to say that the Erdut agreement or the OFA did not introduce changes to the electoral design or to party regulation. These documents did not grant access to former rebels to power-sharing.

In Croatia, there was an UN-mandated mission, UNTAES, in charge of implementation of the Erdut Agreement. It cooperated with local political actors, including remaining Serb political authorities from the so-called “Republika Srpska Krajina” in the former occupied SAO East Slavonia. In Macedonia, state institutions were in charge of OFA implementation. However, there were NATO and EU missions with peacekeeping and policing prerogatives. These missions cooperated with state institutions and did not deal with political parties directly.

Beside these similarities, there are significant differences between Croatia and Macedonia. First, the conflicts were different in terms of duration and gravity. The conflict and early democratic development in Croatia went in parallel. The conflict in Croatia was part of the disintegration of SFRY in the early 1990s. It started in 1991 and ended in 1995. During that time close to 1/3 of the territory of Croatia was under control of Serb armed forces. A so-called “Republic of Srpska Krajina” was established in the Serb controlled areas. There were many victims, civilian casualties and damage to physical and civilian infrastructure in Croatia. In Macedonia, the conflict interrupted a 10 year development of democracy. It started in January 2001 and finished before the end of that year. There were several greater armed clashes. The Albanian armed group controlled minor parts of the territory,

but did not establish governance structures. The numbers of victims, civilian casualties and damage to infrastructure were low and not comparable to Croatia.

Second, Serbs in Croatia are quite different from Albanians in Macedonia. Serbs in Croatia are predominantly Christian Orthodox, and Albanians in Macedonia are predominantly Sunni Muslim. Territorially Serbs in Croatia cluster close to the border with Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, while Albanians in Macedonia cluster close to the border with Kosovo and Albania. Maps showing territorial concentration of ethnic groups and the conflict zones can be found in the appendix. Before the conflict, over 12 percent of the population declared themselves as Serbs in Croatia. After the conflict their numbers drop to 4 percent as a direct consequence of the conflict. Many were expelled, some fled fearing for their life or left voluntarily after the conflict. The table below shows ethnic group changes in the population of Croatia.

Table I.3. Ethnic structure of population in Croatia, Censuses 1991 – 2011

	1991		2001		2011	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Croats	3, 736, 356	78.1	3, 977, 171	89.6	3, 874, 321	90.42
Serbs	581, 663	12.2	201, 631	4.5	186, 633	4.36
Others	392, 870	8.2	169, 528	3.9	197, 172	4.6
Undeclared	73, 376	1.5	89, 130	2	26, 763	0.62
TOTAL	4, 784, 265	100	4, 437, 460	100	4, 284, 889	100

Source: Croatian State Statistical Bureau and Babić (2003).

On the other hand the conflict did not impact the size of Albanians in Macedonia. The census taken after the conflict, in 2002, shows that the number of Albanians in Macedonia increased in comparison to previous data.

Table I.4. Ethnic structure of population in Republic of Macedonia, Censuses 1991 – 2002

	1991		1994		2002	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Macedonians	1,328,187	65	1,295,964	66.6	1,297,981	64.2
Albanians	441,987	21.7	441,104	22.6	509,083	25.2
Turks	77,080	3.8	78,019	4	77,959	3.9
Roma	52,103	2.6	43,707	2.2	53,879	2.6
Serbs	42,775	2.1	40,228	2	35,939	1.8
Vlachs	7,764	0.4	8,601	0.4	9,695	0.4
Others	84,068	4.1	38,309	2	47,706	2.3
TOTAL	2,033,964	100	1,945,932	100	2,022,547	100%

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia

Third, while there is no specific party regulation pertinent to minority ethnic parties in any of the countries, the electoral regimes for minority politics are quite different. For national legislative elections, Serb parties compete for three guaranteed seats in one nation-wide electoral unit, where only Serb-declared citizens have the right to vote. Parties, associations of citizens, or individuals can nominate up to three candidates and voters can vote for three representatives. The top three candidates who receive most votes are elected. Additionally, Serb parties have the right to put up a list in any of the ten general electoral units in Croatia. In the general electoral units, voting is done on a closed list PR system, and there is a five percent threshold. A closed list PR with six electoral units is used for national legislative elections in the post-conflict period in Macedonia. There is no threshold and there are no guaranteed seats for minority communities. This means that Albanian parties compete between themselves and with other parties in the same electoral arena.

Also, Croatia has two-tier local governance, counties and municipalities, while Macedonia has one-tier, only municipalities. In sub-national legislative elections there are guaranteed seats for minorities in

county and municipal assemblies in Croatia. In Macedonia, there are no guaranteed seats. In Croatia, minorities have the right to elect deputy heads of counties and deputy mayors in places where they are entitled proportional representation. Special elections, where only minorities vote, were introduced in 2007. Before that the regional and local councils elected deputy heads of counties and deputy mayors representing minorities from the elected members of councils. Elections where only minorities vote were organized in 2009 and 2013. Deputy mayors representing minorities do not exist in Macedonia and the rules for electing council persons and mayors are the same for all.

Croatia and Macedonia both had four cycles of post-conflict national legislative elections. However, in Croatia all were regular elections, whereas in Macedonia there were early elections in 2008 and 2011. The first national legislative elections in Croatia were five years after the conflict ended, and three years after the peaceful reintegration was completed. In Macedonia, the first national legislative elections were one year after the conflict.

Table I.5. Post-conflict national legislative elections in Croatia and Macedonia

Croatia	2000	2003	2007	2011
Macedonia	2002	2006	2008	2011

Looking at sub-national elections, Croatia had five cycles after the conflict while Macedonia had three. Croatia had local elections right after the peaceful reintegration was complete. Holding local elections was envisaged in the Erdut Agreement as the concluding act for the peaceful reintegration. In Macedonia, sub-national legislative elections were held four years after the conflict. .

Table I.6. Post-conflict sub-national legislative elections in Croatia and Macedonia

Croatia	1997	2001	2005	2009	2013
Macedonia	2005	2009	2013		

In my research I focus on minority ethnic parties in the post-conflict context in Croatia and Macedonia. The competition between minority ethnic parties in each country is the valid level of my analysis. And there is variation in support for minority ethnic parties in both. My main cases are the minority ethnic parties built on war time networks. These are *Samostalna Demokratska Srpska Stranka* (Independent Democratic Serb Party, SDSS) in Croatia and *Bashkimi Demokratik për Integrim* (Democratic Union for Integration, DUI) in Macedonia. SDSS appeals to ethnic Serbs and DUI to ethnic Albanians. I show how these parties were built on war time networks, how they used symbolic capital to get political support, and how they came to control resources and extend patronage to their ethnic group. I claim that the conjunction of these factors enabled them to have a dominant position within their ethnic group in the entire post-conflict period.

Notwithstanding that they compete against different parties in varying electoral arenas, I compared their performance to their ethnic competitors. SDSS had 7 competitors between 1997 and 2013. *Srpska Narodna Stranka* (Serb National Party, SNS), *Partija Podunavskih Srba* (Party of Serbs in Podunavlje, PPS), *Nova Srpska Stranka* (New Serb Party, NSS), *Naša Stranka* (Our Party, NS), *Demokratska partija Srba* (Democratic Party of Serbs, DPS), *Zajednica Srba Hrvatske* (Association of Serbs in Croatia, ZSH) and *Zajednica Srba Rijeke* (Association of Serbs in Rijeka, ZSR).

DUI had 8 ethnic competitors between 2002 and 2013. These are *Partia Demokratike Popullore* (Party for Democratic Prosperity, PDP), *Partia Demokratike e Shqiperise* (Democratic Party of Albanians, DPA), *Partia Demokratike e Re* (New Democratic Party, ND), *Rilindja Demokratike Kombëtare* (National Democratic Revival, RDK), *Partia Demokratike Kombëtare*, (National Democratic Party,

NDP), *Bashkimi Demokratik Shqiptar* (Democratic Union of Albanians, DUA), *Kombëtare Alternative* (National Alternative, NA) and *Forca e Reja Demokratike* (New Democratic Forces, NDS).

Some of the parties were built on or included war time networks and others had no relation to armed groups. But, since the electoral outcomes are similar in both Croatia and Macedonia, and the post-conflict conditions are different, I use the outcomes in one country as control for the other. In this way I show that my findings are not country-specific.

1.5. Data gathering and methods

To gather data I did extensive field work in Croatia and Macedonia. In Croatia, I spent three months in 2011 and five weeks in 2013 and conducted over 50 interviews. I did interviews in Zagreb, Knin, Vukovar, Osijek, Vinkovci, Požega and Borovo. My field work in Croatia covered the capital, but also the three areas of the former so-called “Republic of Srpska Krajina” (RSK): SAO Krajina, SAO West Slavonia and SAO East Slavonia, Baranja and Srem. I did fewer interviews in Macedonia, but preserved the same principles as in Croatia. I did interviews in Skopje, Tetovo, Kumanovo, Lipkovo and Debar trying to cover all of the conflict area on the ground. I did fewer personal interviews in Macedonia because I was able to gather personal accounts from secondary sources.³ I met with people, from different ethnic groups, who had deep understanding and personal experiences from the conflict and post-conflict period. I interviewed people who took part in armed formations across the spectrum, people who were in affiliated organizations, but also those who were only civilians trying to survive the conflict and I talked to representatives of different political parties. I also interviewed journalists, experts and university professors. I gathered content (e.g. party programs, statutes, declarations and

3 In 2010 Foundation Open Society Institute – Macedonia published proceedings of a debate with ethnic Albanian and ethnic Macedonian participants in the conflict in 2010. In 2011, on the 10 year anniversary of OFA, the Macedonian Center for International Cooperation (MCMS) published interviews with political leaders recalling the conflict.

electoral platforms) from minority ethnic parties in both countries. To triangulate the data I used media sources, especially when they were reporting about minority ethnic parties, their competition in elections, or communicated interviews or views of key party officials. In addition, in Croatia I did archival research at the *Croatian Memorial Documentation Center of the Fatherland War* and gathered content from Serb political parties during the conflict.

I gathered available electoral data on all post-conflict national and sub-national elections from the state electoral commissions in Croatia and Macedonia. For each country I built a data set where the votes cast for minority ethnic parties (i.e. Serb parties in Croatia and Albanian parties in Macedonia) on the municipal level were the main units of analysis. I collected data from over 200 municipalities in Croatia and over 60 municipalities in Macedonia. Aggregating the data on the municipal level assures comparability between the two countries. This way I also increased the number of my observations and had sufficient cases and variation to use quantitative methods.

I coded each municipality in relation to the past conflict whether they were affected by the conflict or not. In Croatia, I also coded the municipalities in relation to their location in RSK (e.g. SAO Krajina, SAO West or SAO East) or Croatia proper. I did this to see whether conflict-affected municipalities or control of territory has any impact on support for minority ethnic parties. Support in conflict-affected municipalities can be regarded as a proxy for support from war time networks. War time networks operated precisely in those municipalities during the conflict and, arguably, they remained relevant after the conflict. In the data set I input other data which was relevant for the analysis, such as: number of voters, turnout, size of ethnic group and political control. This was relevant to test some of the competing expectations. For example, if minorities are territorially concentrated, then there will be intra-group competition and if a minority party has political control of public resources, then it can

extend patronage to harness voter support.

Studies of post-conflict state-building and post-conflict democratization lack specific methodology (Woodward et al., 2012). They encapsulate a range of issues and multifaceted phenomena. Some studies rely on large-N analysis and quantitative methods. However, authors argue that case oriented methods are better suited for post-conflict studies (Sisk, 2013). Also, most of the studies which I surveyed, from guerrilla-to-party literature, terrorism and political parties, and minority ethnic parties in competition, use case-oriented research methods.

In my research I rely mainly on case-oriented research methods, but I try to corroborate the findings with quantitative analysis of electoral data. I find that this is a suitable approach to answer my main research question. The operationalization and measurement of my independent variables call for case-oriented research methods. I have three independent variables: structural legacies (i.e. war time networks), symbolic legacies (i.e. symbolic capital) and ability to extend patronage (i.e. control of spoils and resources). It is very difficult, even though not impossible, to quantify them. However, it is unclear whether the quantitative analysis will show the causal inferences with my dependent variable, success of minority ethnic parties. I look at an extended period of time: from the end of the conflict to the present. Therefore, I give greater weight to case oriented methods.

I used process tracing as the main method of analysis. The analysis is structured on the three factors which I posit: structural legacies, symbolism and control of spoils and resources. Process tracing shows how, over time, the parties were built on war time networks, how they transferred the symbolic capital and used it as political capital, and how they came to control resources and spoils. For the quantitative analysis I used one way ANOVA and bivariate Pearson's correlation. I used one way ANOVA to

compare the mean support for parties in relation to conflict-affected municipalities and control of territory during the conflict. The low number of explanatory variables justifies the usage of ANOVA. Furthermore, Allison (2010) used a similar procedure when analyzing voter support for FMLN in El Salvador which assures the validity of the method. However, while Allison (2010) analyzes voter support for only one party in the first post-conflict elections, I analyze voter support for all minority ethnic parties in all national and local elections over the whole post-conflict period. I used Pearson's correlations to check for inferences between political control of the municipality and voter support for minority ethnic parties. With correlations I control for other explanatory variables. Hale (2007) uses a similar approach to analyze possibilities to extend patronage in Russia, which again assures the validity of the method. Having over 200 units of analysis in Croatia, I could have used more advanced statistical operations, according to conservative statistical requirements; however, because there were fewer units of analysis I would not be able to do the same in Macedonia.

I test my hypothesis, in parallel with the other ones, in a within group analysis of Serb parties in Croatia and Albanian parties in Macedonia. This design allows me to keep constant some of the competing institutional explanations (e.g. power-sharing arrangements and electoral regimes), account for territorial concentration and be able to compare ethnic parties that appeal to the same group. However, since I do the analysis in two countries, I also show the results of a between country analysis. In this way I compare the strategies of ethnic parties in two post-conflict countries. Controlling for the electoral outcomes, under different conditions, I show that my argument is not country specific. The explanation should be valid for competition between minority ethnic parties in post-conflict Croatia and Macedonia.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of contemporary conflicts, since World War II have been intrastate conflicts.⁴ Notable research addressed the questions why ethnic conflicts start, what the consequences are and possible responses to them?⁵ Authors have explored conflict resolution, building peace and sustaining democracy, the role of international actors and local level actors and processes.⁶ Post-conflict peacebuilding research is strongly emerging; however, it still misses a specific methodology, perhaps because it is a “multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon” (Woodward, Kostovicova and Bojicic-Dzelilovic, 2012: 469). Most of the attention to ending conflicts and building peace and democracy is given to institutional choices (Bogaards, 2013: 81). The recent formation of a research network “Institutions for Sustainable Peace” in Hamburg and a special issue of *Civil Wars* journal demonstrate this (Kurtenbach and Mehler, 2013).

In the post-conflict research agenda state-building is on one side of the spectrum. State-building “emphasizes the building, or rebuilding, of core state governance capacities for security (through security sector reform) and for human development (through service delivery)” (Sisk, 2010: 57). It was largely developed through the practices and policies of international organizations (Woodward, 2012) and appeared as alternative to “liberal peacebuilding”. For example, advocates of state-building claim that institutionalization (i.e. building governance institutions) has to come before liberalization (i.e.

4 For example, there were forty one civil wars between 1940 and 1990 (Walter, 1999); and from 118 conflicts from 1989 to 2004 only seven were inter-state (Kalyvas, 2006: 16). In 2009 there were 29 on-going intrastate conflicts, and their number dropped to 23 in 2012 (UCDP, 2014).

5 Among others see, Wolff, 2006; Cordell and Wolff, 2009; Woodward, 1995; Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Collier, 2009; Birnir, 2007; Wimmer, Cederman and Min, 2009; Wucherpfening et al., 2012; Roessler, 2012; Buhaug et al., 2008; Buhaug, 2010 and Petersen, 2002.

6 Among others see, Lake and Rothchild, 1998; Gurr 2000; Schneckener and Wolff, 2004; Sandole et al., 2008; Chandler, 2006; Kostovicova and Bojicic, 2006; Newman et al. 2009; Lijphart, 1977; Horowitz, 1985, 2008; McGarry and O'Leary, 1993; Ottaway, 2002; Brinkerhoff, 2007; Jarstad and Sisk, 2008; Paris and Sisk, 2009; Kaldor, 2007 and Nordstrom 2004.

introduction of pluralism) (Paris, 2004). They put greater weight to international and domestic context, the security situation and issues, changes to institutional design (Paris and Sisk, 2009) and to improving economic conditions (Collier et al., 2003). However, state-building usually takes legitimacy for granted (Woodward, 2012) and neglects the “production, circulation and circumscription” of the local interpretative frameworks (Gilbert, 2012). It assumes hierarchical governance structures, while in the post-conflict environment there are decentralized and hybrid structures (Stroschein, 2012). State-building neglects the impact on socioeconomic conditions (Fagan, 2012), the impact on local governance (Pickering, 2012) and importance of informal and criminal networks in the post-conflict environment (Strazzari, 2012).

Post-conflict democratization is on the other side of the post-conflict research agenda. It “is pursued as a process of transition toward liberal institutions and processes through which mutual security is negotiated through non-violent decision-making based on rule-bound political competition, inclusion, popular participation and accountability (i.e. a new social contract)” (Sisk, 2010).⁷ Post-conflict democratization focuses on formal liberal institutions, for example power-sharing arrangements,⁸ electoral regimes⁹ and political parties' regulation.¹⁰ For example, electoral engineering strategies and party regulations are suggested to tame rogue political actors and to create broad-based, aggregative,

7 Some authors suggest that introduction of liberal institutions contributes to instability in the post-conflict phase because they provide for political expression of salient and opposing identities like ethnicity. For example see Barkan, 2000; Snyder, 2000; Mansfield and Snyder, 2005; Kaufmann, 1996; Biddle, 2006. However there are authors who dispute these claims and find that political relevance of ethnicity is not necessarily detrimental to democracy, for example see Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Sambanis, 2001; Ishiyama, 2009; Scarritt and McMillan, 2001; Fish and Kroenig, 2006; Sollenberg, 2005; Kalyvas, 2008; Posner 2007; Kalyvas and Kocher, 2007; Steenkamp, 2008; Gormley-Henan and Macginty, 2008.

8 Power-sharing arrangements are found to contribute to peace and democracy (Hartzell and Hoddie, 2003) even if former rebels are integrated in politics (Pospieszna and Schneider, 2013); however, power-sharing arrangements can have adverse effects in the long term or create institutional inefficiencies (Rothchild, 2005; Jarstad, 2008; Reilly, 2013; Sriram, 2008; Mehler and Tull, 2005; Spears, 2000).

9 Electoral regimes are seen as an early instrument to introduce power-sharing (Sisk, 2009; Reilly, 2008); however, they do not necessarily lead to cessation of hostilities (Gaber, 1998)

10 For example, in Southeast Asia (Hicken, 2008), Central and South-Eastern Europe (Bieber, 2008), Latin America (Catón and Tuesta Soldevilla, 2008), Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands (Okole, 2008) and Southern and East Africa (Kadima, 2008).

and multi-ethnic parties in post-conflict settings (Reilly, 2006, 2008, 2013; Reilly and Nordlund, 2008; Bogaards, 2008, 2013). However, violence and political polarization occurs under different electoral regimes (Höglund, Jarstad and Kovacs, 2009).

Authors in the special issue of *Civil Wars* journal from December 2013, dedicated to institutions for sustainable peace, “acknowledge that institutional choice may not be the only determinant for peace, but also the context (i.e. war termination) and actor behavior (international and domestic actors) play an important role in the implementation of peace as well” (Kurtenbach and Mehler, 2013: 2). The local context requires a sociological perspective and an actor centered approach.¹¹ From a sociological perspective, legacies of protracted civil wars, with many casualties spread on a wider territory, have a stronger impact on post-conflict electoral and party politics, than formal liberal institutions.¹² In post-conflict countries “there is little doubt that in many instances elections left a bitter legacy, aggravating existing tensions and cleavages”, while “political parties appealed to parochial loyalties to gain votes” (Kumar and Ottaway 1998: 230-231). If armed conflicts coincide with ethnic identities, then the latter usually become instrumental for political identities (Simonsen, 2005).¹³

At the end of the conflict warring parties have three options: to resume fighting, to seek external arbitration (protectorate) or internal arbitration (democracy). Democracy is possible if the warring parties believe they have a chance of winning the elections and citizens prefer democracy because it provides order and protection against banditry (Wantchekon, 2004, Wantchekon and Neeman 2002).

11 For example, local actors mediate UN guided institutional reforms (Mehler, 2013); elite's post-conflict power sharing or negotiated pacts can become basis for democracy (Sisk, 2013) and the majority crafts electoral and party rules (Randall, 2008).

12 For example, this was the case in Mozambique (Manning, 2007), Nepal (Raj Dahal, 2009), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Manning, 2004, 2006), Ghana (Pinkney, 1988; Meissner, 2009), Ivory Coast (Acka, 2009) and Lebanon (Maalouf, 2009; Arian, 2005).

13 For example, like in Afghanistan (ICG, 2005) or Iraq (Randal, 2008: 251).

After a peace agreement has been signed and before the first elections are held, politics needs to be “demilitarized”. “Demilitarizing politics [goes, D.T] through the transformation of militias into political parties [and, D.T] therefore promotes war termination and democratization” (Lyons, 2002: 26). Post-conflict elections encourage “the transformation of warring armies into peaceful political parties” (Reilly, 2008: 158) and after an ethnic conflict the “priority may be precisely to induce armed forces to become political parties” (Randall, 2008: 252).

However there is no coherent theoretical guidance about the performance of parties in post-conflict settings. There are studies about the links between armed groups and political parties during and after an armed conflict, for example studies on terrorism and political violence and guerrilla-to-party transformation. From one point of view the literature on terrorism and political violence is important because it shows the possible links between armed groups and political parties. It shows the origins and activities of political parties in relations to the conflict. From another point of view the guerrilla-to-party literature is important because it explores the transformation process. It shows the process from using bullets to achieve political goals to using ballots. It also partly explores the performance of the parties from rebels. However, if parties from rebels transform into minority ethnic parties, then the literature on minority ethnic parties in competition becomes relevant. On the other hand, literature on ethnic parties may also be relevant; however, it overlooks the connections between armed groups and political parties, and the implications thereof.

II.1. Terrorism and political violence

Political parties are usually associated with the use of legitimate and non-violent strategies to achieve their goals. Terrorist or rebel/guerrilla organizations are associated with using violence. However, in

conflict and post-conflict cases there is seldom a clear dichotomy between parties and terrorist/rebel/guerrilla groups. For example, the Fatah movement in Palestine acts both as a party and a terrorist organization (Weinberg and Pedahzur, 2003), the UNITA movement in Angola moved back and forth between a political party and a guerrilla organization (Ottaway, 1998) and Hamas won the elections in Palestine in 2006 (Turner, 2006).

Weinberg and Pedahzur (2003) equate political parties with terrorist groups as 'political groups' that have political ambitions and need mass support. Then, given the incentive structure, a political group opts for the most efficient strategy to achieve its goals. Sometimes it is violence, other times not. The choices are not fixed, they are rather fluid, and depend mainly on their strategic attractiveness (Weinberg, 1991). Parties may chose to create a terrorist branch or the party may split in independent violent and non-violent factions (Weinberg, 1991). A terrorist group may form a party to complement the use of violence with nonviolent tactics or it may fully transform to a political party (Weinberg, 1991: 429-30).

So there could be strong links between political parties and rebel groups. Rebel groups may start parties to complement their violent tactics with electoral participation. Rebel groups may also transform to political parties. The relationship works in the opposite direction. Parties may organize paramilitaries to complement their electoral strategies with violence. Parties can also turn into terrorist/rebel/guerrilla groups. It appears that there can be a whole life cycle between a group's usage of violence or moderate politics, including using both at once. Theoretically there could be three types of situations: first, when bullets dominate, second, when bullets are used in parallel to ballots, and third, when ballots replace bullets. While I recognize the existence and theoretical potential of the first two categories, my own research interests lie in the last option.

In the first case, when parties transform into or create terrorist groups/armed wings “they tend to assimilate in the newborn organization the same hierarchical, or vertical, structure, which is usually characteristic within political parties” (Martin et al., 2008). A special issue of *Terrorism and Political Violence* in 2013 elaborates this point. There are cases where political parties created paramilitary organizations or engaged in intrastate violence, civil strife and even civil war (Altier, Martin and Weinberg, 2013). This is expected to happen when the political system is unsettled (i.e. new or newly restored) and polarized and usually during elections. Terrorist attacks, organized and inspired by political parties, become more frequent before elections (Newman, 2013). Religious based parties are more likely to instigate violence than secular parties (Satana, Inman and Birnir, 2013).

Considering the second option, parallel usage of bullets and ballots, Brathwaite (2013) claims that some terrorist groups may enter the electoral arena to differentiate from competitors, and if they have territorially concentrated support they are more likely to stand in elections. For example, Hamas in Palestine and ETA in Spain transformed, or added political party activities in their specter of engagement (Bhasin and Hallward, 2013; de la Calle and Sánchez-Cuenca, 2013; Alonso, 2013). Also, party led violence and conflict have defined the political history of Colombia. “Two of the most prominent phenomena of Colombia's political history, the partisan civil war known as *La Violencia* and the power-sharing agreement known as the National Front, were both party-based at their core” (Taylor, 2009: 60).

In the third case scenario, former rebel groups transform into political parties. And the guerrilla-to-party literature addresses this phenomenon.

II.2. Guerrilla-to-party transformation

There are studies of rebel groups and insurgent movements, in terms of what types exist, which strategies they use in changing environment and varying conditions.¹⁴ However, in the post-conflict period rebel groups become political parties and run in elections. Some “achieved remarkable long term or recent success in their post-war conversion from insurgency to the electoral battleground” (Dudouet et al., 2012: 38), and were included in or were heading the government in their respective countries.¹⁵

Studies of armed groups' transformation to political parties tend to focus on particular cases, usually in Latin America, Africa or Asia (e.g. Pool, 2001; Allison, 2006; Deonandan et al., 2007; Manning, 2007; Kovacs, 2007; Zeeuw 2008; Dudouet et al., 2008). The guerrilla-to-party literature looks at the process of transformation and where it was successful and where not. It lays out the conditions for transformation and looks at changes within the organization (Ishiyama and Bata, 2011). Studies show that local environment, rebel group's dynamics and the international context account for a successful transformation.

Factors from the local environment which support successful transformation include: regime stability (Weinberg and Pedahzur 2003, Martin et al 2008), inclusive conflict settlements (Zeeuw, 2008), higher level of popular support for rebels (Kovacs, 2007; Zeeuw, 2008) and new institutions (e.g. parliamentary democracy and PR) which provide collective and selective incentives for the rebel group (Kovacs, 2007). Factors which derive from rebel group dynamics include: accepting legitimacy of government and having realistic political goals (Weinberg and Pedahzur 2003, Martin et al 2008),

14 Among others see, Weinstein, 2007; Bøås and Dunn, 2007; Clapham, 1998; Keen, 2005; Wood, 2003 and Kalyvas, 2006.

15 For more see Dudouet et al.,(2012) table 1 on page 6.

having leadership cohesion (Kovacs, 2007), creating a constituency within the group committed to democracy (Manning, 2008) and undergoing structural and attitudinal changes (Zeeuw, 2008). Further on the regional and international context must provide security and political stability to convince “rebel movements that it is safe to disarm and start a political dialogue with their former adversaries” (Zeeuw 2008: 20). Support from international actors can ease up the guerrilla-to-party transformation (Kumar and Zeeuw, 2008: 273-274); however, it does not necessarily influence party performance or the decision of the rebels to return to violence (Kovacs, 2007).

The guerrilla-to-party literature presents a valid framework for analyzing the transformation process, defined as revoking violence and replacing bullets with ballots; however, it says very little for the development of the new parties and their performance. Also, the models for transformation rely on some heavy assumptions. They assume regime stability when post-conflict institutions are unsettled. Furthermore, guerrilla-to-party literature assumes that former combatants will be deprived of power in the interparty relations, while admitting that rebel leaders provide stability in the war-to-democracy transition and retain power in the party (Zeeuw 2008: 16). New parties are expected to have objectives different from the former guerrillas, which neglects the importance of historical legacies and socioeconomic conditions. Authors miss, or make implicit, the point that the legitimacy of the former combatants lies in the armed conflict. Their basis of politics is hardly transformed. They rely on personalistic and clientelistic mechanisms of internal control and relationship with the electorate. Parties from former rebel groups tend to blur the party and the state, as they continue to be embodiment of national liberation struggles (Salih 2003). There is no sharp division where the guerrilla ends and the party continues. In that respect rebel structures, resources and values/symbols are key to understand the performance of the new parties.

However, in the guerrilla-to-party literature there is an underlined assumption that if the transformation is successful, then the new parties will be same as any of the existing ones. In that way studies miss a crucial point that former structures and legacies are important resources for the new parties. As some authors argue “political parties with roots as rebel groups are not “new” organizations in the sense that they start from scratch. Some have long histories dating back several decades to political parties, unions, student organizations, and peasant groups in pre-civil war days” (Allison, 2010: 105).

Rebel's transformation goes in two phases: first is revoking violence and second is performing as political parties (Kovacs, 2007). In the first phase rebels abandon violence, and in the second they perform, successfully or not, as political parties. The current guerrilla-to-party literature does a good job explaining the first, but it does not necessarily address the second. The structural continuity between the rebel groups and the new parties has serious implications for the parties' resources and performance. When a viable political party is the dependent variable then it begs the attention and analysis of the party's performance (i.e. analysis of electoral results and electoral competition and resources which are used). To evaluate the parties' performance one needs to take in consideration how the parties adapt to the institutional environment and which resources they have at their disposal.

II.3. Minority ethnic parties in competition

There is a large body of literature that deals with democratization and accommodation of ethnic diversity¹⁶ On one side there is the 'centrifugalist' approach which advocates power-sharing arrangements for accommodation of diversity in divided societies and as means to settle ethnic conflicts.¹⁷ On the other side is the 'centripetalist' approach which advocates creating electoral

16 Among others see, Stein, 2000; Juberias, 2000; Barany and Moser, 2005; Anderweg, 2000; Grofman and Stockwell, 2003; Friedman, 2005; Moser, 2005; Bochsler, 2010.

17 For example see, Lijphart, 1977, 2004, 2012; McGarry and O'Leary, 2004.

incentives to instigate inter-ethnic political cooperation.¹⁸

For a long time, it was considered that ethnic party competition was detrimental to stability and democracy, because it instigates inter-ethnic tensions (Rabushka and Shepsle, 1972; 2008). Ethnic parties in competition were expected to create an ethnic dual party system (Mitchell, 1995). If there were at least two ethnic parties in one ethnic block, then it was regarded that one would be more radical than the other, which was labeled as a strategy of 'ethnic outbidding' (Horowitz, 1985). Minority ethnic parties often use 'outbidding' as their party strategy (Mitchell, 1995; Gormley-Heenan and Macginty, 2008; Brunnbauer, 2007). However, others make the argument that ethnic parties are not detrimental to democracy (Chandra, 2005). In the appropriate institutional settings, which provide incentives for multiple dimensions of ethnicity, ethnic parties can foster democracy and even 'jump start' the formation of the party system (Birnir, 2007).

However, there are cases where intra-group plurality and competition does not lead to ethnic tensions, but rather conciliates ethnic conflict and fosters ethnic party cooperation (Mitchell, O'Leary and Evans, 2001; Mitchell, Evans and O'Leary 2009). Also, ethnic parties may sometimes decide to cooperate rather than to compete with one another (Stroschein, 2001), even during an inter-ethnic conflict (Caspersen, 2006, 2010). A recent cross-sectional data on ethno-national positions of 210 political parties in 22 multinational European democracies shows that there is great variance "in the policy positions adopted by ethno-national parties in competition", which is puzzling from a perspective of ethnic outbidding (Szöcsik and Zuber, 2012: 2).

Whether ethnic parties choose to radicalize or not, is the main focus of the literature on ethnic parties.

18 For example see, Horowitz, 1985, 1990, 2008; Reilly, 2001.

The work on minority ethnic parties in competition, puts ethnic parties in a perspective of rational actors who shape and structure political competition (Enyedi, 2005; Bornschier, 2009). Following this logic, ethnic outbidding is only one of the possible strategies for ethnic parties in competition. Ethnic parties outbid, if they consider that such strategy would get them more voter support. If minority ethnic parties do not consider outbidding to be an adequate strategy, then they use different strategies to attract voter support. However, it is not always clear which strategy is most successful? It is assumed that if an ethnic party is successful, then it had a successful strategy. Studies on minority ethnic parties in competition do not take in consideration all of the different resources which ethnic parties utilize and do not make specific claims about minority parties in post-conflict cases, as a subset in the universe of minority parties. Another caveat is that they are done on different levels of analysis. Some compare parties from the same ethnic group or compare parties from different groups in the same country and third compare parties from same ethnic group in different countries. To assess the performance of minority ethnic parties, *ceteris paribus*, one should make a within country analysis and focus on parties which appeal to the same ethnic group.

II.4. Competing explanations

The competing explanations come from guerrilla-to-party transformation and minority ethnic parties in competition. The guerrilla-to-party literature suggests two sets of factors which may explain the performance of parties from rebels. The first relate to the post-conflict institutional environment. For example, the way the conflict ended and the terms of the peace agreement can explain the success or failure of parties from rebels. Peace agreements can provide support for parties if they provide for their inclusion in power-sharing institution or provide support through the electoral regime. For example, if the peace agreement or power-sharing arrangements provide procedures for inclusion of certain parties

in the legislative or the executive, then some parties will be structurally favored in the post-conflict period. If rebel groups are victorious after the conflict and they are in government, then they have access to spoils and possibilities for selective incentives to get voter support (Allison, 2010). Similarly, if the peace agreement entails changes to the electoral regime, then some parties may be favored. In the post-conflict period the electoral or party regulations may set impediments for some parties, while providing leeway for others.

The second set of factors, which may explain the performance of parties from rebels, relate to the characteristic of the rebel group. These factors include control of territory and use of violence against civilians during the conflict, size and popular support for the rebel group, hierarchical centralization, extending social services during the conflict and histories of the rebel group, which is to say their ideational capital. First, support for parties for former rebels is more likely to be higher in regions which were under their control during the conflict. Analysis of electoral data from national legislative elections, gathered at sub-national regional and local level, for the first post-conflict elections in 1994 from El Salvador corroborates this point (Allison, 2010). Parties from rebels performed better in regions where they had strong presence during the conflict and where government forces were responsible for human rights abuses. In El Salvador “the ability of rebels to capture and control territory and their use of violence against the civilian population are two key factors explaining the performance of rebels as political parties” (Allison, 2010). However, the results come from the first post-conflict elections; hence they are not quite surprising. Also, it is unclear how long does the effect last?

Second, size and popular support for rebel groups can explain performance after political transformation (Allison, 2006). The claim is that larger and more popular rebel groups have better

results as political parties. “The number of combatants and popular support during the conflict tend to provide a better explanation than institutional factors for the initial success of these groups as political parties” (Allison, 2006). In Lebanon, battlefield victories and armed resistance contributed for the popularity of Hezbollah in the post-conflict period. Poll results “confirmed the fact that many young Christian and Muslims adults from all areas of Lebanon would indeed be willing to elect a member of the resistance – reference to Hezbollah. Of the 1,427 individuals polled, 62 percent said that they would vote for a member of the resistance and 38 per cent said they would not” (Palmer Harik, 2004: 50).

Third, long term conflicts induce stronger rebel organization (Zeeuw, 2007) and parties from rebels follow the armed groups' hierarchical and centralized organization (Ishiyama and Batta, 2011). If that is the case, then they will be better equipped to attract mass support (Manning, 2004, 2007). For example, the Maoist party in Nepal during the conflict and after remained centralized with considerable organizational capacities. It had a “tradition of being hierarchically structured and centralized” and “inherited considerable organizational capacity as a result of its conduct of the People's War” (Ishiyama and Batta, 2011: 375). During the war the Maoist organized “People's Governments” on the district, regional and national level, which provided security and social services, especially in the countryside and rural areas. “Certainly the inherited organizational features of the party borrowed from the war time period have helped to mobilize support during the election” (Ishiyama and Batta, 2011: 377). In that respect, the local branches that provided security and social services during the war bring electoral gains after. This brings attention to the next factor from rebel groups' characteristics which explains the performance of their off-spring parties.

Fourth, if a rebel group extended social services in some areas during the conflict, then the new party will enjoy electoral support in those areas. Rebel's governance during the war helps them to establish

their political legitimacy. This is then translated to electoral support in the post-conflict period if the rebel group did not coerce or intimidate the local population. For example, in some areas of El Salvador FMLN organized collective agricultural production and popular education programs. The results was that “FMLN support was indeed greater in controlled zones (relative to non-controlled zones) and ex-conflict zones (relative to non-conflict zones”); which goes to say that “the ability of the FMLN to develop alternative authoritative structures during the civil war had positive implications for the FMLN in the post-war period” (Allison, 2010: 121). Similarly, during the conflict in Lebanon, Hezbollah established community networks that provided people with public and social services, which was latter beneficial for their electoral success (Palmer Harik, 2004). The networks and service delivery started during the war as substitute for governance and they continued well after the war ended. They range from garbage collection and supply of drinkable water, to agriculture support, reconstruction, health services, education, small loans program and aid for families of fallen fighters. Hezbollah also has control of several relief NGOs and foundations that provide help and assistance.

Histories, or ideational capital, of rebel groups is the last factor. Some claim that histories of rebel “groups and their performance during the conflict are likely to be at least as important to explaining their performance as political parties as those issues we typically associate with new political parties” (Allison, 2010: 105). The point is that parties have ideational and administrative capital. The administrative capital is material (e.g. offices and power), while the ideational capital are the values, identity and symbols which attract the voters and they are expected to work for parties from rebels, as they do for any other party (Ishiyama and Batta, 2011). For example, in areas where Hezbollah had supreme rule from the war onwards their campaign slogan was 'Loyalty to the Blood of Martyrs' (Palmer Harik, 2004: 108). However, “we should be careful not to give too much explanatory power to wartime factors. It appears unlikely that the organization's military success should be the only variable

in explaining each group's electoral performance” (Allison, 2006: 151).

On the other hand, there are only few studies of minority ethnic parties in competition. The research agenda is developing and putting forward tentative hypothesis about intra-group competition. For example, it is found that territorial concentration of ethnic groups and permissiveness of the electoral system supports the creation of minority ethnic parties (Bochsler, 2011). In addition, if there are multiple levels of government, then it is very likely that there will be intra-group competition (Bochsler, 2012). Hence, spatial patterns of ethnic minorities and electoral incentives need to be taken in consideration when analyzing ethnic party competition.

Social demands, opportunity structures and relations with other competitors are relevant for competition between minority ethnic parties (Zuber, 2011, 2012). If minority ethnic parties cooperate with other parties, in electoral arenas where the ethnic market is imperfectly segmented, then they are more likely to moderate in electoral arenas where there is a perfectly segmented market. It appears “ethnic party elites choose their strategies not only in light of societal preferences (outbidding) and institutional parameters (power sharing), but also in light of their competitors” (Zuber, 2012: 921). Beside levels of government, inclusion or exclusion in government can be a reason for minority ethnic parties to be moderate or radical (Bochsler and Szöcsik, 2013). If minority ethnic parties are part of the government, then they will be moderate. And opposite, if minority ethnic parties are in opposition, then they will radicalize. Due to clientelistic potential of governing parties, moderate ethnic parties can be more successful than their competitors and they can be more willing to maintain closer inter-ethnic cooperation with their governing partners, then with their ethnic-kin competitors (Szekely, 2014).

Minority politics in post-conflict countries is a specific subset in the universe of minority politics. It has

not received great attention; even though there are some studies which tangentially touch upon the issue. For example, research from Northern Ireland points out that within the Northern Irish Catholics “it is to be presumed that perspectives on the legitimacy of paramilitary violence plays a major role in differentiating Sinn Féin from SDLP supporters” (Coakley, 2008: 798). Also, the Good Friday Agreement provided institutional incentives (i.e. power-sharing arrangements accessible to all political parties) for ethnic radicals to moderate and the introduction of proportional representation lowered the costs of intra-bloc competition.

To summarize, the explanations from the guerrilla-to-party literature for the performance of parties relate to the post-conflict institutional environment and to the characteristics of the rebel groups. If post-conflict institutions favor parties from rebels, then they will be more successful. If parties from rebels are included in government, then they can provide spoils to their voters and get support. One would expect parties from rebels to get more support in former conflict regions, even though it is not clear for how long. Also, one would expect that if parties derive from larger rebel groups, with many local branches which extended social services and were local security providers during an extended conflict, then they will be more successful than other parties. One would expect that if parties from rebels are centralized and coherent, similar to the armed group, and if they have past political experience and also include new party cadres, then they will be more successful than other parties in the post-conflict period. Finally, one would expect the history or ideational capital of the rebel group to be important for the party's performance; however, it is unclear in which way and how is the effect mitigated.

On the other hand, the literature on minority ethnic parties in competition suggests that territorial concentration of minorities and permissive electoral rules allow for intra-group competition. Inclusion

in government, and possibilities to extend patronage, can induce ethnic parties to moderate and win elections. If minority ethnic parties cooperate with other parties, they are also likely to moderate when appealing to their own kin. In post-conflict settings, there is an inference between paramilitaries and ethnic parties, arguably based on the perspective whether violence was justified or not. And if the peace agreement is inclusive and provides incentives, then ethnic radicals will moderate. Post-conflict democratization and guerrilla-to-party transformation literature, make a similar point. However, they have not been put together with minority ethnic parties in competition.

III. SERB PARTIES IN CROATIA

III.1. The conflict and post-conflict environment for minority politics in Croatia

From the variety of authors who explored the causes and consequences of the war in Yugoslavia (Cohen, 1995; Bennett, 1995) some pointed out long standing ethnic hatreds (Kaplan, 1996; Kaufman, 2001), others pointed out a path dependency stemming from the failure of the federal system to integrate ethnic divisions when the economy was deteriorating (Ramet, 1996) and convincingly showed how failures of the political economy (Woodward, 1995), irresponsible political elites (Zimmermann, 1999) and nationalism (Banac, 2001) were main causes for the war.

In Croatia, it seemed that elite fear-mongering played a role in instigating the ethnic conflict in 1990s (Barić, 2005). This was part of the politics of Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman, and the media followed suit. In the period when the future regime was discussed, Tuđman's HDZ government was forcing Serbs to leave the state administration, principally the members of the police, and re-enacting memories of, WWII fascist, the Ustasha (Goldstein 2010: 75). On the other hand, Serbs responded with exclaiming nationalistic messages¹⁹ and formed the *Srpska Demokratska Stranka* (Serb Democratic Party, SDS) as a response to the formation and functioning of HDZ.²⁰

SDS was formed to represent and protect the rights of Serbs in Croatia. It stood in elections in 1990. It won some electoral support and was represented in parliament. However, as inter-ethnic tensions were mounting, SDS was becoming more radical. A day before the Croatian Parliament enacted a new

¹⁹ Serbs organized a big rally in Knin in February 1989. One Serb poet addressed the crowd with the words “Serbs in Croatia are descendants of slaughtered people”. Interview with Mihaljo Kragulj, 01.10.2013 in Knin

²⁰ Letter of Jovan Rašković, first president of SDS, to Franjo Tuđman, leader of HDZ, from 20 February, 1990 Author's copy. Obtained from the Croatian Memorial Documentation Center of the Fatherland War in Zagreb, February 2011

Constitution in December, 1990, Serbs adopted the Statute of Serb Autonomous Area of Krajina (SAO Krajina) (Goldstein 2010: 86). This led to escalation of inter-ethnic relations and armed fighting. On February 22, 1991, the Croatian Parliament voted a resolution to leave Yugoslavia and declared independence. The Serbs in SAO Krajina and Western and Eastern Slavonia enacted a resolution to leave Croatia. Politicians from Serbia, as well as local ones, additionally radicalized and inflamed the local population calling for armed action (Goldstein, 2010: 78-79).

In the fighting that followed, the Serbs, with the support of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA), took control of roughly one third of Croatia. On 19 December 1991, the parliament of SAO Krajina proclaimed the “Republika Srpska Krajina” (Republic of Serb Krajina, RSK) made of SAO Krajina, SAO Western Slavonia and SAO Eastern Slavonia. The three parts were not cohesive. Each had its own political leader and rivalries between them were constant throughout the war. “Formally, however, Milan Babić was only president of SAO Krajina as well as president of the Serb National Council. The two other SAOs in Croatia – SAO Western Slavonia and SAO Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem – were led by Veljko Džakula and Goran Hadžić” (Caspersen, 2010: 101). RSK was marked with frequent personnel changes and high institutional instability.²¹

However, all Serbs in Croatia weren't in RSK. Some did not support SDS and stayed in Croatia proper during the conflict. Some of the Serbs supported the Croatian authorities and were ready to oppose their ethnic brethren. For example, when the conflict erupted, a government of national unity was formed. A part of that government (1991-1992) was Živko Juzbašić, a Serb politician and WWII partisan. He had a proposal to form “a brigade 'Nikola Tesla', made of Serbs, which would fight in the

21 Between 19 December 1990 and 26 February 1992 each region had its own parliament. After that a joint parliament was formed which had two sessions (one from 26 February 1992 to 12 February 1994, and the second from 12 February 1994 to 5 August 1995). In period of four years RSK had three presidents (Milan Babić 19.12.1991-26.02.1992; Goran Hadžić 26.02.1992-12.02.1994; Milan Martić 12.02.1994-05.08.1995) and six governments (RSK, undated).

Homeland War on the Croatian side and even though some 2,000 volunteered for the brigade, Tuđman refused the proposal”.²² Other Serbs in Croatia proper started to organize politically and formed the Serb National Party (SNS). SNS was the only Serb party in Croatia proper during the conflict. SNS stood in elections, had MPs in Parliament and even a deputy speaker of parliament. However, SNS got a mocking nickname “Tuđman's Serbs”, because it always supported HDZ and never the opposition. The cooperation with Croatian authorities did not significantly improve the positions of Serbs in Croatia proper. At first they were looked at with suspicion. And as the conflict escalated they were subject to harassment, maltreatment and discrimination. They were often times attacked and some disappeared.

The armed fighting in Croatia lost intensity by the end of 1991. A final cease fire was signed on January 3, 1992 in Sarajevo. Based on a UN Security Council resolution UN protected areas in Croatia (UNPA) were formed. The idea was to protect the ceasefire pending a political settlement. There were four UNPA zones in Croatia: North, South, West and East. Beside the UNPA zones there were also “pink areas” that were in Croatia, but outside of the zones and where JNA had control. These were practically wider border regions of RSK. North UNPA was made of Banovina and Kordun, Dalmatia and Lika were in South UNPA, West Slavonia was in West UNPA, and East Slavonia was East UNPA.²³ UN peacekeeping mission in Yugoslavia, known as the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), was deployed in the UNPA zones in Croatia and maintained the peace until 1995.

West UNPA zone was militarily overtaken by the Croatian army in operation “Flash” in May 1995 and

22 Slobodna Dalmacija. “Novog Svetozara nema, a kad će doći ne zna se”, 25.08.2012, available at <http://www.slobodnadalmacija.hr/Scena/Adrian/tabid/175/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/185229/Novog-Svetozara-nema-a-kad-e-doi-ne-zna-se.aspx> last accessed on 4 February 2014.

23 To highlight the continuity of Serb political representation throughout the text I use RSK's labels for the territory; notwithstanding that UNPA zones introduced territorial and functional reorganization of RSK.

North and South UNPA zones were overtaken in operation “Storm” in August 1995. During the military operations “Flash” and “Storm” Serbs massively exited those areas. Some estimate that around 18,000 refugees left after “Flash” and over 100,000 left during “Storm” (Goldstein, 2010). Many of the people fled to Serbia, even as many to Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also some 60,000 went in Eastern Slavonia (Vrkić, 1997: 189). Thus Eastern Slavonia had the highest concentration of Serbs in Croatia in the post-conflict period.

Eastern Slavonia, that is to say SAO East Slavonia or East UNPA zone, was peacefully integrated in Croatia with the signing of a peace agreement. It was signed in the village of Erdut on November 11, 1995, by Milan Milanović as representative of the Serbs in SAO East Slavonia and Hrvoje Šarinić as representative of the Croatian government. Peter Gabraith, US Ambassador to Croatia, and Thorvald Stoltenberg, UN peace negotiator, were co-signers. The Erdut agreement was the result of “negotiations in Dayton between Milošević and Tuđman” (Caspersen, 2010: 115) as part of wider efforts to end the conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bing, 2007; Klein, 2010). And even though international representatives negotiated with the Serbs in SAO East Slavonia (Barić, 2011), the Erdut agreement “was already arranged”.²⁴ It marked the start of the peaceful reintegration and was also the first step toward deescalating the tensions between Croatia and Serbia (Klein, 2010; Škare – Ožbolt, 2010).

However, Serbs were not very enthusiastic about the peaceful reintegration (Cvikić, 2010). RSK institutions were still functioning in Eastern Slavonia. The “streets were filled with uniformed and armed Serbs, no one mentions demobilization, and weapons are still close to the line of scrimmage”.²⁵

24 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

25 AIM Belgrade. “Ko stigne do Bezdna – ceka ga Batina”, 24.1.1996, available at <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199601/60124-005-pubs-beo.htm> last accessed on 4 February 2014.

The assembly of SAO East Slavonia was renamed as the assembly of the “Serb area of East Slavonia, Baranja and Srem” in 1996. Goran Hadžić was elected president of the Serb area and Vojislav Stanimirović was elected president of the executive council (Barić, 2011). Serbs wanted autonomy for the area to preserve their status as majority ethnic group. They feared that their rights would be jeopardized if the area was divided and if they became a minority group.²⁶ They even organized a referendum; however, the international community and Croatian government did not recognize the results. SAO East Slavonia was divided into two counties: Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-srijemska. Serbs became a minority group in both of the new counties, which had an impact on their political representation. On the other hand, the Erdut agreement guaranteed their status and basic minority rights.

On the other hand, Croats were not happy about the Erdut Agreement and accepted it “coldly” because they “expected in Vukovar, as in other parts of Podunavlje, military victories equal to “Flash” and “Storm” (Škare – Ožbolt, 2010: 75). Serbs would say “that they lost the war but they gained the Erdut Agreement” (Vrkić, 1997: 193). Even today many Serb representatives would say that the Erdut Agreement is the most important document for Serbs in Croatia and that all constitutional rights for Serbs and other minorities derive from that document.²⁷ The Erdut Agreement guaranteed political representation and formation of *Zajedničko Vijeće Opština* (Joint Council of Municipalities, ZVO). ZVO was an instrument for institutional integration of Serbs and representation of their issues. The agreement envisaged return of property, compensation for lost property and aid for reconstruction of destroyed property and that a transitional police force made of Serbs and Croats would be set up. The Erdut agreement provided political and economic incentives for minority members to stay and be

26 Feral Tribune. Drago Hedl, Interview with Vojislav Stanimirovic, “We were all in Trenches”, Split, 3 March, 1997.

27 Interviews with Vojislav Stanimirović 15.10.2013, Dragan Crnogorac 21.10.2013, Miodrag Nedeljković 16.10.2013, all in Vukovar.

integrated in the post-conflict area. Such incentives are highly needed in a post-conflict environment. However, political control of such incentives could give way for a patron-client relationship.

The UN Security Council, with resolution 1037, established the UN Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Siumium (UNTAES) to monitor and implement the peaceful reintegration. The UNTAES mission was supposed to bring the demilitarized and secured area back under Croatian control, to retain the multi-ethnic character of the region, to encourage trust between local inhabitants regardless of their ethnic background, to allow refugees and displaced to safely return to their homes, to promote human rights and freedoms, to promote post-conflict reconstruction and development, and to organize free and fair local elections (Klein, 2010). The organization of free and fair elections was supposed to be the final task of UNTAES mission and a sign that the peaceful reintegration process was finished.

The Erdut agreement stipulated that elections will be organized 30 days before the end of the transitional period, upon which ZVO would be formed. This was supposed to happen in December 1996. However, by the end of 1996 Jacques Klein, head of UNTAES, considered that all conditions were not met to organize elections and finish the transitional period. He asked the UN Security Council to prolong the mission, and asked the Croatian government to give stronger commitments regarding the rights and inclusion of minorities. For the Croatian government elections were of crucial importance because elections were seen as the main stepping stone for bringing back Croatian governance in Eastern Slavonia (Vrkić, 1997). Hence, they were willing to cooperate and answered to Klein's request. They submitted a Letter of Intention to the UN Security Council. The Letter was also an answer to Serb demands in the UNTAES region.

In the letter, the Croatian government committed to hold elections in the UNTAES administered region, together with the local elections in other parts of Croatia, on 16 March, 1997. In the letter Serbs were guaranteed to get the positions of deputy heads in both Vukovarsko-Srijemska and Osječko-Baranjska counties. They also got guarantees that 700 to 800 Serb police officers would be integrated and that Serbs will be represented in “local health services, police and judiciary in the region that is now under the transitional authority” (Art. 4). The formation of the ZVO was also guaranteed, as well that it would meet with the President of Croatia, at least once in every four months, to “propose and helping to find solutions of common interests for the national minority” (Art. 9). The Croatian government guaranteed that Serbs would have right of minority education and protection of cultural identity and that “war casualties, especially disabled, widows and orphans, will have full health and social rights” (Art. 11).

These were sufficient guarantees for the international community to bring the UNTAES mission towards its end. The first post-conflict elections in UNPA Zone East, or SAO East Slavonia, were first scheduled for March 1997. However, Klein decided to move them to April because he wanted “to give Serbs a new chance, to get organized, to get enrolled and to take Croatian documents, and then all to vote” (Vrkić, 1997: 291). There were an estimated 150,000 people in the region of which 60,000 were Serb refugees from other parts of Croatia, while there were 50,000 Croats waiting to return in the region (Klein, 2010). UNTAES estimated that around 90% of the population voted in the 1997 April election.

The Croatian government respected this commitment and formed ZVO on 15 October 1998. It was defined as a body that “harmonizes the interests of the Serb community in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem and in parts of Osječko-Baranjska and Vukovarsko-Srijemska counties” (Govt. of Republic of Croatia, 1998, Art. 2). ZVO was formed from elected Serb council persons from these

areas. ZVO was to be financed from the state budget of Croatia, from contributions from cities and municipalities, own income and donations. On 1 December 1998, ZVO signed an agreement with the Croatian government for financing of 3.5 million Kuna for a period of 3 years.²⁸ ZVO got competence to nominate Serb candidates for political positions on county and national levels. For example, ZVO would nominate deputy heads of counties, assistant ministers for interior, justice, education, sport and culture, and to other positions.²⁹

The status and rights of Serbs, including other minorities, were significantly improved when a new constitutional law was enacted in 2002.³⁰ Minorities were guaranteed usage of language, symbols, cultural autonomy, religion and media. Guaranteed representation in elected bodies on national, regional and local level was introduced,³¹ as well as positions in administration and the judiciary. The new law also introduced councils of national minorities, on national and sub-national level. The sub-national councils were envisaged as elected bodies in municipalities and counties where minorities were over 1.5 percent. Associations of minorities, NGOs or individuals got the right to propose candidates. Sub-national councils are non-profit organizations. They are financed by local government, or from the state budget. Elected members should work voluntarily, but they get monthly payments. The sub-national councils nominate minority's representatives in state and local administration.

The National Council for national minorities is in charge of minority protection on national level, which means implementation of the constitutional law on local, county and national level. The National

28 15 Дана. Успостава грађанског поверења. Новости Заједничког већа општина 26.12.1998, п.2 [15 Days. Establishing citizens trust. News of Joint Council of Municipalities. 26.12.1998, pp. 2]

29 The strong competences and resources of ZVO would later prove crucial for structuring the competition among Serb parties in Croatia.

30 The changes came after criticism and pressure from the international community, mainly the EU, to improve minority rights. Wanting to make progress in its EU integration, Croatia was susceptible to EU pressure.

31 Three Seats in *Sabor* were guaranteed if the minority group was over 1.5%, which effectively applied only to Serbs, and groups below 1.5% got four seats, all together. If a minority group was over 5% of the population, on county or municipal level, then it got guaranteed seats in the county and municipal assemblies.

Council is also in charge of dispersing funds for national minorities from state budget. The National Councils is not an elected body. All minority groups are represented in it. Seven members are nominated from local and county councils, five members are proposed by other minority organizations and minority MPs in *Sabor* are ex-officio members of the National Council.

The institutional environment for minority politics in post-conflict Croatia is well elaborated. On one side is ZVO, as a powerful regional body, which came as a consequence of the peaceful reintegration. On the other side, the constitutional law guaranteed wide set of rights and introduced minority councils. Arguably a political control over these institutions would give any minority ethnic party a possibility to extend patronage and harness electoral support. In Croatia, *Samostalna Demokratska Srpska Stranka* (Independent Democratic Serb Party, SDSS) dominates the competition between the Serb parties. SDSS was formed on 5 March 1997 in Borovo, close to Vukovar. In the first post-conflict local elections it put candidates only in the reintegrated region and won convincingly. This was a crucial period for sustaining peace in Croatia, returning refugees and retaining Serbs in Eastern Slavonia. It was also period of structuring the political representation of Serbs. Over the years SDSS grew to be the dominant Serb party in Croatia. To understand how it came to this, first one needs to go back to the conflict and trace the origins of this party.

III.2. Formation and radicalization of SDS

SDS was formed in Knin on 17 February 1990; however, party branches were also established in Serbia and Slovenia (Knežević, 2011). Even though SDS defined itself as “not an ethnic party, but an ethnic one” (SDS 1990: 6), it did not escape ethnic nationalism. For example, the founding declaration stated that “Serb diaspora in Croatia is a historical victim ... Every victim is best defended with democracy

and freedom. Therefore, the Serb people in Croatia have a special need to gather around democratic principles of equality and freedom” (SDS 1990: 6).

SDS portrayed itself as a democratic party and in opposition to the ruling Communist party of Yugoslavia. Jovan Opačić, a prominent SDS member in an electoral speech delivered in Knin 1990, stated that leadership of SDS was made of “martyrs for democracy and Serb interests” which were imprisoned for their activities during communism. He told the people: “It is up to you to decide whether on the upcoming elections you will vote for your true heroes who fought for the honor, dignity and equality of Serb people or for the ones who put you in prison”.³² However, in regards to the future of the federal regime, SDS demanded the principle “one citizen – one voice” to be introduced in all of Yugoslavia. In Croatia, this was seen as siding with the politics of Slobodan Milošević and the introduction of a federal Yugoslavia where Serbs would dominate.³³

The programmatic goals of SDS were mixed. On one side the party put forward reforms toward democracy and market economy. On the other hand SDS defended Serb interests in Croatia. This applied first to the economic situation of Serbs in Croatia. In SDS' view “the development of the underdeveloped municipalities in Croatia with Serb majority appears as a very urgent need” (SDS 1990: 10). Second, an SDS goal was to create a new “administrative division of Croatia in regions and municipalities that will primarily reflect the national structure of the area in which we live” (SDS 1990: 10). Third, SDS goals were to protect and promote Serb culture, language and education. SDS initially “took a fairly moderate position and in its program it advocated democracy, human rights, national equality as well as cultural autonomy for the Serbs, and the redrawing of administrative borders to

32 Speech of Jovan Opačić in Knin 1990. Authors copy. Obtained from the Croatian Memorial Documentation Center of the Fatherland War in Zagreb, February 2011.

33 Interview with Antun Vujić, 17.02.2011 in Zagreb

create Serb-majority regions and municipalities. SDS supported the continued existence of the Yugoslav Federation and vowed to protect the interests of Serbs in Croatia” (Caspersen, 2010: 48). But as the conflict was escalating, SDS was radicalizing its positions and actions.

The first elections in Croatia were held in April 1990. Because of the short time period SDS managed to set up candidates for elections “only in Knin and the surroundings, where the party won convincingly” (Goldstein 2010: 73). SDS managed to win 5 MPs in the national parliament and get a majority in local councils in some Serb dominated municipalities (Knežević, 2011). Through the elections SDS significantly contributed to ethnic homogenization (Kubo, 2007) and their local branches were getting in confrontation with Croatian parties and authorities (Bašić and Miškulin, 2007). SDS did not have branches in Western and Eastern Slavonia for the first multiparty elections in Croatia. In these regions the Serbs dominantly supported SKH-SDP, communist successor party in 1990.³⁴ The local branches of SDS in Western and Eastern Slavonia were organized after the ethnic conflict started.

In the beginning of the conflict SDS served mainly as political leadership, but then started to aid the military organization of Serbs in Croatia. The local political structures in each region contributed to the formation and organization of paramilitary structures; notwithstanding the fact that there were political parties and paramilitary structures from Serbia who were active in Croatia.³⁵ SDS local branches in Tevrške, Plavno, Virovitica, and Brezovo Polje on 3 and 4 November 1991 brought decisions for fund-raising and food drives for the armed groups, while SDS in Plitvice on 6 January 1992 informed JNA

34 Interviews with Vojislav Stanimirović 15.10.2013 in Vukovar and Miroslav Keravica 27.10.2013 in Borovo. Because of that SKH-SDP won convincingly in Vukovar and the surroundings areas in 1990.

35 For example, Šešelj's SRS had party organization in RSK and organized paramilitary units. In Nova Varoš SRS organized volunteers and local militia. In Obrovac SRS arrested and banned paramilitary members back to Novi Sad and Kikinda for drunkenness and disorderly behavior (Order from the volunteer detachment of SRS, 31.10.1993). When one party from Serbia was denied registry in RSK, for not having complete documentation, SRS protested in a public statement saying “We can't forget that, beside SRS that gave the most volunteers, this party with own volunteers participated in the defense of the western Serb borders and the creation of RSK” (Authors copy. Obtained from the Croatian Memorial Documentation Center of the Fatherland War in Zagreb, February 2011).

that they “started to organize the people for self-defense. With the actions of SDS 1,100 people were activated (out of 8,000 inhabitants) and the platform of SDS reflected the interests almost of the entire population, so it resembled a movement”.³⁶

In a short period SDS went from a more or less moderate ethnic party into a radical secessionist party. The end result was that SDS radicalized and took active part in the armed inter-ethnic conflict. The Serbs managed to occupy a substantial part of the territory of Croatia, mainly where they were a majority, de facto succeeded and created RSK. However, during the time of RSK, SDS imploded and fell apart.

SDS split in several factions (Barić, 2005) due to regional differences which were fueled by internal bickering and fighting over resources. These were Srpska demokratska stranka Krajine [Serb democratic party Krajina] (SDS Krajina), Srpska demokratska stranka srpskih zemalja [Serb Democratic Party of All Serb lands] (SDS SSZ), Jedinstvena srpska demokratska stranka (“Monarhisti”) [United Serb democratic party (“Monarhist”), and Srpska demokratska stranka za sjedinjenje države srpske (SDS za SDS) [Serb Democratic Party for Unification of Serb States] (Archive of the Croatian Memorial Center, undated). Beside SDS' fractions there were other parties that were important in the political life of RSK. These were Srpska radikalna stranka (SRS) [Serb Radical Party], Srpska partija socijalista (SPS) [Serb Socialist Party] and Socijaldemokratska partija (SDP) [Socialdemocratic Party].³⁷

36 Authors copy. Obtained from the Croatian Memorial Documentation Center of the Fatherland War in Zagreb, February 2011

37 The document from the Croatian Memorial Documentation Center of the Fatherland War in Zagreb also mentions other 'marginal parties' such as: Srpska narodna obnova (SNO) [Serb National Revival], Demokratska narodna stranka Krajine [Democratic peoples party of Krajina] with seat in Beli Manastir, Rumunjsko-romska narodna stranka [Romanian-roma peoples party] also with a seat in Beli Manastir, Stranka Srpskih patriota RSK [Party of Serb Patriots RSK] with seat in Tovarnik, and Srpska seljačka stranka Krajine [Serb Peasant Party of Krajina] founded in the beginning of 1994 in Petrinja.

The first and only elections in RSK (Presidential, parliamentary and local) were held in December 1993. Before these elections were held the “parliament of RSK was formed from representatives of all municipal councils from RSK, and the last elections for municipal councils were held in 1990, before the Serb rebellion took place” (Archive of the Croatian Memorial Center, undated: 18). The high number of political parties in RSK indicated stiff political competition. However, as the number of parties was increasing, their organization was weakening. Control of military and coercive resources was a key factor for winning in elections. “Non-political resources, especially military resources, were of great importance; new politically salient issues, primary valence issues, emerged; party competition increased but party structures as such were not important” (Caspersen, 2010: 128). Milan Babić, in Knin, and Goran Hadžić, in Vukovar, were important political leaders because they controlled local paramilitary structures. Candidates from SDS-Krajina, SDS of Serb Lands, SRS, SPS, SDP and United SDS (Monarhist) were elected to the parliament of RSK in 1993 (RSK, 1994).

During the conflict the membership in Serb political parties and armed formations was overlapping. Many of the Serbs which lived in RSK were either part of the armed forces or members of affiliated political and social organizations. Wide and dense networks, intertwining armed and political groups, were formed during the conflict. These networks were strong and operating in RSK.

For example, SDS in its party program from 1992 states that “in the difficult war events great majority of our members and sympathizers, from the times of the first barricades, were on the protruding front lines in all battlefields” (SDS, 1992: 6). Some local branches were directly organizing the military formations. As one report shows "on the proposal of the party [SDS, D.T] after the events in Baranja a committee for national salvation was elected with the mission to organize resistance to the aggressor...

In mid-June the committee elects a war headquarters which by the end of July is filled up with new members”. In January 1993, SDS sent a press release announcing that its party convention is postponed until further notice because Croatian forces were “piling up ... in some border areas of Republic of Srpska Krajina. Because of that many of the party members, and members of party organs are called in service of the fatherland, so they are not able to attend the convention in the before scheduled time date and place”.³⁸

This is hardly surprising having in mind the circumstances in RSK in that period. Some Serb politicians admit that in those days, “we were all in the trenches”.³⁹ Membership in political parties and armed groups went hand in hand to weave the war time networks. For parties and politicians it was also beneficial to show military engagement. They saw it as important element in their quest for legitimacy. Many of the political parties were publicly proclaiming this fact. For example in a public announcement, SDS-Krajina, claimed that

“members and sympathizers of SDS Krajina showed a high level of political maturity and patriotism: with their engagements, mobilization and fighting actions they contributed to stop the Croatian aggression, and together with the rest of the people, with volunteers from other Serb land, soldiers and officer, to set up a strong defense system”.⁴⁰

The same case was with the Serb radical party (SRS). In a public letter from 1994 they say that:

“In the bloody battle for the final definition of Serb state, the members and sympathizers of Serb Radical Party wage war in the first front line. After the multiparty elections in RSK our party started several activities, where for the whole time we

38 Srpska Demokratska Stranka (SDS), Public Announcement, Republika Srpska Krajina, Knin, 21 January, 1993. Document from Archive of Fatherland War. Author's copy.

39 Feral Tribune. Drago Hedl, Interview with Vojislav Stanimirovic, “We were all in Trenches”, Split, 03.03.1997.

40 Public Announcement, Srpska Demokratska Stranka Krajine, Executive Board, Knin 24 February 1993. Document from Archive. Author's copy.

were very much present on the first front lines with the goal to preserve the present borders of our homeland”.⁴¹

In another example, SRS objected to some political appointments in a letter sent to the presidents of parliament and government of RSK. SRS writes that the president of a local assembly “remains to be commander of brigade, and you speak of depoliticizing the army and police only when members of SRS are concerned”, while another person “was commander of the territorial defense of Western Slavonia during the war. After that he was President of the Assembly where he remained until 19.05.1993”.⁴² This means that SDS members performed political functions during the time when they had military functions.

After the war coercive resources couldn't be used to win elections and participation in military or political structures became a liability. Croatian authorities issued criminal charges against Serbs who were part of armed and political structures. This meant that some war-time Serb leaders could no longer be active in politics and most of Serb military leaders fled Croatia.

However, since Eastern Slavonia wasn't militarily overtaken, many of the political structures from RSK persisted. There was a high concentration of refugees, but also of war time networks in Eastern Slavonia. For the Erdut agreement to be implemented Serbs needed to become politically organized. The bulk of the work in the implementation of the Erdut agreement, from the Serb side, was done by a transitional executive council. This council, to a large extent, was made of political structures which were active in RSK. For the peaceful reintegration to work Serbs in Eastern Slavonia needed to form a political party and to participate in the local elections in 1997. SDSS was formed with that purpose. On

41 Srpska Radicalna Stranka (SRS). Letter to public, Oblast Zapadna Slavonia, Okučani, 1994. Document from Archive. Author's copy.

42 SRS, Western Slavonia, Letter to President of Assembly of RSK, and Prime Minister, Okučani, 20.06.1993. Document from Archive. Author's copy.

the other side, the formation of SDSS was continuation, or better said institutionalization of the war time networks which had political control on ground.

III.3. Formation of SDSS

SDS structures from RSK had political control in Eastern Slavonia before and during the period of peaceful reintegration. Ivan Vrkić, who was in charge of the process from Croatian side, noticed that Serb “local politicians rule in their areas, but we are left with the decision how to move forward: can we go around them or with them to the final goal” (Vrkić, 1997: 125). The final goal was peaceful reintegration of the region and to reach it cooperative Serb political leadership was essential.

However, the Serb political structures were divided. On one side, there were people gathered around Vojislav Stanimirović and the transitional executive council that was managing the implementation of the Erdut Agreement and the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia. They say that in that period:

“were taught by the bad experience, from Western Slavonia where all Serbs left, to accept the peace deal put forward by the Erdut Agreement. On the tragedy of other Serbs from “Flash” and “Storm”, we knew what was in store for us. Either we accept the peace plan or they will force us to leave.”⁴³

Most of the Serbs accepted the peace option because they saw what happened in Knin, and what followed after “Flash” and “Storm”. On the other side they felt betrayed by Serbia. They understood if there is a military action in Vukovar, a big part of the Serbs will have to leave and that they will be expelled as it was the case after “Storm”.⁴⁴

43 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

44 Interview with Danko Nikolić, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

On the other side, were radical political structures led by Goran Hadžić. They were organized in the assembly of SAO East Slavonia. Paramilitary formations were also present. According to some they were organizing protests against the reintegration process and setting explosions to deteriorate the security (Vrkić, 1997: 403). However, the legitimacy of the radicals was shaken and they were losing the support of the people. Goran Hadžić, former leader of SDS and President of RSK, was becoming increasingly unpopular. When he tried to get involved in the reintegration process he was faced with severe public reactions (Vrkić, 1997: 255), because in the views of the Serbs Hadžić “was interested in women, grilled lamb, good cars, money for gambling, and that was what he was doing. Hadžić knew that his politics was finished and that he was not the right person to cooperate with the Croatian government”.⁴⁵

Jacques Klein continued to marginalize Hadžić and other radicals. With his engagement they lost the support from Slobodan Milošević and had to give up the control of the oil refinery in that area.⁴⁶ Klein continued diplomatically to suppress the radical's possibilities for smuggling.

“Klein with his entourage picked up Hadžić, gathered the press and took him to Erdut to the train station, where a train for Serbia was ready with fifty wagons of Slavonian oak. He put two tanks in front of the train and then declared to the journalist that he made a deal with Hadžić that not a single log will be taken from the area. At the end Klein requested that Hadžić confirms the same story, which Hadžić did” (Vrkić, 1997: 101).

The Croats were fully involved in the strategy to marginalize the radicals. Croats were determined to take them out of politics and not to allow them to be politically active anymore. For example, in view of the elections in 1997 and the formation of SDSS, the pro-governmental daily newspaper “Vjesnik”

⁴⁵ Interviews in Vukovar, October 2013.

⁴⁶ Interview with Ivan Vrkić, 24.10.2013 in Osijek.

published “that if Hadžić becomes the president of the party we will arrest him as soon as he gets documents” (Vrkić, 1997: 321). Ivan Vrkić was absolutely refusing to work closely with Goran Hadžić and did not make it a secret. On contrary, he wanted everyone to know that he is not willing to work with a suspected war criminal (Vrkić, 1997: 91). The idea behind all of these efforts was to make more space for moderate and cooperative political structures. The moderate political structures who were committed to the peace process were increasing their local support (Vrkić, 1997: 188) and had UNTAES support (Barić, 2011).

In hindsight many would say that it was the Croats and UNTAES that chose the political leadership of SDSS.⁴⁷ This is a very simplistic view. There was a clear strategy to marginalize the radicals. But the basis of this strategy was to eradicate the paramilitary formations and to prevent the smuggling which gave economic incentives for radical structures. There was an anticipated gain that more moderate and cooperative political structures will surface. Croats were mostly interested in holding the elections and bringing back Croatian governance to the reintegrated region. They and UNTAES supported and included Serb politicians which supported the peaceful reintegration. As the peaceful integration was drawing toward its end elections were becoming more certain. Increasing number of the active Serb politicians were thinking of participating. Not all of them were equally cooperative in the peace process. But they were interested in remaining in politics. For example, Miroslav Keravica, Mayor of Vukovar in RSK and during the peaceful reintegration, was seen as a radical Serb politician (Vrkić, 1997: 223-224), but wanted to participate in the elections (Vrkić, 1997: 264). That was sufficient for the Croats and UNTAES to support the continuation of his political activities, as long as he was separated from Hadžić (Vrkić, 1997: 307 and 323). When SDSS was formed, Miroslav Keravica became vice president of the party.

⁴⁷ Interviews with Branislav Vorkapić 07.10.2013, Milorad Mišković 09.10.2013, and Miljenko Turniški 15.10.2013, all in Osijek.

There was no replacement or imposition of new political leadership in the reintegrated region. It was rather continuation of the political structures active in RSK. The ones who were ready to accept the political reality got the chance to continue their political career. There was a clear need and intention to transform the radical political structures from RSK into more cooperative ones. However, UNTAES and Croats had limited influence in the internal Serb dynamics in regards to party formation and political developments. It was uncertain whether radicals or moderate will prevail (Vrkić, 1997: 283).

The Serbs understood that they need to form a party if they were to participate in the local elections in 1997. The founding assembly of SDSS was called on 05 March 1997 in Borovo, near Vukovar. There were two candidates for president: Vojislav Stanimirović and Goran Hadžić. The voting for party president was a critical juncture for the political representation of Serbs in Croatia. Serb politicians note that “during the transitional time period we, among other things, had a catharsis of cadres”.⁴⁸ Vojislav Stanimirović was elected President of the party in a second round of secret voting. In the first round of public voting “neither he nor Hadžić got majority” (Vrkić, 1997: 325).

SDSS was formed to protect and accomplish the rights of Serbs in Eastern Slavonia, to retain them in the region and to maintain their cultural and national identity. This was the main goal from the start.

The party was seen as a political organization of vital importance for Serbs in that region. “Without the party, no political organization, no organization of governance where Serbs are majority, we could not survive”.⁴⁹ In the first period (1997/1998), the main priorities of SDSS were to establish security for individuals and for their property and to help them to stay. That meant to convince Serbs to take

48 Interview with Miodrag Nedeljković 16.10.2013 in Vukovar.

49 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

Croatian documents, to give up the weapons and to accept amnesty and go in elections.⁵⁰ In that period the most challenging task was to stop the Serbs from fleeing. “It was crucial that people stayed here, that we kept them here after the war and helped them to survive”.⁵¹ In the second phase (1998/1999) the main priority was the return of property and creating conditions for refugee return. SDSS had close cooperation with OSCE and UNHCR, which were the main partners in the implementation of their program and the measures that they were proposing.

The first program of SDSS claimed the historical heritage of the political organizations of the Serbs from the 19th century in Croatia to the time Serbs were led by “people's tribune and leader of Serb Democratic Party (SDS) Jovan Rašković” (SDSS, 1997: 1). Despite making such connection SDSS also called “all responsible for war crimes to be punished, on the Serb and the Croatian side” (SDSS, 1997: 3). SDSS defined itself “as a minority party” advocating Serb specific interests in the post-conflict period (SDSS, 1997: 6), with the aim to secure “Serb participation, civic and national, in the political life and political public” in all levels of government in Croatia (SDSS, 1997: 1). In their latest program SDSS stayed committed to “the rights and interests of members of Serb nationality”.⁵²

The main policy goal of SDSS was and is to help the Serb integrate in the post-conflict period. In their view they laid the “foundations of new minority politics in Croatia and opened the process of refugee returns” in 1997 (SDSS, 2005: 1). This meant advocating for property return, renewal of households and securing jobs in the returnees' areas. To foster the return of refugees and sustainability of returnee areas SDSS supported investments in returnees' areas coming from private, public and international sources, but also demanded “increase of budgetary means for the housing demands of returnees, and to

50 Interview with Danko Nikolić, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

51 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

52 Art. 11, Statute of SDSS, 15.03.2009

make the spending more targeted and efficient” (SDSS, 2005: 2). SDSS also tried to protect the Serbs from wrongdoings, like for example “taking away property from citizens of Serb nationality, using fraud, forgeries, blackmailing and pure robbery” done by individuals, and sometimes in cooperation with the relevant institutions such as the cadaster and the public notary (SDSS, 2005: 3) and “to decrease the discrimination concerning criminal charges for war crimes against members of the Serb community” (SDSS, 2005: 3). Furthermore, SDSS demanded that the state take care of the Serb victims, civilian and military, families of deceased and wounded. The return of refugees and lost rights remains a top priority for SDSS. This is due to the fact that there are still unresolved issues and missing persons. Concerning the latter, SDSS vouches to “adequately mark places of suffering of Serb people and create legal and other conditions to make the civilian casualties of war equal”.⁵³

Second policy goal of SDSS was and is to increase the Serb representation in all levels of government. Firstly, they demanded more job positions for Serbs in public institutions, government, administration, judiciary and police, especially the ones dealing with Serb interests. The need for this “best illustrated with the fact that the Administration for returnees of the relevant ministry has 141 employed of which none is Serb” (SDSS, 2005: 3). Lately, increasing Serb representation also meant improving minority self-governance and institutions of cultural autonomy. This mainly referred to sub-national Vijeća Srpske Nacionalne Manjine (Councils of Serb National Minority, VSNM). SDSS considered that their elected officials on sub-national level should be more involved in the work of VSNMs as “an added impulse for strengthening their role” (SDSS, 2005: 5).

SDSS also demanded greater regionalism and increasing competences for lower level of governance.

Concerning the latter, the main institutions in the view of SDSS are ZVO “as institution of minority,

⁵³ Samostalna demokratska srpska stranka, Program za 2013-2017, available at www.sdss.hr last accessed on 6 February 2014.

regional self-governance on the territory of two counties, and the Serb National Council (SNV), as an institution of minority, personal self-governance on the whole territory of Croatia” (SDSS, 1997: 7). SDSS also supports multiculturalism. They aim to influence the “language, cultural and educational policy” for adopting an integral concept in Croatia with the preservation of Serb specifics. SDSS demanded “Cyrillic script [to be, D.T] in official use in places where Serb community is over one third of the population” (SDSS, 2005: 5).

The first regional branches of SDSS were formed in the reintegrated region of Eastern Slavonia “in Vukovar and Beli Manstir, in 1997”.⁵⁴ Highest concentration of local branches was preserved in this region even after it was divided into two counties (e.g. Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-srijemska). SDSS has a party branch practically in all municipalities where Serbs live. For example, in Osječko-baranjska county there are “8 municipal and 2 city branches, with 24 local sub-branches” with “1,709 party members”.⁵⁵ SDSS also started to form branches in other parts of Croatia. The branch of SDSS in Zagreb was established in beginning of November 1999. It was for the city of Zagreb and Zagrebacka county. In this period of time SDSS claimed to have “4,000 members out of which 42% were young. The party also spread in the regions of Lika and Dalmacija”.⁵⁶

Internal reports from SDSS show that most efforts were directed toward building the party organization. SDSS was mainly devoted to enhancing the organizational performance, opening more branches and sub-branches, increasing the membership and advocating for turnout in the 2011 census.⁵⁷

54 Jovan Jelić. Report of the work of the county branch of SDSS in Osječko-baranjska county for period 2008-2012, Osijek, 26.11.2012

55 Jovan Jelić. Report of the work of the county branch of SDSS in Osječko-baranjska county for period 2008-2012, Osijek, 26.11.2012

56 15 Dana. “Основан регионални одбор СДСС-а у Загребу“, No 16, 03.11.1999, p.4.

57 Jovan Jelić. Report of the work of the county branch of SDSS in Osječko-baranjska county for period 2008-2012, Osijek, 26.11.2012

Very little if any focus was put on developing policies. The policy issues that were discussed dealt with post-conflict related to Serbs.

SDSS stood in local elections, only in Eastern Slavonia, in 1997 and won overwhelming support. SDSS failed to win seats in the parliamentary elections in 2000, but got all three Serb MPs in 2003. SDSS' results of the local elections in 2005 were “30% higher in comparison with elections in 2001”.⁵⁸ In total, SDSS had 232 council members, 13 mayors, and 18 deputy mayors after the elections in 2005; and two deputy heads of counties “on basis of the Erdut Agreement and Letter of intention of government of Republic of Croatia for the end of the peaceful reintegration”.⁵⁹ SDSS won seats in some municipalities where it did not have branches, but where there were sufficient Serb returnees. This mainly included places in the former SAO Krajina and Western Slavonia, where some Serb refugees were returning. For the party “most pressing task was to form party branches in those municipalities and cities”.⁶⁰ Previously SDSS was cautious to play a strong role in political life in former conflict areas. For example, SDSS did not run candidates for mayor of Knin in 2008 because it was “still not time for SDSS to have a mayor of Knin”.⁶¹ In the conflict areas Serbs first formed NGOs, like *Srpsko Kulturno Društvo “Prosvjeta”* which facilitated the return of refugees and the formation of SDSS followed after.⁶² However, SDSS was not built from scratch, even in these areas. There was a structural continuity with the war time networks. The building of SDSS was a process of institutionalization of the legacies of the conflict.

58 SDSS. Izveštaj o aktivnostima SDSS-a u 2005 god, p.1.

59 SDSS. Izveštaj o aktivnostima SDSS-a u 2005 god, p.2.

60 SDSS. Izveštaj o aktivnostima SDSS-a u 2005 god, p.5.

61 Večernji List. “Srbi se vraćaju u Knin tek kad odu u mirovino”, 11.08.2008.

62 Dragoljub Čupković. President of SKD “Prosvjeta” in Knin. Speech marking 15 years from the renewal of the branch in Knin of the Serb Cultural Association “Prosvjeta” (SKD Prosvjeta) . 27.06.2012. Author's copy.

III.3.1. Structural Legacies: SDSS built on SDS

During RSK there was a division between military and political leadership; notwithstanding that SDS aided the formation of armed groups. After the conflict ended Croatia raised thousands of indictments for members of Serb armed groups. Because of that most of the Serb military leaders left and Croatia allowed, and encouraged, all involved in armed structures to leave the country.⁶³

However, as it will be shown below, many of the leading members and activists of SDSS were active in the armed forces of RSK. There is no doubt that to a large extent SDSS is based on SDS. High party officials do not hide their connection with SDS. The picture of Jovan Rašković, first leader of SDS, is kept in SDSS' party headquarters. Party officials acknowledge that the initial ideas of SDS for recognition of Serbs in Croatia and their rights are also important today.⁶⁴ Founding members of SDSS admit also to have been founders of SDS and acknowledge that SDSS was built on SDS' structures.⁶⁵

At the end of the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia, Serbs needed to have a political party to participate in elections. They tried to register SDS; however, they were refused. The Croatian Constitutional Court had banned SDS for instigating a Serb rebellion in Croatia. From a Croatian perspective, SDS instigated a 'rebellion' in Croatia. Since SDS was not allowed to exist, all active Serb political structures from Eastern Slavonia went into SDSS. "SDSS in 1997 was more of a movement than a party. It united individuals and groups who existed in RSK".⁶⁶

For the Serbs in Eastern Slavonia, SDSS was continuation of their efforts to have political representation and governance in the places where they were majority. When asked how was SDSS

63 Interview with Miodrag Nedeljković 16.10.2013 in Vukovar.

64 Interview with Danko Nikolić, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

65 Interview with Miodrag Nedeljković 16.10.2013 in Vukovar.

66 Interview with Danko Nikolić, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar

formed and why, they say that old activists from SDS were involved and that the main reason was to retain political governance in municipalities with Serb majority, as this quote illustrates:

“Parts of the people were certainly old activists from SDS, and others were Serbs that stayed. Without political organization we could not have governance in the municipalities. For example, in Borovo there are 6,000 inhabitants, some 92% are Serbs. If there is no political organization and you do not go to elections, the Croats with 8% will control the municipality. We had to organize politically in order to participate in elections. That was the condition”.⁶⁷

Actually the assembly to found SDSS was called by the central board of SDS. The line between SDS and SDSS was thin and blurred. Vojislav Stanimirović acknowledges this point:

“When we formed SDSS, I replaced Goran Hadžić as president of SDS. That was a difficult moment. He had his own people in the board of SDS. I had to get majority support, and I did that. The majority changed him as president, so that we could form SDSS. He left after the central board meeting. He did not like me. He was afraid of intellectuals, people that thought with their own head. He was mostly following what Belgrade and Milošević would say. For us it was clear that following Belgrade was not the way to go. But many people that were ruling in Krajina made a lot of money and transferred their property in Serbia. They were not interested whether Serbs will stay in Croatia”.

This was a crucial moment for the political organization of Serbs in Croatia. SDS moderates prevailed in Eastern Slavonia after the conflict ended. They were supporting the peaceful reintegration. Vojislav Stanimirović was leading the transitional executive council which was in charge of implementation of the Erdut agreement from the Serb side. The process of peaceful reintegration gave them opportunity to continue with their political career, albeit transformed as SDSS.

Since SDS could not be registered as a party, and under time pressure for the upcoming elections, the

⁶⁷ Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

Serbs led by Stanimirović decided to merge with another already existing party. Milorad Pupovac, a Serb politician in Zagreb who was active in Croatia proper, formed the Independent Serb Party (Samostalna Srpska Stranka, SSS) in 1995. Some claim that the formation of SSS was helped by the politically active Serbs, including SDS members, from Western Slavonia.⁶⁸ Their argument is that it took 100 signatures to form a party. It was rather difficult to raise support in Zagreb and other places in Croatia proper. During the war and in the period after, political activism raised security concerns for Serbs. Serbs were afraid to join Serb political parties because of the stigma of RSK and SDS. However, this did not apply to Serbs in RSK. Serbs in Western Slavonia were able to get Croatian documents and they helped Pupovac to form SSS, which was registered in Zagreb.

Milorad Pupovac was a Serb intellectual and a moderate politician who was not involved in RSK. During the war he did not support RSK, but was also very critical of the actions of President Tuđman. He always advocated a peace-solution to the conflict. All of that made him a prime candidate for the foundation of SDSS. There was mutual benefit for both sides from the merger.

“Pupovac came and we made an agreement with him. He had registered a party Samostalna Srpska Stranka (SSS) [Independent Serb Party]. It was also a party on paper, without voters. We used his registration and merged the two parties, SDS and SSS, into one Samostalna Demokratska Srpska Stranka (SDSS) [Independent Democratic Serb Party] on 5 March 1997. With Pupovac we had a pass with the Croatian authorities, because we had some constrains due to the stigma of participating in the war. On the other hand Pupovac got an electorate that he did not have”.⁶⁹

When SDSS was formed, Milorad Pupovac was not very familiar with the Serbs in Eastern Slavonia. Some of the politicians from RSK point out that they took him on a tour in the reintegrated region so he

68 Interview with Miroslav Grozdanić 22.10.2013 in Požega.

69 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

would become more familiar with the voters.⁷⁰ Undoubtedly Pupovac wanted to improve politically the status of Serbs in Croatia. However, he also probably understood that merging with the Serbs in Eastern Slavonia would improve his future political prospects. SDSS was registered on 19 March 1997 in Zagreb, but the seat of the party was in Vukovar. The next month SDSS ran in elections in Eastern Slavonia and won convincingly.

The political base of the SDSS was in Eastern Slavonia and the main power holders were mainly from RSK. For example, during the peaceful reintegration period when President Tuđman went to Vukovar for the first time after the conflict, the Croatian and UNTAES delegations were welcomed by “Stanimirović, Šuša, Vojnović, Knežević,⁷¹ Keravica, Žigić, Šiljan, Lemić and others” (Vrkić, 1997: 219). Vojislav Stanimirović in RSK was MP and minister in government. He became president of SDSS. Vojin Šuša was member of parliament in SAO Slavonia and an MP in the RSK parliament. Miroslav Keravica was Mayor of Vukovar in RSK, and became vice president of SDSS. Vaso Žigić was deputy minister of finance in RSK, and a strong local politician in Beli Manastir and Baranja region. Jovo Rebrača was member of parliament of SAO East Slavonia from Tenja, and an MP in the RSK parliament. Both of them were members of SDSS and got elected as council persons in Vukovar in 1997 elections. Milorad Lemić was an MP in the RSK parliament, and was also secretary for trade and tourism in the transitional executive council. Furthermore, Mirko Jagetić was member of parliament in SAO Slavonia and MP in RSK. After the conflict as member of SDSS he was deputy head of Vukovarsko-Sremska county. All of these examples strongly corroborate the structural continuity between SDS and SDSS.

70 Interviews with Jovan Ajduković, 17.10.2013 in Vukovar and Miroslav Keravica, 27.10.2013 in Borovo.

71 There were two Knežević MPs in parliament of SAO Slavonia and RSK, Jefto and Milan, both from Beli Manastir. (RSK, undated: 49). It is unclear whether Vrkić refers to one of them, or to a third person.

After the local post-conflict elections in 1997, SDSS acted as the political representative of the Serbs, so there was continuation of political representation from the peaceful reintegration and the post-conflict period. After the 1997 local elections, all Serb institutions from RSK and SAO Slavonia ceased to exist, and SDSS became the “foundation for Serb gathering, and [winning, D.T] power in municipalities and realize [Serb, D.T] rights through the joint council of municipalities” (Barić, 2011: 443). Most of the political structures in SAO Slavonia, along with their war time networks, joined SDSS during the peaceful reintegration process. “In a political sense 'turning off' the Serb area, better said integrating the Serbs from that region in the political life of Croatia went through the formation of SDSS as a new political party that united the representatives of all parties that existed during the time of RSK” (Barić, 2011: 453).

When SDSS started to branch out in other regions, on one hand it continued to build on SDS. On the other hand it used the Serb refugees who were harbored in Eastern Slavonia. Some of the refugees were SDS members, and became part of SDSS. Some served as contacts for setting up local branches when they returned to their homes. For example, the branches in Western Slavonia were made with the help of Veljko Đakula, president of SDS in Western Slavonia, and Miroslav Grozdanić. Đakula was member of government and Grozdanić of parliament in RSK. They were both politicians from Western Slavonia. During the conflict they were in SDS and after the conflict in SDSS. Milorad Nedeljković, who was member of Parliament in SAO Slavonia, was president of SDS in his municipality and later became president of SDSS. Serb political representatives admit that SDSS strategy was first to built the base in the reintegrated region, than to branch out around Croatia using the infrastructure of SDS and the refugees. The following quotes illustrate this point very well:

Building the party structure of SDSS was not a problem because it came in the footprints of SDS. The party was built here

[in Vukovar, D.T] because other parts of Croatia were devastated. We first established ourselves here, because we are in highest numbers here, we are stronger, Serbia is close. Then we started to build bases around the country. There weren't a lot of difficulties in revitalizing SDS in this area. It was made on existing structures. SDS was active here during Krajina, after that it continued to live. And in areas where people left in "Flash" and "Storm" first there were no people, and second they were skeptical and afraid to be active in politics in a national party. In all local communities you can find someone. Personal contacts, family contacts, several people get together we would prepare them and start the party. There were also contacts made with the refugees that were here and when they went back.⁷²

After the founding here [in Vukovar, D.T] we went on to revitalize SDS in other places, like in Knin. I was present in some places, not in all. But in general in the direction of Lika, Banija and Kordun, North Dalmatia the membership and bases of the new party was taken from the previous SDS.⁷³

Some of them [local branches of SDSS, D.T] are made from refugees who returned and with whom we had contacts. Some were in Vukovar. With some we had other contacts from the time of RSK. We knew each other through families, friends, and membership in Communist party.⁷⁴

Some of the refugees decided to stay and get involved in local politics. For example, Špiro Lazinica was from Gospić, a small town close to Knin. He fled after operation "Storm", and settled in Beli Manastir in Eastern Slavonia. During the reintegration period he was active in the Serb refugee association, close to the local Serb politicians and was secretary for agriculture in the transitional executive council (Vrkić, 1997: 30 and 200). He entered SDSS from the founding. He was deputy Mayor (1997) and council person of Beli Manastir (1997-2000). Some refugees, who were active during RSK, joined SDSS and returned to their home to serve on political positions as SDSS' candidates. For example, Bogdan Rkman was a war prone journalist and sublieutenant in RSK army.⁷⁵

72 Interview with Jovan Ajduković, 17.10.2013 in Vukovar

73 Interview with Miodrag Nedeljković 16.10.2013 in Vukovar.

74 Interview with Danko Nikolić, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar

75 See news portal "E-novine". "Rkman – i ratni huškač i oficir [Rkman – War abetter and officer]". 12.07.2013 (available

Then he was fugitive in Vukovar and was president of the Homeland Club of people from Kordun and Banija „Miloš Vojnović“. He joined SDSS and became president of the executive board and was elected as council person in Vukovar. He became deputy head of Sisačko-Moslavačka county, where he is originally from, after the local elections in 2013. Jovan Rašković, president of SDSS in Šibensko-kninska county and Serb deputy head of that county, is mentioned as being part of army structures during the war.⁷⁶ He left Knin after operation “Storm”, but was among first to return. Rašković is also accused of cooperating with Croatian security forces, while being close to Milan Martić, during the time of SAO Krajina, and that he received war pension for his services from the Croatian state.⁷⁷

Some of the people who built SDSS say that they were forcefully drafted in the armed structures of RSK; while others deny being part of armed structures. Nevertheless it is known that some of the leading members of SDSS from the regions of Banija, Lika and Kordun around Knin (i.e. former SAO Krajina) were members of the armed structures of RSK. Also, there were news reports that members of RSK's armed forces were elected as candidates from SDSS in the local elections in 2013.⁷⁸ However, one should point out that former members of RSK's armed forces were found among candidates of different parties.⁷⁹ It goes to show that this is not only a practice of SDSS, but that in Croatia there are

at <http://www.e-novine.com/region/region-hrvatska/87619-Rkman---ratni-huka-oficir.html>) accessed on 24.11.2013.

76 Slobodna Dalmacija. “SAO KRAJINA” PRED IZBORE. Šefu Kninske kasarne mirovina zbog zasluga za hrvatsku državu!? [SAO Krajina before elections. The chief of the Knin army barracks gets pension for merit of Croatian state!?”., 04.12.2009, available at

<http://www.slobodnadalmacija.hr/Hrvatska/tabid/66/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/82044/Default.aspx> last accessed on 3 February 2014.

77 Dnevno. “Lažnjak’: Podžupana Raškovića nema u Registru, a prima vojnu mirovinu od 7.312,67 kn [Impersonator: Deputy head of county Rašković is not in the registry, and gets military pension of 7,312.67 kn]”, 22.12.2012, available at <http://www.dnevno.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/74169-laznjak-podzupana-raskovica-nema-u-registru-a-prima-vojni-mirovinu-od-7-312-67-kn.html> last accessed on 4 February 2014.

78 See news portal “OkO”. “Evo kako su na izborima u Hrvatskoj prošli bivši pripadnici 'Srpske vojske Krajine' [This is how the former members of the 'Serb army of Krajina' did in elections in Croatia]”. 20.05.2013 (available at <http://www.dnevno.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/87113-evo-kako-su-na-izborima-u-hrvatskoj-prošli-bivši-pripadnici-srpske-vojske-krajine.html>) accessed on 24.11.2013.

79 See news portal “OkO”. “Do jučer agresori, a sutra gradonačelnici I dožupani Lijepe naše [Agresors until yesterday, and from tomorrow mayors and deputy heads of counties in our beautiful homeland]”. 15.05.2013. (available at <http://www.dnevno.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/86823-do-jučer-agresori-a-sutra-gradonacelnici-i-dožupani-lijepe-nase.html>) accessed on 24.11.2013.

more former members of RSK armed forces than they are free to admit.

Serbs in Croatia are cautious when it comes to their involvement in the armed structures of RSK.

Croatia granted amnesty for all who were militarily active in RSK, but also kept thousands of anonymous indictments for war crimes. This can be seen as an instrument of intimidation and pressure toward Serbs. It also sets serious impediments to people being able to freely declare whether they were part of the armed forces. Regardless whether they committed a crime, were active or passive during the fights, for Serbs in Croatia declaring membership in the armed structures of RSK is a personal jeopardy. But having in mind that SDS was supporting the armed formations, and that during the war Serbs were in position to defend their life, family and community, it is plausible that in SDSS there are more former members of RSK armed forces than are willing to admit.

The core of SDSS was based on active politicians from RSK. Having that in mind, SDSS makes a conscious effort to attract and promote younger people who do not bear the stigma of the war. For example, Petar Đukić, who was head of transitional police unit during reintegration, served as assistant minister of interior in post-conflict Croatia. Attracting new party cadre was put as a priority early after the formation of SDSS. For example, in February 1999 “the main board [of SDSS, D.T] gave a very high grade to the working group for organizing youth organizations of SDSS because in a short period 433 young Serbs from the region joined the party”.⁸⁰

Vojislav Stanimirović resigned his mandate twice after winning in parliamentary elections in 2007 and 2011. He says that he does not have conditions to serve as an MP. He is stigmatized because of his political activities during RSK:

⁸⁰ Podrška Srpskom Narodnom Vijeću. 15 Dana. Novosti Zajedničkog vijeća općina. 09.02.1999, str. 2 [Support to Serb National Council. 15 Days. News of the Joint Council of Municipalities. 09.02.1999, pp.2]

“I have isolated myself from Parliament. I could not stand the constant harassment from the right hard-liners. I was called names (četnici); they would throw paper at me. So I would serve for some time, and then return the mandate. I resigned twice and gave way for a younger colleague who does not have the burden of war on him”.⁸¹

In that way Dragan Crnogorac, as deputy candidate for MP, got the mandate. Crnogorac is vice president of SDSS and president of ZVO. He spent his childhood as a refugee in Croatia, Serbia and Germany. He wasn't politically or militarily active during RSK and doesn't suffer personal stigmatization. Furthermore, Đorđe Čurčić was invited to join SDSS because he was a well known young businessman in his municipality. He was elected twice as Mayor and twice as deputy head of Vukovarsko-Srijemska county. Similarly, Predrag Burza joined SDSS after establishing himself in the business community and was elected Mayor of his municipality. Young Boško Gvero became the head of SDSS in Osijek and Srđan Milaković is deputy Mayor of Vukovar.

SDSS was formed before the local elections at the end of the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia. It was built on the infrastructure of SDS. Military leaders and radical Serb politicians were banned from Croatia. SDS' moderates in Eastern Slavonia prevailed and together with their war time networks worked to built SDSS. This process shows the institutionalization of the structural legacies of the conflict. It went in parallel with the institutionalization of the symbolic legacies of the conflict.

III.3.2. Symbolic Legacies: Symbolic capital for electoral gains

Symbolic capital started to be formed during the conflict in Croatia. To some extent membership in political parties and armed groups overlapped in RSK. Parties found it important to mention in public

⁸¹ Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

announcements that their members were part of armed groups. Arguably this contributed to their legitimacy, in the times of war, and increased their chances for attracting electoral support. During the conflict, participation in armed group was seen as a positive asset for a political career. One example is the announcement of SDS – Krajina for the presidential elections in RSK. According to their press statement, candidates with battle experience were favored and “on the list for proposed candidates for President, SDS will give support to proven Serb nationalists, who led the people in battle with a gun in their hands”.⁸²

Membership in armed structures was seen as positive characteristic for membership in political parties. One SDS faction in RSK noted that “this party accepts in its cadres people of the types of good man, *patriots and warriors*, honest intellectuals” [italics added, D.T].⁸³ The active participation in armed groups and in conflict was seen as enhancing the credibility of the politicians. The rationale was that if people fought the Croatian state then they would present Serb political interests in RSK better than the ones who did not take part in the conflict. Parties' rationale was that the first “had the guts not to stand under the Croatian flag” and the second were “from the office-salon type”.⁸⁴

Social practices to sustain the symbolic capital were also started during the conflict. SDS factions organized commemorations to pay respect to fallen fighters. They saw this activity as part of their obligation as political party. SDS-SZ on 26 June 1994 organized a ceremony of laying flowers and commemorative speeches “in the sign of great and eternal gratitude to our heroes who gave their lives

82 Srpska Demokratska Stranka, Public Announcement, Glavni Odbor, Knin, 27.11.1993. Document from Archive. Author's copy.

83 Interview with Mile Paspalj, Coordinator of SDS-SZ for Banija and Kordun, Отаџбина, Информаривни часопис општинског одбора СДС Српских Земаља Глина, Глина јули 1994, Бр. 1, pp. 25. Document from Archive. Author's copy.

84 Interview with Mile Paspalj, Coordinator of SDS-SZ for Banija and Kordun, Отаџбина, Информаривни часопис општинског одбора СДС Српских Земаља Глина, Глина јули 1994, Бр. 1, pp. 27. Document from Archive. Author's copy.

for the freedom of our people” in front of a Memorial house and at the place where the first Serb died in 1991 in municipality Glina.⁸⁵

The activities of individuals constituted a crucial element in their symbolic capital. Because of their engagement in the conflict people were regarded credible to assume politically appointed positions. Their symbolic capital was used to harness political support from officials and from the public in the local community. Different political parties were trying to use the symbolic capital of their members and arguing that their candidates are fit for a political position because of their symbolic capital, among other things. For example, the social democratic party of RSK supported their candidate, who was a director in oil refinery, for a political appointment with an argument based on his symbolic capital, saying that “he is a proven patriot, fighter and officer in the army of Krajina” and that “he has proven himself as good organizer and capable officer and enjoys great respect among the people”.⁸⁶

In the post-conflict period it was important to translate the symbolic capital. In the case of SDSS there was a purposeful strategy to show the lineage with SDS. Therefore, the name of the party was purposefully selected to resemble the old party. This is how Vojislav Stanimirović explained it in an interview in 1997.

Q: Are you getting ready for the elections? Are you setting up political parties? Will you run in the elections as a single Serb political block?

We've set up the initiative council of the Independent Democratic Serb Party (SDSS). That's our little mischief, because they didn't let us name it Serb Democratic Party (SDS), because it is supposedly a terrorist organization. Then we decided to

85 Отаџбина, Информаривни часопис општинског одбора СДС Српских Земаља Глина, Глина јули 1994, Бр. 1, pp. 42-43. Document from Archive. Author's copy.

86 Social Democratic Party, Republic Serb Krajina, Main Board Okučani, Letter to executive council of municipality Okučani, No 17/95, Okučani, 27.04.1995. Document from Archive. Author's copy.

name our party SDSS.⁸⁷

The logo of SDSS was almost the same as SDS. Only one additional S was added. It was kept more or less “because it was association with previous time”, so people will recognize and trust the party.⁸⁸

Additionally, Serbs would feel empowered to stay and to use their symbols in the post-conflict period.

SDSS high representatives, which were part of the armed structures in RSK, claim that the people value their role during RSK and that is why they vote for them.⁸⁹ In their view it is an absolute plus for them that they were fighting for their people during the war. In the post-conflict period this is judged positive for receiving electoral support. Some of their war time enemies, similarly turned politicians, agree with that. For example, Anto Đapić was one of the founders of the Croatian Right Party (Hrvatska stranka prava, HSP), a radical right party that formed the paramilitary organization 'Croatian Defense Forces' (Hrvatske Obrambene Snage, HOS) in 1990. HOS merged with the Croatian army in 1992. Đapić was military commander of HOS and officer in the Croatian army. This experience propelled him in Croatian politics and he was among the most popular Croatian politicians in the 1990s. Nowadays he draws a parallel between him and the Serb political leaders: “My belonging in HOS was a launch ramp for me into Croatian politics. Similar like Stanimirović had his path. He also has that”.⁹⁰ Vojislav Stanimirović agrees somewhat to that line of argumentation. He considers his time in Krajina as a plus for his political career; however, he links his symbolic capital not to the armed conflict, but to his role in the transitional executive council and the peaceful reintegration.⁹¹

87 Feral Tribune. Drago Hedl, Interview with Vojislav Stanimirovic, “We were all in Trenches”, Split, 03.03.1997.

88 Interview with Đorđe Čurčić, 16.10.2013 in Osijek.

89 Interviews in Knin, 01.10.2013.

90 Interview with Anto Đapić, 23.10.2013 in Osijek.

91 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

Croats won and can speak freely about their participation in the conflict. On the other hand, Serbs lost and could face criminal charges if they admit to being part of armed structures. Serb politicians cannot publicly claim symbolic capital deriving from their activities during the conflict. Therefore, the symbolic capital Stanimirović claims is less connected to his military past, but more to his decisive role in peace building. With the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia Serbs got to stay in their homes and to retain property, which was not the case in the other parts of RSK. Leading the process from the Serb side gave Stanimirović, and SDSS, significant symbolic capital which was translated into electoral support. These quotes illustrate that:

Stanimirović has a key role for preserving the cohesion and support for SDSS. People respect him because he was deeply involved in the implementation of the Erdut Agreement. He was responsible for the peaceful reintegration and is directly responsible for the fact that people stayed in their homes. If he was not in SDSS the party would be probably among the biggest and most important parties of Serbs in Croatia, but the support would be lower. There would be more divisions and the implementation of the Erdut Agreement and representation of the Serbs would not be so successful. Stanimirović has unchallenged authority among the Serbs in Eastern Croatia. Pupovac passes very well among the urban Serbs in Zagreb and other cities. But the voter base of SDSS is in Eastern Croatia. There the Serb community is most numerous.⁹²

Stanimirović has a strong charisma and keeps everyone together. If we go in any Serb village, he is an idol for them. This is due to his role in the peaceful reintegration. He was saying like this: “You have possibility to take documents, go in elections and choose your representatives. You have a choice not to leave your home grounds with your life packed in nylon bags like people after “Flash” and “Storm”. If you do not want to stay in Croatia, sell your property and leave. You will not be forced to sleep in someone's huts or in collective centers. You will have your dignity”. I think that this is the crown of his politics. He still enjoys respect for that.⁹³

Commemorations, as collective social practices, became the main instrument to preserve the memory

92 Interview with Danko Nikolić, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar

93 Interview with Miodrag Nedeljković 16.10.2013 in Vukovar.

of the conflict. For some, commemorations were also the main instrument to sustain the symbolic capital. Commemorative events had political meaning and were used as instrument to create the party image. Commemorations started to be organized right after the peaceful reintegration. For example, “the association of war victims in Vukovar, in cooperation with ZVO and SDSS, initiated a dirge to victims of war in the Serb cemetery in Vukovar” in 1999.⁹⁴ SDSS was the co-organizer of the dirge and different Serb political parties attended the commemorations. Since then commemorations are organized regularly every year. SDSS representatives are always present and often deliver speeches at the commemorations. They are more likely to be organizers, together with other Serb institutions which they control like ZVO, SNV or VSNM. The practice in Vukovar was preserved up to 2013.⁹⁵ Commemorations were also organized in Borovo in 2010⁹⁶ and in 2012⁹⁷; when Dušan Latas, president of VSNM and SDSS council person from Borovo, addressed the people present.⁹⁸ SDSS and affiliated organizations also organized commemorations in other places where Serb civilian victims were killed during the war. One such place is Varivoda, near Knin. The dirge in 2012 was organized by the municipality of Kistanje, where the mayor and majority belong to SDSS.⁹⁹ Another place is Paulin Dvor where civilian casualties were discovered in 2010. For the commemoration in 2012, families of victims in Paulin Dvor were accompanied by Serb political representatives from SDSS, ZVO and VSNM of Vukovarsko-srijemska county. Vojislav Stanimirović delivered a speech in which he asked that the commemoration become a regular annual event.¹⁰⁰ Representatives of other Serb political parties, such as SNS, NS or NSS, are sometimes present; however, they have a secondary role. This means that they lay flowers and pay respect, but do not have an active role during the event.

94 15 Dana. “Парастос жртвама рата у Вуковару“, No 14, 21.09.1999, p.16.

95 Извор. “Помен за цивилне жртве рата“, Лист Заједничког већа општина, Двонедељник, 09/2013, p. 12.

96 Novosti. “Parastos ratnim žrtvama na vukovarskom vojničkom groblju“, No 562, 24.09.2010.

97 Извор. “Парастос у Алеји“, Лист заједничког већа општина, Бр. 50, 09/2012, p. 23.

98 Извор. “Парастос за погинуле“, Лист заједничког већа општина, Бр. 50, 09/2012, p. 19.

99 Извор. “За злочине нема оправдања“, Лист заједничког већа општина, No 52, 10/2012, p. 3.

100 SNV. Vijesti. “Sećanje na žrtve ratnog zločina“, 28.11.2012, available at <http://snv.hr/vijesti/secanje-na-zrtve-ratnog-zlocina/> last accessed on 4 February 2014.

For representatives of SDSS commemorative events are parts of the political work of the party. They consider important for their constituency to provide them with the possibility to pay homage to the civilian casualties. It carries a political message Serbs were also casualties, against the dominant political discourse in Croatia which portrays the Serbs only as aggressors.¹⁰¹ Therefore, part of the political work of SDSS is to preserve and mark the sites where atrocities against Serbs were committed.¹⁰² Regular commemorations of casualties are obligation for SDSS. But they also present an instrument to preserve their symbolic capital over time.

“Statements of memory” are another instrument for preserving symbolic capital. The first “Statement of Memory” was issued on 4 August 2009.¹⁰³ It was signed by Milorad Pupovac, president of SNV and vice president of SDSS. The statement read that operations “Flash” and “Storm” brought an end to the war, but that they also “caused new suffering, new destruction, and new exoduses of over 200,000 Croatian citizens of Serb nationality”. With the statement, SNV expressed commiseration with “the victims who suffered in the whole war period 1991-1995 and in silence remember their suffering”. In the statement they also express support for refugees who still have not returned, and cannot acquire “right of home, work, pension, and overall legal security”. The statement called authorities in Serbia and Croatia to work together to “solve remaining refugees issues, as the issues of renewal, lost housing rights and work rights, and to sanction committed war crimes and to judge politics that led to them and to exodus”. Similar “statements of memory” were issued every year up to 2013 to mark the anniversary of operations “Flash” and “Storm”. The statements raised concerns for the problems of refugees, returnees and injustices done to Serbs, and pointed out that most of crimes committed against Serbs

101 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

102 Interview with Đorđe Čurčić, 16.10.2013 in Osijek.

103 SNV. “Izjava sjećanja”, Zagreb, 04.08.2009, available at http://www.snv.hr/pdf/Izjava_sjecanja_VIII_09.pdf last accessed on 4 February 2014.

remained unpunished. It is argued that this practice is preserved because “in the public memory of Croatia there is no space for these sufferings” which is “insulting the feelings of those who suffer themselves and commiserate with the ones who suffered”.¹⁰⁴ However, the practice also serves to preserve the symbolic capital of SDSS and contributes toward the Serb point in the contested discourse over the past conflict.

Supporting a contested discourse of the conflict is the third instrument for preserving the symbolic capital. The dominant Croatian discourse considers that the Serbs instigated a rebellion, they were the aggressors, and occupied parts of Croatia. From a Serb point of view, Serbs were defending themselves from Croatian nationalists, they were also victims, and their sufferings should not be overlooked. This contested discourse underlines the divergent ethnic understanding of the conflict, and is very vividly present in Vukovar.

During the conflict Vukovar was a battleground where many atrocities were committed. In the post-conflict period it became a symbolic battleground. For example, Croats, after they reclaimed governance, wanted either to move Serb graves and monuments to the outskirts of the city (Vrkić, 1997: 305) or to bulldoze them down, which was a proposal of Branimir Glavaš, a radical Croat politician later imprisoned for war crimes. For the Serbs in Vukovar, and the wider region, it was important to preserve the burial site intact. This was important for the peaceful reintegration, but also for the prospects of SDSS. Serbs succeeded in preserving the graves and this was read as a political success for SDSS.¹⁰⁵

104 SNV. Vijesti. “5. izjava sjećanja Srpskog narodnog vijeća”, 03.08.2012 available at <http://snv.hr/vijesti/5-izjava-sjecanja-srpskog-narodnog-vijeca/> last accessed on 5 February 2014.

105 Feral Tribune. Drago Hedl, Interview with Vojislav Stanimirovic, “We were all in Trenches”, Split, 03.03.1997.

Another example from Vukovar is the marking of 18 November, a day of contested meaning for Croats and Serbs. Croats, even though they tried way beyond their possibilities to win, were militarily defeated in Vukovar on 18 November 1991. In the fighting there were many casualties on both sides and afterward there was mass killing of Croats close to Vukovar. Serbs controlled Vukovar throughout the war. For the Croats 18 November symbolizes the fall of Vukovar and subsequent occupation. Croatian institutions, every year, organize events to commemorate the 'fall of Vukovar'. Different political parties take part in such events. However, because the Serb perception and discourse is somewhat different, SDSS doesn't take part in the events. Instead, SNV and ZVO held a joint commemorative session in Vukovar on 15 November 2012. On this occasion they issued a 'statement of memory'. They asked that all victims be treated equally and that all war crimes be punished. The statement asked for “building joint politics of memory and joint commemorations in the city of Vukovar and other places of suffering in Croatia”.¹⁰⁶

Other dates and events from the war in Croatia are similarly contested. For example, Croatian institutions organize manifestations to celebrate the military victories in “Flash” and “Storm”. SDSS does not attend these events. The military operations, for many among the Serb community and beyond, were a prelude for ethnic cleansing. Milorad Pupovac, vice president of SDSS, and a prominent Serb politician in Croatia illustrated this point in one TV debate¹⁰⁷:

Journalist: Mr. Pupovac is “Storm” a day for Serbs in Croatia to celebrate?

Pupovac: Serbs have a reason to celebrate the peaceful reintegration of Croatian Podunavlje [Eastern Slavonia, D.T].

106 Beta. “Izjava sećanja SNO i ZVO povodom godišnjice u Vukovaru”, 15.11.2012, available at <http://www.glas-javnosti.rs/aktuelne-vesti/2012-11-15/izjava-secanja-sno-i-zvo-povodom-godisnjice-u-vukovaru> last accessed on 5 February 2014.

107 Discussion on HTV1, 24.07.2009. Milorad Pupovac and General Petar Stipeć, Head of Croatian Military HQ, on Operation “Storm”. From 5'48". Available on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wb7UITVWRic> (accessed on 18.10.2013)

Journalist: That is 15 January.

Pupovac: That is right.

Journalist: And “Storm”?

Pupovac: It is difficult for Serbs to celebrate “Storm”. Because that is a day of their suffering, after which it was difficult to recover after that suffering.

...

Pupovac: Two things should be said. We can and we want to celebrate A. the establishment of the territorial integrity and B. peace. That is something that we share, and we can share that with all citizens of Croatia.

SDSS has devised a purposeful strategy to translate the symbolic capital from the war into their electoral gains. On one side, the role of Stanimirović during the peaceful reintegration was decisive to protect and retain the Serbs in their homes in Eastern Slavonia. On the other side, symbolic lineage with SDS was kept. The party makes sure that homage to Serb war casualties is regularly paid. SDSS also supported, or developed, social practices which aim to preserve the symbolic capital. These are commemorative events, statements of memory and supporting a contested discourse. The symbolic legacy of the conflict was institutionalized and became a valuable resource for the party.

III.3.3. Patronage and clientelism

Serbs were in a dire situation in the post-conflict period. They were harassed. Their property was destroyed or taken away. The public infrastructure was destroyed. Poverty and unemployment rates were high. They faced an uncertain future. Financial aid from foreign donors was highly needed for the post-conflict reconstruction; however, it could also be used to make local politicians stronger (Vrkić, 1997: 195). Foreign donor aid for reconstruction served to improve the material base of Serbs, “as well as their political base” (Vrkić, 1997: 225). For example, a private construction company “Epirus”

employed about hundred workers and “worked most during reconstruction” in Erdut.¹⁰⁸ Jovo Vuković, the general manager of “Epirus” between 1997 and 2002, was among the founding members of SDSS. He headed the municipal lists for SDSS in Erdut in 2001 and was elected MP from SDSS list in 2011. He denied any connections between his business and political career.¹⁰⁹ However, his other company “Vuković”, registered in Vukovar, was also among the main construction companies in the region and leader in post-conflict reconstruction. SDSS was in power in all of the Serb majority municipalities and they also had opportunity to channel the post-conflict reconstruction. The demand for patronage was present and SDSS had the power to supply.

Also, it seems that some of the post-conflict aid was selectively channeled. For example, Hungarians in Slavonia complained that “Serbs share everything among themselves, fertilizers, seeds for harvest or they sell the surplus and transfer it to Serbia” (Vrkić, 1997: 327). Serb politicians active in those times confirm that they provided essential agricultural resources and equipment to their minority members. They claim it was essential for the people to stay and survive in the region. The bad economy was a strong reason for the people to leave, even though it was not the exclusive one.

The impoverished economy was as a great impediment for return and reconciliation.¹¹⁰ And it remained a challenge in subsequent years.¹¹¹ Unemployment was high all around Eastern Slavonia. For example, in Borovo out of total of 6,000 inhabitants “2,500 were fully employed before this war” and after the

108 15 Dana. “Општина Ердут“, No 8, 14.06.1999, p. 10.

109 T-portal. “Ni SDSS, ni HDZ, sutra ni SDP, nemaju veze s mojim poslom”, 06.12.2011, available at <http://izbori2011.tportal.hr/sve-vijesti/163513/Ni-SDSS-ni-HDZ-sutra-ni-SDP-nemaju-veze-s-mojim-poslom.html#UvEPYayoiPM> last accessed on 4 February 2014.

110 15 Dana. “Teška ekonomska situacija glavna prepreka u procesu povratka I pomirbe”, No 8, 14.06.1999, p.2.

111 15 Dana. “Обнова привреде најважнији фактор за спровођење свих тачака Ердутског споразума“, No 17, 17.11.1999, p.2.

conflict only 320 worked.¹¹² The situation was similar in other municipalities such as Šodolovci,¹¹³ Darda,¹¹⁴ Markušica,¹¹⁵ Mirkovci¹¹⁶ or Erdut.¹¹⁷ People were in need of employment and/or social support. The implementation of the Erdut agreement envisaged that Serbs would keep employment in the public institutions of RSK and that they would get social support. The transitional executive council, from Serb side, was in charge of the process. Serbs got to keep their employment in public institutions.¹¹⁸ Pensions were given to 6,800 persons in the region. Persons disabled in the war, widows and orphans got access to health and social protection. This was an important issue for Serbs in the post-conflict period and it was also high on the agenda of political parties during RSK.¹¹⁹

Vojislav Stanimirović was head of the transitional executive council, and also president of SDSS, so the political gains went to SDSS. It was understood that SDSS provided jobs and social support for Serbs in Eastern Slavonia. On one side, some argue that the implementation of the Erdut Agreement provided the necessary set of material incentives for political elites to develop “clientelistic social relations” (Cvikić, 2010: 164). On the other, high party officials claim that this was one of the biggest achievements of SDSS, as this quote shows:

The biggest value that SDSS achieved is that it helped the people to remain in their homes after the peaceful reintegration.

112 15 Dana. Из Српских општина. Новости Заједничког већа општина 26.12.1998, п. 6 [15 Days. From Serb municipalities. News of Joint Council of Municipalities. 26.12.1998, pp. 6]

113 15 Dana. “Разминиравање – решење свих проблема“, No 5, 11.03.1999, p. 4.

114 15 Dana. “Општина Дарда“, No 7, 25.05.1999, p.10.

115 15 Dana. “Општина Маркушица“, No 9, 30.06.1999, p. 10.

116 15 Dana “Мирковци – жал за статусом општине“, No 11, 31.07.1999, p.6.

117 15 Dana. “Општина Ердут“, No 8, 14.06.1999, p. 10.

118 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

119 For example, the platform of SDS Krajina reads “In social policy SDS [SDS Krajina, D.T] will firstly and mostly advocate for taking care of the Serb wounded and families of fallen fighters. This war brought to a very difficult situation of all Serb people in the area of RSK, and the position of the ones that lost their dearest is especially difficult” (SDS Krajina, undated). Also the electoral brochure of Milan Martić for the 1993 presidential elections in RSK had five main points as main electoral promises. Fifth among them was the promise of “honorable and dignified treatment of fighters, war invalids and families of fallen fighters”. Author has copies of both documents obtained from the Croatian Memorial Documentation Center of the Fatherland War in Zagreb, February 2011.

Very important. People were taken over, they were integrated, and that worked in public administration, police, judiciary, health system, schools. They kept their position and stayed here. In the other parts of Croatia they did not have anything. Total poverty.¹²⁰

SDSS got further access to spoils with participation in sub-national and national government. Because it could bring Serb votes, SDSS became a desirable coalition partner for different Croatian parties.¹²¹

After the local post-conflict elections in 1997, the main winning parties, HDZ and SDSS, made a political agreement to divide spoils and positions (Vrkić, 1997: 359-404). HDZ got top positions in counties and municipalities where Croats were majority, (e.g. Mayors and heads of counties) and SDSS got deputies. If Serbs were in majority, SDSS got top positions and HDZ got the deputies.

Reconstruction of political governance, and inclusion of Serbs, was part of the peaceful reintegration and had UNTAES backing. Access to spoils and resources was the major justification for SDSS to share governance with their former nemesis. The rationale was that if they were part of government then they could provide benefits for their voters. SDSS considered that their voters “expect to bring them electricity in their home, or to create conditions for them to raise credit” and they “know very well that without participation in bodies of government it is very difficult to achieve that”.¹²² The logic was that there is a demand for patronage in the post-conflict period and if SDSS was part of government it could supply patronage. And in indeed, part of SDSS' governance in the post-conflict period included renewals and reconstruction of damaged and destroyed public infrastructure, such as rebuilding roads, water supply system or public lighting.¹²³ These constitute 'club' goods which the party could supply to their ethnic group. However, with governance on local level SDSS also got a

120 Interview with Miodrag Nedeljković 16.10.2013 in Vukovar.

121 AIM Zagreb. “Glavas and his jackpot”, 18.04.1997, available at <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/trae/archive/data/199704/70421-002-trae-zag.htm> last accessed on 4 February 2014.

122 Vreme. “Stara imena i nove stranke”, No 881, 22.11.2007, available at <http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=535271> last accessed on 4 February 2014.

123 Interview with Đorđe Čurčić, 16.10.2013 in Osijek.

chance to supply targeted 'private' goods. For example, granting heating wood and one-off money subsistence of 350 Kuna to socially deprived persons¹²⁴ or discretionary provision of public health services and employment in local institutions.¹²⁵ SDSS officials admit that they try to secure funding, from county or municipal budgets, for various Serb non-governmental organizations dealing with pensioners, sports or cultural issues, and that they expect electoral support in exchanges. However, they also say that providing finances does not always translate to electoral support. On the other side, their competitors are pointing that SDSS' control of spoils and resources gave them an unfair advantage. Local analysts equally agree that “SDSS controls spoils and resources for Serbs on local level. All financing for Serb organizations goes through them. All employment of Serbs in public administration also goes through them”.¹²⁶

SDSS won the guaranteed Serb seats in the national legislative elections in 2003 and 2007. It then signed an agreement with the new HDZ government. On one side, HDZ needed stronger majority in parliament and they were under political constitutionality by the EU to improve minorities' position in order to accelerate Croatia's accession process. On the other side, SDSS wanted access to more spoils and they saw a chance to support HDZ with the condition “to renew the areas where refugees return and to give them support to renew their housing, roads, water supply, and electricity. This was needed to close some chapters with EU”.¹²⁷ SDSS considered that they could do much more for their ethnic group if they were part of the government.¹²⁸ In the agreement from 2003 SDSS got government's

12415 Дана. Хроника општина и градова: Новости Заједничког већа општина 26.12.1998, п. 7 [15 Days. Chronicle of municipalities and cities. News of Joint Council of Municipalities. 26.12.1998, pp. 7]

125 Slobodna Lika. “Gordana Petrić - Milorad Delić, načelnik, općinu Vrhovine pretvorio u svoj dnevni boravak!”, 08.02.2012, available at http://slobodnalika.com/novosti/12193_gordana++petric++milorad+delic+nacelnik+opcinu+vrhovine+pretvorio+u+svoj+dnevni+boravak+.html last accessed on 4 February 2014.

126 Interview with Mihaljo Kragulj, 01.10.2013 in Knin.

127 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

128 Parentium. “Stanimirović o potpisivanju sporazuma sa Sanaderom”, 19.12.2003, available at <http://porec.mobi/prva.asp?clanak=815> last accessed on 6 February 2014.

commitment that unlawfully taken property will be returned to Serbs and assistant ministers in the government.¹²⁹ The implementation of the agreement did not go smoothly; however, 3,450 unlawfully taken houses, from a total of 3,500, were returned to Serbs in 2004 and 2005 (SDSS, 2005: 3). Furthermore, from 16,200 demands submitted for renewal of houses, 9,700 were answered positively. On the other hand, except in Eastern Croatia, there were still problems with proportional representation of Serbs in police, judiciary and other public institutions. Usage of Serb language was problematic and there was lack of budgetary support for returnees and Serb organization.

In the 2007 agreement SDSS got more 'earmarks' for the Serbs in Croatia. For example, financing for renewing houses and solutions for housing issues, greater investments in returnee's areas in water systems, electricity, roads, ambulances, kindergartens, and in education, health system, social protection, in order to support local economic development.¹³⁰ These policies were expected to create around 200 jobs in the returnee's areas. The agreement took into consideration the implementation of language policy including introduction of Serb language and script and renewal of Serb cultural monuments and churches. One part of the agreement was dedicated to “the civilian casualties of war, missing persons and deceased, expelled and war crime trials” where it was pointed out that processes of exhumation would be accelerated, the public would be better informed and the “grave sites and places of suffering” would be marked.¹³¹ SDSS representatives proudly point out that they “reconstructed 23,000 Serb houses from 2005. No Serb house was reconstructed until 2005”.¹³² After the government changed SDSS' MPs continued to push for targeted goods for Serbs.¹³³

129 Parentium. “HDZ i SDSS potpisali ugovor o suradnji i potpori budućoj vladi”, 18.12.2003 available at <http://porec.mobi/prva.asp?clanak=764> last accessed on 6 February 2014.

130 For more see “Sporazum između HDZ-a i SDSS-a o saradnji Vladi RH i Hrvatskom Saboru”, 10.01.2008. Author's copy.

131 “Sporazum između HDZ-a i SDSS-a o saradnji Vladi RH i Hrvatskom Saboru”, 10.01.2008. p.6. Author's copy.

132 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

133 Novosti, Kronika. “Bolja komunikacija, efektivnija rješenja”, No. 720, 4.10.2013, p. 2 [“ Better communication, more effective solutions”].

If targeted goods cannot be secured from national and sub-national government, then SDSS extends 'club' and 'private' goods directly or through institutions and organization under its control. For example, SDSS allocates parts of its party budget for donations. The party's financial report shows that it donated over 95,000 Euros between 2010 and 2012 (SDSS, 2012a). Donations are made for “gifts and financial aid”, “support for cultural and sport manifestations” and “stipend and scholarships”. The party's working program for 2012-2012 envisages that SDSS will give financial “aid to citizens on social and medicine indication, and providing financial support to Serb sport and cultural organizations” (SDSS, 2012b). This indicates that SDSS gives one-off financial support to its voters.

SDSS controls almost all elected institutions and organizations that have means to target benefits to Serbs. Among these ZVO features prominently. ZVO was a product of the peaceful reintegration. It was envisaged as an institution which would help the Serbs to improve their positions and rights in the post-conflict period. ZVO was defined as a body “that harmonizes interests of the Serb national community in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem in the areas of Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-srijemska counties”.¹³⁴ It was founded in Vukovar on 23 May 1997 and the Croatian government confirmed the founding on 15 October 1998. ZVO has competences to nominate Serb deputy heads in the two counties and to propose Serb representatives in public institutions (e.g. assistant ministers for internal affairs, justice, education, sport and culture). One of the competences of ZVO is to manage the media of the Serb ethnic community (TV, radio and press) in the area of Vukovarko-srijemska and Osječko-baranjska counties. It also has other competences for protecting and improving the rights of Serbs (e.g. following and improving language use and cultural policies).¹³⁵ ZVO aims to improve the social and cultural life of Serbs (e.g. organizing summer camps for Serb students

134 Decision of Croatian government, Urbroj: 5030114-98-1, Art. 2, Zagreb, 15.10.1998.

135 Decision of Croatian government, Urbroj: 5030114-98-1, Art. 7, Zagreb, 15.10.1998.

and organizing sporting, religious and cultural events) and help them with their individual problems, by offering free legal aid (ZVO, 2006). ZVO's resources are beneficial assets for any political party, and SDSS has had control of ZVO since it was formed.

The formation of ZVO allowed for Serb political structures from the conflict to transit in the post-conflict period. After the 1997 local elections, Serb institutions from RSK ceased to exist. The executive council, headed by Stanimirović, at its last session – before dissolving, decided to transfer its property to ZVO, meaning “finances, inventory, offices and cars. Also, the founding rights of informative and cultural institutions, such as the radio and television centers in Beli Manastir, Borovo and Vukovar, and the same was to be done about the Serb cultural center in Vukovar” (Barić, 2011: 446). According to Stanimirović “ZVO was to be formed by SDSS candidates who participated in the elections” (Barić, 2011: 443). The main board of SDSS called its local branches to “recommend their own representatives for the joint council of municipalities” (Barić, 2011: 444). The assembly of ZVO was to be formed by Serb council persons, from any party, from municipalities in Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-srijemska county. However, most of these council persons were from SDSS. Miloš Vojnović became president of ZVO while he was vice president of SDSS. He was also the right hand man of Stanimirovic. Other presidents of ZVO also had high positions in SDSS. The deputy heads of counties, which ZVO nominates, are ex-officio vice presidents of ZVO and they are usually SDSS members. The first president of ZVO acknowledged that there was close cooperation between ZVO and SDSS.¹³⁶ The current one agrees that “most members, delegates in [ZVO's, D.T] assembly, are members of SDSS”, and considers that SDSS “was on the right track to preserve and strengthen ZVO, and we managed to achieve a lot on local, regional and national level when SDSS was in

¹³⁶ 15 Дана. Милош Војновић: СДФ и ЗВО имају многе додирне тачке. Новости Заједничког већа општина 26.01.1999, п.5 [15 Days. First meeting of the Joint Council of Municipalities. Miloš Vojnović: SDF and ZVO have many meeting points. News of Joint Council of Municipalities. 26.01.1999, pp. 5]

government”.¹³⁷

ZVO is an important political instrument for SDSS. It supported the rise and development of SDSS. For example, the bi-weekly newsletter which ZVO started in 1998 was filled with information about SDSS. It featured party news and messages, thus resembling a party bulletin. Furthermore, ZVO proposed SDSS members to serve in public administration.¹³⁸ Jovan Ajduković, who is also a former president of ZVO at the same time when he was vice president of SDSS, acknowledges that ZVO was instrumental for developing SDSS:

“When we were not present in Parliament [from 1997 to 2003, D.T], we worked through ZVO. ZVO is a product of the peaceful reintegration. If we did not have that, the party would not have made it. ZVO had its own seat, financing from the government, and provided us with possibility to establish ourselves and make a strong base in this region”.

“When ZVO was functioning we got representatives and resources to function as a community, to spread and built the political organization, to win local elections.¹³⁹

Furthermore, he admits that ZVO under him provided Serbs with employment opportunities, and arguably such practices are instrumental in creating patron-client relationships.¹⁴⁰

Another prominent organization which is controlled by SDSS is *Srpsko Nacionalno Vijeće* (Serb National Council, SNV). The assembly of SNV is made up of all members in councils of Serb national

137 Извор. Interview with Dragan Crnogorac, president of ZVO and MP from SDSS, “Лојалност држави не заслужује се омаловажавањем и нипоштодавањем“, Лист заједничког већа општина, No. 57, Двонедељник, 12/2002, p. 7.

138 15 Дана. Прва седница Заједничког већа општина. Уместо Драгана Нукића предложен Мирко Пуповац . Новости Заједничког већа општина 26.01.1999 [15 Days. First meeting of the Joint Council of Municipalities. Instead of Dragan Cukic, Mirko Pupovac assigned . News of Joint Council of Municipalities. 26.01.1999]

139 Interview Jovan Ajduković, 17.10.2013 in Vukovar

140 Interview with Jovan Ajduković, 17.10.2013 in Vukovar

minority (VSNM) elected in county level elections around Croatia (SNV, 2008a). Several Serb NGOs (e.g. SKD “Prosvjeta”, SDF, Associations of Serbs in Rijeka and Istra) and ZVO gave initiative to form SNV. The constitutive assembly of SNV was held in Zagreb on 19 July 1997. SDSS was a founding member of SNV. Milorad Pupovac became president of SNV, and has retained that position since then. He is also the vice president of SDSS. On the front page of a publication marking SNV's 10 year anniversary is a picture of the founding assembly which shows Pupovac and Stanimirović seated in the front row.

When SNV was formed its main goals were to aid the return of refugees, to rebuild trust, and to push for full implementation of the Erdut agreement (SNV, 1997). Today the goals of SNV are to institutionally strengthen the Serb community in Croatia and to improve cooperation with authorities, from local, county and national level, to reintegrate the Serb community in the overall Croatian society, as equal citizens with own collective identity, to repatriate Serb refugees, especially the ones that were expelled after operations “Flash” and “Storm”, to monitor the implementation of the legal framework for protection of Serb rights and to give proposals to improve it, to renew monuments of culture and monuments from WWII that are important for Serbs in Croatia and to initiate a development fund (SNV, 2007: 10-12). The funding for SNV comes from the state budget of Croatia, from the budgets of county level VSNMs and from international organizations and donations. Among the top achievements in the first 10 years, SNV lists the peaceful reintegration, rebuilding trust between Serbs and Croats and return of refugees, which were done together with SDSS and ZVO (SNV, 2007: 13). SNV publishes a weekly magazine “Novosti” which is seen as a Serb weekly, but enjoys a great reputation and wider influence in Croatia. SNV organizes regular annual commemorations of Serb civilian victims, killed after operation “Storm”, in Varivoda and Gošići, in wider Knin region. SNV erected a monument to the Serb victims in Varivoda in 2010. SNV is by large seen as an influential Serb institution in Croatia, and

an extended arm of SDSS.

SDSS also assumed control of most of VSNM. Even though parties should not participate in the elections for VSNM, SDSS organized party lists. In SDSS' party reports one can read that they “paid special attention to [VSNM, D.T] elections in Beli Manastir and Osijek. If there were more lists, our candidates won the majority” in 2011.¹⁴¹ In this manner SDSS had political control of another instrument for minority integration which they could use for their advantage. For example, the seat of SDSS' county branch in Osječko-baranjska county is in the offices of VSNM. This corroborates the point of closeness between SDSS and VSNM. Further, VSNM and SNV organize commemorative sessions and issue statements of memory. VSNM and SNV also have funds to support and/or organize cultural and social events, which often become public political platforms for SDSS.

SDSS had control of larger non-governmental organizations that were working to improve the status of Serbs in Eastern Slavonia and Croatia. For example, the Center for Peace, Legal Advice and Psycho-social aid from Vukovar “offered legal advice in the field, education on human rights” and was led by Danko Nikolić, who later became secretary general of SDSS.¹⁴² Another example is the Serb Democratic Forum (SDF) that was established in 1995. The organization supported refugee return. SDF had a well established network of local branches in Western Slavonia. It was led by Veljko Đakula, former SDS leader and also member of SDSS. SDF established close cooperation with ZVO in order to be present in Eastern Slavonia and Baranja.¹⁴³ SDSS and SDF announced that they will try to help the people to get their property back.

141 Jovan Jelić. Report of the work of the county branch of SDSS in Osječko-baranjska county for period 2008-2012, Osijek, 26.11.2012

142 15 Dana. “Mirovine I deložacije u centru pažnje”, No 11, 31.07.1999, p.9.

143 15 Дана. Српски демократски форум (Уместо личне карте). Новости Заједничког већа општина 26.01.1999, п. 5 [15 Days. Serb Democratic Forum (Instead of ID). News of Joint Council of Municipalities. 26.01.1999 pp. 5]

Vocal critics of SDSS point out that the political control over institutions and organizations gave SDSS possibilities to create patron-client relationship with the electorate. Critics say that SDSS “received money from the state and they use it to buy political position”.¹⁴⁴ On the other hand, representatives of SDSS claim that they work for benefit of the people. They point out that they have substantially improved the situation of Serbs in Croatia:

“We are most successful Serb party because we helped people to stay in their homes. And that we stayed together with them. Then because we reconstructed our municipalities, churches. All of that gives legitimacy to this party that is the only one that deals with Serb interests. This is the only party that has instruments”.¹⁴⁵

Notwithstanding the positive results that SDSS achieved, one should point out that it is not the party that has the instruments. Most of the instruments are institutionally prescribed and essential for minority protection and integration. They come as a consequence of the Erdut Agreement and the implementation of the Letter of Intention and were to serve the Serb community without prejudice or preferences for political parties. However, SDSS won political control. First, in the post-conflict period SDSS had the capacity to channel the post-conflict reconstruction and aid. Then, since they were in charge of the implementation of the Erdut agreement, they got possibilities to secure jobs and social support for Serbs. Participation in sub-national and national government gave them access to spoils and new possibilities to extend 'club' and 'private' goods. Last, but not least, SDSS extended patronage directly, through party donations, or through institutions and organizations which they controlled and had means to target benefits to members of their ethnic group.

144 Interview with Jovan Ajduković, 17.10.2013 in Vukovar

145 Interview with Vojislav Stanimirović, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar.

III.4. Competition between Serb parties in post-conflict Croatia

Serb parties in Croatia compete in different elections: local, county and national legislative elections.

They compete between themselves, but also they compete with Croatian parties. The reserved seats on local and county level are not given exclusively to Serb parties, but rather to Serb candidates on party lists which have most votes. Additionally, with the changes to the law for local elections made in 2007, Serbs also vote for deputy mayors and deputy heads of counties where they are entitled to proportional representation. Different Serb and Croatian parties put candidates for guaranteed deputy seats at the 2009 and 2013 local elections. Serbs have three guaranteed seats in the national legislative. Serb MPs are elected from a special Serb minority electoral unit (i.e. the whole of Croatia is regarded as one electoral unit where only Serbs have the right to vote). Voters can cast up to three votes. The candidates who get most votes are elected. In addition, some Serb parties and candidates run in parliamentary elections in the general electoral units, usually in ones where Serbs make up a substantial part of the electorate. However, Croatian parties, and especially left oriented parties, often have Serb candidates on their lists in the general electoral units. In these electoral units, there is a five percent threshold.

I collected electoral results for all Serb political parties in over 200 municipalities in all post-conflict elections (1997-2013). I created different data sets for local elections, for county elections and for parliamentary elections. For sub-national elections, I included municipalities where Serb parties got at least one vote. For national legislative elections, I included municipalities where at least three votes were cast. According to the electoral rules, casting three votes for different candidates would satisfy a minimal criterion for competition. I took the average result of the three candidates in each municipality, and consider this the party results per municipality. With the candidates' and party results, I measure the dependent variable.

Using a liberal selection criterion, all municipalities where Serb parties get votes, I aimed to increase the number of municipalities and with it the possible variance.¹⁴⁶ In the data set, most Serbs live in municipalities which were in Croatia proper; however, the turnout was higher in former conflict regions and especially in former SAO East. Close to 70% of municipalities in the data set are in Croatia proper, and about 30% are in the former conflict regions. Setting the level of analysis on municipalities allowed me to include other relevant variables, such as: number of voters and turnout per municipality, total population and number of Serbs in each municipality, and location of municipality during the conflict and whether it was conflict-affected or not. Number of voters, turnout and electoral results were obtained from *Državno izborno poverenstvo* (State Electoral Commission, DIP) of Croatia.¹⁴⁷ The data for total population and number of Serbs is taken from *Državni zavod za statistiku* (State Bureau for Statistics, DZS) and from the censuses in 2001 and 2011.¹⁴⁸ The 2001 census data are used in the analysis of the parliamentary elections in 2003 and 2007, and for the analysis of the 2011 parliamentary elections I use the 2011 census data.

The measurement of municipalities' location, and whether it was conflict-affected or not, is based on my research. I coded whether the municipality was in SAO East, in SAO West, SAO Krajina or was in Croatia proper during the conflict. To measure the location of each municipality, I compared Google Maps coordinates with maps of RSK and maps of conflict-affected areas in Croatia. I take municipalities in RSK and conflict-affected ones as proxies for the strength of war time networks. I argue that war time networks were stronger and denser in the municipalities that were part of RSK. This would particularly hold in SAO East since SAO West and SAO Krajina were militarily overrun and Serbs fled these regions. Consequentially, one would not expect Serb war time networks in

146 More information about the data sets and variance in the sample is found in the appendix.

147 Most of the results are available on DIP's web site: www.izbori.hr.

148 The census data from 2001 is available at <http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/censuses/Census2001/census.htm> and the census data from 2011 is available at <http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/censuses/census2011/censuslogo.htm>.

municipalities which were part of Croatia proper and were not affected by the conflict.

Notwithstanding the processes of refugee return and re-building the networks, the process by which SDSS was built shows that in SAO East a good part of the war time networks remained intact.

To measure political control of spoils and resources, I looked at municipalities where ZVO has competences. ZVO controls instruments for minority integration in two conflict-affected counties Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-srijemska (former UNTAES region or SAO East) and is under SDSS' control. I coded a dummy variable, labeled ZVO control, where municipalities in the two counties are coded 1, and others are 0. This is a crude measure of a small portion of the possible 'private' and 'club' goods which SDSS can extend. But in this way I can clearly see the party support in ZVO controlled municipalities versus the others.

National legislative elections are the pinnacle of competition between Serb parties in Croatia. The winners get access to resources of which some are symbolic (e.g. political representation in *Sabor* and media presence) and others are tangible (e.g. party financing, proposing bills and getting earmarks from government, participation in government and access to spoils, such as ex-office participation in the National Council of Serb National Minorities which disperses state funds for all VSNMs). These elections are heavily contested. SDSS, SNS and PSS were the main competitors in 2003 and 2007, while in 2011 it was SDSS and the coalition *Srpska sloga*. Some Serb NGOs have also put candidate lists, like the *Zajednica Srba Rijeke* (Association of Serbs in Rijeka, ZRS) in 2003 or the *Zajednica Srba Hrvatske* (Association of Serbs in Croatia, ZHS) in 2007. Serbs had one guaranteed seat in the 2000 elections. However, the Constitutional law was changed in 2002 and Serbs got three guaranteed seats in *Sabor*. Voters have the right to vote for up to three candidates. The ones who get most of the votes become elected. The results of the voting for Serb MPs between 2000 and 2011 are given in the

table below. The table shows results for parties that won a minimum of 2 percent from the voter turnout.¹⁴⁹

Table III.1. Voting for Serb members of *Sabor* in Serb minority electoral unit (2000-2011)

	2000		2003		2007		2011	
Total No of votes	168, 606		222, 769		190, 510		183, 992	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Turnout	31, 962	18.96	47, 610	21.37	25, 092	13.17	23, 072	12.54
SDSS 1	9, 171	35.3	25, 210	52.95	14, 917	59.45	14, 445	62.61
SDSS 2			25, 773	54.13	12, 714	50.67	14, 120	61.2
SDSS 3			16, 092	33.8	9, 443	37.64	12, 212	52.93
SNS 1	12, 396	47.72	15, 661	32.89	1, 446	5.76		
SNS 2			4, 551	9.56	1, 147	4.57		
SNS 3			4, 517	9.49	898	3.58		
PPS 1			3, 889	8.19	6, 557	26.21		
PPS 2			3, 655	7.68	1, 242	4.95		
PPS 3			2, 797	5.87	1, 028	4.1		
ZSR 1			1, 376	2.89				
ZSR 2			1, 201	2.52				
ZSR 3			1, 100	2.31				
ZSH 1	1, 467	5.65	-	-	2, 270	9.05		
ZSH 2					2, 332	9.29		
ZSH 3					608	2.42		
Srpska Sloga 1							4, 745	20.57
Srpska Sloga 2							3, 497	15.16
Srpska Sloga 3							2, 076	9
SP 1							883	3.83
SP 2							610	2.64
SP 3							338	1.46

149 The other party lists which competed in the parliamentary elections in the Serb minority electoral unit include: Treci Hrvatski Blok (BV – Treci Blok) [Third Croatian Block], Liberalna Stranka (LS) [Liberal Party], Udruga povratnika – Donji Kukuruzari (U.P.D.K) [Association of returnees – Donji Kukuruzari] in 2003; Hrvatska stranka mladih (HSM) [Croatian youth party], Abeceda Demokracije (ABECEDA) [A B C of Democracy] and Socijalistička radnička partija Hrvatske (SRP) [Socialist Workers Party of Croatia] in 2007; and Udruga Srba Osječko-baranjske županije (U.S.O.B.Z) [Association of Serbs in Osječko-baranjska county).

Ind. 1	2,944	11.33					855	3.71
Ind. 2							556	2.41
Ind. 3							587	2.54
Ind. 4							470	2.04

Candidates in elections:

2000 elections for SDSS 1 Milorad Pupovac, SNS 1 Milan Đukić, ZSH 1 Svetozar Livada, Ind. 1 Veselin Pejnović;

2003 elections for SDSS 1 Milorad Pupovac, SDSS 2 Vojislav Stanimirović, SDSS 3 Ratko Gajica, SNS 1 Milan Đukić, SNS 2 Ksenija Aleksić-Ambrozić, SNS 3 Milan Uzelac, PPS 1 Rade Leskovac, PPS 2 Ljubica Javorina Šolaja, PPS 3 Milan Čupić; ZSR 1 Tatjana Olujić Musić, ZSR 2 Vaso Vujnović, ZSR 3 Vidoje Jovanović;

2007 elections for SDSS 1 Milorad Pupovac, SDSS 2 Vojislav Stanimirović, SDSS 3 Ratko Gajica, SNS 1 Luka Šušak, SNS 2 Dušan Crnković, SNS 3 Dragan Hinić; PPS 1 Rade Leskovac, PPS 2 Ljubica Javorina Šolaja, PPS 3 Vladimir Kosić; ZSH 1 Svetozar Livada, ZSH 2 Veljko Đakula, ZSH 3 Branko Lubovac.

2011 elections for SDSS 1 Milorad Pupovac, SDSS 2 Vojislav Stanimirović, SDSS 3 Jovo Vuković; Srpska sloga 1 Jovan Ajduković, Srpska sloga 2 Veljko Đakula, Srpska sloga 3 Milan Rodić; SP 1 Dušan Cvetanović, SP 2 Nemanja Marić, SP 3 Dragana Resan, Ind. 1 Slobodan Milošević, Ind. 2 Ljubomir Mikić, Ind. 3 Duško Simić, Ind. 4 Branislav Tekić.

In the 2000 elections Milan Đukić, SNS' candidate, managed to defeat Milorad Pupovac, SDSS' candidate. Đukić won 12,396 (47.72%) while Pupovac had 9,171 votes (35.3%). In this period (2000-2003) SDSS was not represented in *Sabor*. However, in all following elections SDSS' candidates got most of the votes and the party had all three Serb MPs in *Sabor*. Vojislav Stanimirović and Milorad Pupovac got over 50 percent of the votes. Their support even climbed to over 60 percent in 2011.

My argument is that SDSS is the most successful party because it was built on war time networks and had possibilities to extend patronage. To test the support from war time networks I analyzed the variance of electoral support for Serb parties in relation to municipalities' location during the conflict. I expect that if a Serb party was built on war time networks, then it would have higher support in former regions of RSK. I used one way ANOVA to compare the parties' means in each electoral cycle. This was the most appropriate method since the number of explanatory variables is low and also because the municipal status is a categorical variable – with four categories and the party support is a continuous variable. Even though municipalities from Croatia proper are overrepresented in the sample, the distribution of voter turnout is roughly the same compared to former SAO East and SAO Krajina. Also,

Levene's test in all three analyses shows that there is no homogeneity of variance. Tables 2, 3 and 4 show the results of the tests.

Table III.2. 2003 elections. One way ANOVA: municipalities' location and voter support

	N	SDSS	SNS	PPS	ZSR
SAO East	27	375.4 (573.896)	58.47 (87.828)	44.01 (71.495)	7.46 (10.5)
SAO West	6	28.44 (31.199)	22.72 (23.088)	10.67 (11.628)	4.67 (4.526)
SAO Krajina	36	168.47 (234.027)	79.13 (105.751)	21.18 (20.678)	8.55 (8.101)
Croatia proper	167	26.54 (68.474)	18.8 (38.207)	7.57 (16.044)	3.64 (7.9)
Levene's test		.000'	.000'	.000'	0.27
F		21.39***	11.864***	13.398***	4.544**

***. Significant at 0.01. **. Significant at 0.05. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

Table III.3. 2007 elections. One way ANOVA: municipalities' location and voter support

	N	SDSS	SNS	PPS	ZSH
SAO East	28	231.02 (357.33)	5.08 (7.053)	58.52 (126.498)	9.1 (15.348)
SAO West	6	32.17 (32.637)	3.22 (2.647)	5 (5.177)	12 (17.685)
SAO Krajina	34	70.74 (107.431)	12.75 (11.602)	13.35 (11.710)	15.29 (15.924)
Croatia proper	154	21.06 (53.198)	3.63 (7.478)	5.24 (11.98)	5.68 (13.299)
Levene's test		.000'	.000'	.000'	.110'
F		17.943***	11.829***	10.722***	4.612**

***. Significant at 0.01. **. Significant at 0.05. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

Table III.4. 2011 elections. One way ANOVA: municipalities' location and voter support parties

	N	SDSS	Srpska sloga	SP
SAO East	28	268.4 (410.660)	43.61 (83.527)	4.42 (5.699)
SAO West	6	32.33 (39.129)	20.61 (31.9)	4 (3.645)
SAO Krajina	35	53.57 (99.132)	22.91 (30.23)	4.29 (6.559)
Croatia proper	160	24.85	7.99	1.91

		(61.885)	(16.754)	(3.498)
Levene's test		.000'	.000'	.008'
F		19.345***	9.242***	4.825**

***. Significant at 0.01. **. Significant at 0.05. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

The results for all Serb parties are statistically significant. The F scores are highest for SDSS, which means that the effect is strongest for them. Lower F scores for the other Serb political parties signify a weaker effect. The results also hold when the mean scores are compared for individual candidates.¹⁵⁰

The results show that SDSS gets most votes in municipalities from former conflict regions even though most of Serbs live in Croatia proper. The results also show that SDSS' mean score and standard deviation was and remains highest in former SAO East compared to municipalities from other regions. This shows that even though SDSS wins most of Serb votes, municipalities in SAO East are its voter strongholds. These results confirm that there is a strong association between former RSK regions, particularly SAO East, where war time networks existed, and voter support for SDSS. If one looks at the results of individual candidates, then it is clear that Vojislav Stanimirović has more support in former SAO East than Milorad Pupovac. On the other hand Milorad Pupovac has more support in municipalities from Croatia proper than Stanimirović has. This finding confirms my hypothesis. SDSS was built on war time networks and has highest support in regions where war time networks were stronger. This is not a surprising finding for the early post-conflict period, but it is rather common sense. However, it is very surprising that the effect is still strongly present in 2011. This is 16 years after the conflict ended in Croatia. This shows that SDSS was not only built in places where war time networks were wide and dense, but that it also managed to institutionalize the support and to turn it into a strong voter base.

¹⁵⁰ The results are presented in the appendix.

Second, to test inferences between possibilities to extend patronage and voter support, I correlated electoral results with different explanatory variables. I expect that if a party has possibilities to extend patronage, then it will have higher voter support. About one third of Serbs in the sample live in the municipalities where ZVO has competence. They are more likely to vote than other Serb voters. Because SDSS controls ZVO, and thus has possibilities to extend patronage, I expect SDSS' voter support to have highest positive relationship with ZVO-controlled municipalities. Running correlations gave me possibility to check inferences with the number of Serbs in the municipality, the number of voters and turnout in the municipality. The census data and the number of voters are very similar in the sense that they should indicate a high positive relationship with Serb party support. This means that if the percent of Serbs in a municipality is higher, then the support for Serb parties would also be higher. A higher turnout means higher electoral opportunities for the Serb parties. The results of the correlations for national legislative elections are given in tables 5, 6 and 7.

Table III.5. 2003 elections. Correlation: voter support for Serb parties

N = 236	SDSS	SNS	PPS	ZSR
Number of Serbs (2001 census)	.745**	.733**	.859**	.924**
No of voters	.742**	.812**	.837**	.866**
Turnout	.971**	.814**	.963**	.750**
conflict-affected	.231**	.223**	.227**	.184**
ZVO control	.302**	.083'	.268**	.074'

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table III.6. 2007 elections. Correlation: voter support for Serb parties

N = 222	SDSS	SNS	PPS	ZSH
Number of Serbs (2001 census)	.769**	.759**	.689**	.828**
No of voters	.752**	.840**	.660**	.855**
Turnout	.980**	.605**	.669**	.899**
conflict-affected	.201**	.175**	.142*	0.13
ZVO control	.335**	-0.046	-0.019	.264**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table III.7. 2011 elections. Correlation: voter support for Serb parties

N = 229	SDSS	Srpska sloga	SP
Number of Serbs (2011 census)	.740**	.776**	.825**
No of voters	.709**	.781**	.796**
Turnout	.990**	.906**	.747**
conflict-affected	.175**	.164*	.159*
ZVO control	.351**	.199**	.090'

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Almost all of the results are statistically significant. They show high positive coefficients for voter support for Serb parties with number of Serbs and number of Serb voters. It is interesting to see that smaller Serb parties and lists for candidates (e.g. ZSR, ZSH and SP) have the highest positive relationship with number of Serbs. This shows that they get most support where the number of Serbs and Serb voters is highest. The other parties also have similar high positive coefficients; however, SDSS has the lowest compared to the other Serb parties, and particularly in regards to number of Serb voters. This shows that where the number of Serbs and Serb voters is high, the support for Serb parties in more diversified, and also goes for the smaller Serb parties. However, SDSS has an incredibly high positive coefficient with voter turnout and increasing from 0.971 in 2003 to 0.990 in 2011. This shows that SDSS support is positively correlated with voter turnout. It means that SDSS has a stable voter support and probably a disciplined electorate.

The coefficients for conflict-affected municipalities and Serb voter support are positive, but weaker. SDSS had a marginally stronger coefficient in 2003, compared to other parties, and even though the strength of the SDSS coefficient decreased in 2007 and 2011, it was still the strongest and statistically most significant. This shows that SDSS voter support is more positively related to conflict-affected

municipalities than it is the case with other Serb parties. Conflict-affected municipalities can be regarded as places where war time networks existed, or still exist. In that sense, these results are another corroboration of the previous point shown in analysis of variance above. However, one can regard conflict-affected municipalities as places where there would be high demand for assisting refugee return and post-conflict reconstruction. In that sense, conflict-affected municipalities provide a possibilities for parties to extend 'club' and 'private' goods if they have the means, for example by controlling minority integration instruments.

I check for this in the ZVO controlled correlation. Namely, ZVO-controlled municipalities are a sub-set of conflict-affected municipalities. SDSS can extend patronage through ZVO. And in ZVO-controlled municipalities the voter support for SDSS shows a positive coefficient with increasing strength from 0.302 in 2003 to 0.351 in 2011. PPS shows a positive, but weaker, coefficient in 2003, while in 2007 the coefficient is not statistically significant, even though it is very weak and negative. On the other hand, ZSH voter support in 2007 and Srpska Sloga's in 2011 is positively correlated with ZVO-controlled municipalities; however, the coefficients are weaker than SDSS. This shows that SDSS is not the only and exclusive party that wins votes in ZVO-controlled municipalities but it is the party that is most likely to have highest voter support in those municipalities. These results confirm my hypothesis.

More corroboration is found if one sees the votes that Serb parties win in different counties in the national legislative elections.¹⁵¹ ZVO has competences in two counties, Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-srijemska. In these two counties, SDSS gets many more votes than other Serb parties. Also, the votes that SDSS gets in these two counties contribute the most in total amount of votes if won

¹⁵¹ The tables are presented in the appendix.

in all of Croatia. The votes in these two counties made for 55 percent in 2003, 60 percent in 2007 and 62 percent in 2011. Large parts of these counties were in the UNTAES zone (i.e. part of former SAO East Slavonia). They were peacefully reintegrated into Croatia after the Erdut Agreement was signed. It was there that SDSS was built from former war time networks, transferred symbolic capital, and had most possibilities to extend patronage. This region became a strong voter base for SDSS. For SDSS this has been sufficient to win in parliamentary elections in the Serb minority electoral unit and to become the main party that represents the Serbs in Croatia.

The results from local legislative elections in the post-conflict period offer additional corroboration. The results are presented in the table below. They show that SDSS won most votes compared to other Serb parties in all cycles of local elections between 1997 and 2013. In 1997 they won 61, 451 votes (45 percent of the turnout), and since then their support has decreased to 20, 062 (6.6 percent of the turnout) in 2013. The other parties have more modest results and none have managed even to come close to SDSS.

Table III.8. Results of Serb parties in local legislative elections (1997-2013)

	1997 (N=28)		2001 (N=36)		2005 (N=54)		2009 (N=67)		2013 (N=51)	
Total No of votes	186, 978		343, 037		521, 148		900, 877		704, 234	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Turnout	134, 898	72.14	162, 232	47.29	208, 046	39.92	378, 949	42.06	303, 282	43.06
SDSS	61, 451	45.55	25, 494	15.71	27, 337	13.14	26, 230	6.92	20, 062	6.61
SNS	-	-	5, 330	3.28	1, 616	0.77	841	0.22	602	0.2
NSS	-	-	-	-	-	-	1, 967	0.52	42	0
PPS	-	-	-	-	-	-	770	0.2	-	-
DPS	-	-	-	-	-	-	1, 971	0.52	-	-
NS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	83	0
NS and NSS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1052	0.35

The question which arises is why is this? To answer I looked at SDSS' voter support in relation to control of territory during the conflict period (1991-1995). The results are presented in the table below.

Table III.9. SDSS voter support in relation to municipalities' location during conflict, in percent

	1997 (N=28)	2001 (N=36)	2005 (N=54)	2009 (N=67)	2013 (N=53)
SAO East	98.77	63.69	39.7	34.17	42.77
SAO West	0.86	0	1.06	1.19	0.27
SAO Krajina	0	25.51	45.66	47.11	45.34
Croatia proper	0.37	10.8	13.58	17.53	11.63

In the first post-conflict local elections SDSS had lists only in municipalities of the former SAO East region. This was the UNTAES zone which was peacefully reintegrated after the Erdut Agreement. SDSS was built in this area on the war time networks of SDS. They institutionalized their symbolic capital and had possibilities to extend patronage, like for example with channeling post-conflict reconstruction or securing jobs in the public sector with the implementation of the Erdut agreement. SDSS won everywhere in 1997 and was not even challenged. For the second local elections in 2001 SDSS was still mainly concentrated in the former SAO East, but also started to form branches in the former SAO Krajina, where most of the Serbs were expelled after operation “Storm”. SDSS was supporting the refugee return. The refugee return gave SDSS a possibility to build their party structure on former war time networks. Symbolic capital was also institutionalized. Dirges and commemorations became a common practice. The post-conflict formation of various Serb NGO's, such as the Knin branch of SKD “Prosvjeta” were an introduction for the formation and strengthening of SDSS. Also, they provided possibilities to extend 'club' (e.g. housing and reconstruction) and 'private' (e.g. employment) goods to Serbs. Voter support for SDSS, local legislative elections, was almost equally

distributed between the former SAO East and SAO Krajina regions for the elections in 2005 and onwards. To understand why this happened one should recall that from 2003 SDSS was participating in government. In the coalition agreement they got earmarks for Serbs and especially for returnees in former SAO Krajina (e.g. rebuilding public infrastructure and housing in Serb areas). Inclusion in government gave them access to spoils and resources which they could extend as patronage. As a result their voter support increased in SAO Krajina.

SDSS institutionalized the legacies of the conflict and gained possibilities to extend patronage. The institutionalization of the legacies gave them a competitive advantage before other Serb parties. With the wide and dense war time networks they had micro social units which were beneficial for communication with the voters and mobilizing voter support. Their symbolic capital strengthened their electoral appeal. Once they controlled political institutions and organization, they had possibilities to extend patronage. Other Serb parties challenged them in various national and local elections with varying success. I first move to explore cases when SDSS lost and then show the unsuccessful strategies of the other Serb parties.

III.4.1. Why did SDSS lose elections?

SDSS lost elections on a couple of occasions. First, they lost sub-national elections for Serb deputy head of county in Western Slavonia in 2009 and 2013 to *Demokratska Partija Srba* (Democratic Party of Serbs, DPS). The case of DPS corroborates my argument. DPS won in these elections because in Western Slavonia they are very similar to SDSS. DPS is a Serb party which institutionalized legacies of the conflict in Western Slavonia and had possibilities to extend patronage there.

DPS was formed in 2009. DPS considers that Serbs in Croatia have “only two options: to organize politically or to live in shame and vanish (DPS, und.). The main goal of DPS is the return, spiritual and material recovery of hundreds of thousands Serbs who left Croatia. The program goals of DPS are mainly geared toward supporting Serb refugees and returnees. DPS was built on war time networks from Western Slavonia. They first established SDSS in Western Slavonia, and then splintered to form DPS. The party was started by Veljko Đakula, former leader of SDS in SAO West Slavonia and president of SDF. In Western Slavonia “Đakula was always strong. From the time of war. He is authority from that time”.¹⁵² Đakula himself is aware of the symbolic capital that he possesses and connects it directly to his political activities during the conflict in Croatia saying that “people who were active in Krajina have more authority in elections”.¹⁵³ Miroslav Grozdanić is another similar and prominent member of DPS. During the conflict he was member of RSK parliament and was president of Pakrac municipality in RSK. He was part of the armed structures of RSK, but claims to “be forcefully mobilized in 1991, only for a month”.¹⁵⁴ Like Đakula, he is similarly aware of the symbolic capital he carries from the time of the conflict: “part of my charisma was connected to my part in Krajina. There I really got a lot, because of my previous role”.¹⁵⁵

Đakula and Grozdanić were among the main Serb leaders in Western Slavonia, and remained in that position after the conflict. This is very similar to Vojislav Stanimirović in Eastern Slavonia. However, in May 1995 Western Slavonia was militarily overtaken by the Croats in operation “Flash”. Serbs massively fled the region, but Đakula and Grozdanić stayed. The Erdut Agreement did not have any provisions for Western Slavonia. The return of refugees was the greatest challenge after the conflict and Serbs were left on their own. Đakula and Grozdanić organized a branch of SDF in Western Slavonia.

152 Author's interview with Tihomir Aleksić, Požega 22.10.2013.

153 Author's interview with Veljko Đakula, Zagreb, 01.03.2011.

154 Author's interview with Miroslav Grozdanić, Požega, 22.10.2013.

155 Author's interview with Miroslav Grozdanić, Požega, 22.10.2013.

SDF supported the return of the refugees, the post-conflict reconstruction and protection of Serb rights in Western Slavonia. It had strong support of international organizations. Đakula and Grozdanić were in charge of the process that brought direct benefits for Serbs and improvement in their everyday life. This quote illustrates their influence in the post-conflict reconstruction process:

“After “Flash” we worked with SDF to provide people reconstruction of housing. Then to provide them humanitarian assistance because they had no work and nothing to leave on, food and other stuff. We worked with UNHCR, Red Cross. People know me because of that. I have helped practically all the families in this region. We had a lot of international assistance for projects. Croatian government helped us very little, through Red Cross and through negotiations with UNHCR we brought refugees to see their property and to check out the possibilities for their return. We helped people in every step – with housing, personal property, pensions, personal documents, convalidation, reconstruction etc. SDF had 18 branches around the country and we had 5 lawyers to help the people in getting their rights”.¹⁵⁶

These activities, undoubtedly, were beneficial for their political career; however, they also used SDF resources to support the political party organization, first SDSS and later DPS. This is in a way similar to SDSS' links and cooperation with ZVO and SNV.

“In 2003 we helped SDSS for the elections for Parliament. SDF gave them local logistics, people on the ground. 2007/08, we were employing around 200 people. At least 100 were involved in the campaign. We had coverage in all villages, we were there helping the people. In 2003 we were together with SDSS and helped them to win the mandates ... now DPS is connected and has cooperation with SDF”.¹⁵⁷

DPS and SDF also organize commemorative events for the Serbs in Western Slavonia. However, they take a different approach than SDSS when it comes to the narrative and understanding of the conflict.

¹⁵⁶ Author's interview with Miroslav Grozdanić, Požega, 22.10.2013.

¹⁵⁷ Author's interview with Miroslav Grozdanić, Požega, 22.10.2013.

For example, Veljko Đakula says that he is “sick and tired of myths, digging up bones and dirges”.¹⁵⁸ He accepted the invitation of Croatian President Ivo Josipović and attended the annual Croatian organized ceremony to mark operation “Storm” in Knin in August 2012. This caused uproar among Serbs. He was criticized by Milorad Pupovac, Borislav Mikelić, the longest serving Prime Minister of RSK,¹⁵⁹ while Serb refugees called his act an insult for all expelled, died and missing Serbs. Đakula agrees that operation “Storm” is seen so negative by Serbs, that they suffered heavily, and that Serbs see it as a crime and exodus and Croats as great victory. However, he also holds that Serbs were brought in such position because of the then irresponsible Serb leadership. And this is in line with the position of DPS concerning the conflict in Croatia. DPS wants to distance itself from the past conflict, saying that “we will not be slaves to myths and persons who flushed us out through water”, and that “it is necessary to create a conscious about ourselves and hidden truths from our past that were fogged, distorted and hidden by communist and nationalist history” (DPS, und).

Western Slavonia mainly extent over the territories of Sisačko-maslovačka and Požeško-slavonska counties. Požeško-slavonska county was part of the former SAO West during the conflict. In 2009 DPS placed candidates mostly in counties that were partially or fully part of SAO West (e.g. Sisačko-maslovačka, Karlovačka and Požeško-slavonska) and in Šibensko-Kninska county, part of which was in SAO Krajina. The results of their votes compared to SDSS' are given in table 12 below.

Table III.10. Competition between SDSS and DPS for Serb deputy head of county in 2009

Counties	Serb voters	Turnout %	SDSS	SDSS %	DPS	DPS %
Sisacko-maslovačka	30, 034	14.54	1, 357	31.07	1, 115	25.53

158 For more see Interview with Veljko Đakula, “Prekopavanja kostiju i parastosa mi je preko glave”, Politika Online, 07.08.2012, available at <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/region/Prekopavanja-kostiju-i-parastosa-mi-je-preko-glave.lt.html> last accessed on 4 February 2014

159 For more see Borislav Mikelić open letter “Afirmisanje zločina u Oluji ponižavanjem Srba”, Glas Srpske, 04 September 2012 (available at <http://www.glassrpske.com/plus teme/Afirmisanje-zlocina-u-Oluji-ponizavanjem-Srba/lat/91626.html> last accessed on 4 February 2014).

Karlovacka	23, 324	15.87	1, 304	35.22	259	7
Sibensko-kninska	18, 701	19.06	2, 776	77.87	695	19.5
Pozesko-slavonska	10, 827	12.7	527	38.33	637	46.33

Đakula and Grozdanić used the same conjunction of three factors (i.e. war time networks, symbolic capital and patronage) to built, first SDSS and then DPS in Western Slavonia. DPS lost in Šibensko-kninska and Karlovačka counties where their conjunction of factors is lower than SDSS. However, they had good results in Sisačko-maslovačka, and a victory in Požeško-slavonska county. Požeško-slavonska county was the heart of SAO West and Miroslav Grozdanić was DPS' candidate. This was their stronghold before and during the conflict. “Grozdanić and Đakula win here because of the events during the war. SDSS did not exist then, neither Pupovac. Here was Veljko Đakula and some other people, and it stayed like that”.¹⁶⁰

The results of the 2013 elections for deputy mayors and deputy heads of counties further corroborate this point. DPS ran only one candidate in Požeško-slavonska county, Miroslav Grozdanić the acting deputy head, in 2013. It was DPS' assessment that they were strongest there. In the elections he won close to 60 percent of the votes, while SDSS' candidate got 21 percent. Also, DPS ran two candidates for deputy mayor in 2013: one in Pakrac, the center of former SAO West, and one in Obrovac, in Dalmatia and part of former SAO Krajina. In Pakrac, DPS won 51.64 percent of the votes, while in Obrovac it got 22.11. This again shows that DPS wins in places where the conjunction of three factors is in their favor.

DPS is a party built mainly on war time networks from Western Slavonia and refugees. It has symbolic

¹⁶⁰ Author's interview with Tihomir Aleksić, Pozega 22.10.2013.

capital from the time of RSK and because it aided the process of refugee return, humanitarian assistance and reconstruction in the post-conflict period. Even though it did not have political control over public instruments for minority integration, through SDF, backed by international donors, it had the means to offer 'club' and 'private' goods to the electorate. But their appeal, or reach, is confined mainly to Western Slavonia, even though the party has branches in Dalmatia, former SAO Krajina. This is why DPS had the most success in the sub-national elections in Western Slavonia. In these elections DPS was even more successful than SDSS. The example of DPS corroborates my argument. It shows that institutionalization of conflict's legacies in conjunction with patronage is a winning model for minority ethnic parties. It works for SDSS and it works for DPS as well.

The national legislative elections in 2000 present the second case when SDSS lost. These elections were the first post-conflict national legislative elections. Even though one would expect SDSS to win, they lost to *Srpska Nacionalna Stranka* (Serb National Party, SNS). These elections show that there are limits to my explanation. Electoral strategies and electoral rules can influence the outcome of competition between minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings. In 2000 Serb parties competed in the general electoral units where there was a 5% threshold, and in the Serb minority electoral unit. Serb parties competed in the electoral units 4, 5, 6 and 9. Electoral units 4 and 5 cover the former UNTAES region, SAO East Slavonia, electoral unit 6 captures former SAO West Slavonia and electoral unit 9 encompasses the territory of SAO Krajina. SDSS had Vojislav Stanimirović in electoral units 4 and 5, and Milorad Pupovac in 6 and 9. SNS had Milan Đukić in electoral units 5 and 9, and Rade Leskovac, from PPS, run in electoral units 4 and 5. Table 11 shows the results of the Serb parties from the 2000 elections in these electoral units.

Table III.11. Results of Serb parties in national legislative elections in 2000

	Electoral unit 4	Electoral unit 5	Electoral unit 6	Electoral unit 9
Total votes	330, 754	376, 847	342, 755	366, 023
Turnout	259, 894	271, 163	265, 026	265, 780
Turnout in %	78.58	71.96	77.32	72.61
SDSS Vojislav Stanimirović	7550	10, 667		
SDSS Vojislav Stanimirović in %	2.91	3.93		
SDSS Milorad Pupovac			2, 167	2, 012
SDSS Milorad Pupovac in %			0.82	0.76
SNS Milan Đukić		1, 817		750
SNS Milan Đukić in %		0.67		0.28
PPS Rade Leskovac	235	474		
PPS in %	0.09	0.17		

In the 2000 elections Stanimirović won most votes compared to other Serb party candidates, over 18,000 in electoral units 4 and 5. However, it was not sufficient to pass the 5% threshold. In electoral unit 5 Stanimirović had almost six times more votes than Milan Đukić. However, Milan Đukić got elected. He ran also in the Serb minority unit, which guaranteed one seat, and won over 12,000 votes (see table IV.1. above). Milorad Pupovac was his SDSS' opponent in the Serb minority electoral unit. Pupovac won over 9,000 votes. If Stanimirović had been SDSS' candidate in the Serb minority electoral unit, then it is very likely that he would have been elected as the Serb representative in *Sabor* instead of Milan Đukić. Instead, SDSS decided to run Pupovac and lost the elections to SNS.

Stanimirović arose from the war time networks in SAO East Slavonia, played a key role in the peaceful reintegration, was endowed with symbolic capital, and last but not least SDSS already had possibilities

to extend patronage in Eastern Slavonia with the channeling of post-conflict reconstruction and implementation of the Erdut agreement. On other hand, Pupovac was from Zagreb, was not part of the war time networks in RSK and did not have the same amount of symbolic capital. Interviews in Vukovar with SDSS founders reveal that at this point Milorad Pupovac did not have strong political influence in former RSK and many did not have a favorable opinion of him because he was in Zagreb during the conflict.

Why did SDSS chose such an electoral strategy? After the conflict ended, and the peaceful reintegration was concluded, the HDZ led government decided to decrease the number of Serb representatives in *Sabor* from three to one. Serbs objected to the change, asking instead to have guaranteed seats and proportional representation. SDSS members in the upper house of parliament sent a letter to President Tudjman saying that “it is not logical after the successfully implemented peaceful integration and the results accomplished in refugee return instead of an increase in the number of Serb representatives, that there is a decrease”.¹⁶¹ Stanimirović spoke in the upper house of parliament against the proposed changes and submitted two amendments, but they were refused.¹⁶² SDSS acted reasonably and constructively. It did not radicalize or boycott the elections. Milorad Pupovac held a press conference appealing to his “compatriots to stay determined to the politics of agreements and to refuse all calls for boycott and similar things as irresponsible calls and acts”.¹⁶³ After a joint meeting of SDSS and SNV, Stanimirović held a press conference where he called Serbs to vote, regardless of the discriminatory law, so they would win some representatives in *Sabor* and announced that SDSS, and SNV, developed an electoral strategy that would go in three ways. First, “in some electoral units, as 4, 5 and 9, and those are the two counties in Eastern Slavonia and the wider region of Knin where we

161 For more see “Pismo trojice Saborskih zastupnika – Srba Predsjedniku Republike”, 15 Dana, No 15, 18.10.1999, p. 6.

162 For more see “Prijedlog izbornog zakona nije u skladu sa ustavnim zakonom”, 15 Dana, No 14, 21.09.1999, p.6.

163 For more see “Не прихваћамо смањење броја представника српске заједнице у Заступничком дому Сабора“, 15 Dana, No 14, 21.09.1999, p. 4.

estimate that there is between ten and eleven percent of Serb population, to go in elections independently because we think we can pass the threshold”; secondly, SDSS wanted to give Serb candidates on joint lists with other parties “where the percent of Serb population was smaller”, and thirdly, would have a candidate nominated in elections for minority representative.¹⁶⁴ Stanimirović also added that they should find an agreement with authorities in Serbia and Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina to bring Serb refugees to vote.

SDSS considered that Stanimirović in 2000 could win in the electoral units that were in the former UNTAES zone (i.e. former SAO East Slavonia). They thought it would be too early – out of security reasons and not to raise inter-ethnic tensions – to run in an electoral unit covering whole of Croatia, like the Serb national minority electoral unit. Therefore, Stanimirović headed the party list in the general electoral units 4 and 5, while Pupovac headed the party list in electoral units 6 and 9, and ran in the Serb minority electoral unit. In this way SDSS believed that it would win 7 to 8 seats in *Sabor*. However, their expectations were not met. They did not get any mandates in the *Sabor* from the general electoral units and also Pupovac lost in the Serb minority electoral unit. The wrong electoral strategy precluded SDSS from representation in *Sabor*. Also, the 5% threshold in the general electoral units proved to be an impediment for Serb parties. Furthermore, there were some local idiosyncratic reasons behind the electoral success of SNS which are explained in the next part.

III.4.2. Why other Serb parties didn't win?

Serb competing parties to SDSS have tried a variety of different tactics. Some were incumbent moderates, others were radicals in opposition. Splinter parties from SDSS developed solid programs. Some promoted multiculturalism and others promoted ethnic clientelism. The three main Serb

¹⁶⁴ For more see “Српско народно веће и СДСС позвали Србе да изађу на изборе“, 15 Dana, No 16, 03.11.1999, p.4.

competitors to SDSS formed a joint coalition in 2011. Any of these strategies, under the right conditions, could help a minority ethnic party to win. However, in post-conflict Croatia none of the parties, and competing strategies, was successful.

Srpska Nacionalna Stranka (Serb National Party, SNS) was an incumbent moderate Serb party when SDSS was formed. In the post-conflict period SNS had limited success against SDSS, mostly because of local idiosyncratic support. SNS was founded in Zagreb in May 1991. Milan Đukić became president and led SNS until his death in 2007. He was elected Mayor in Donji Lapac, his birth place, as SDS' candidate in 1990. Shortly after, he got in conflict with Milan Babić, president of SDS, and escaped to Zagreb, under threat to his life. SNS appealed to Serbs who remained in Croatia proper and did not want to be associated with SDS and Serbs from Krajina.¹⁶⁵ The Serbs who remained in Croatia proper were maltreated, harassed, attacked by media, some disappeared and many left. SNS activists faced serious security challenges which hampered the political activities of SNS (NIT, 1993: 22-23) Veselin Pejnović, then vice president of SNS, says that he escaped assassination twice.¹⁶⁶

Notwithstanding such difficulties, SNS was advocating citizen based sovereignty, respect for Croatia and its government and constitution, and peaceful solution of the crisis. The position of SNS, about the Serbs in Croatia, is best captured in the fact that they took the picture of Nikola Tesla, a famous Serb scientist from Croatia, to be their party symbol and appropriated his motto: “proud of Serb people and Croatian homeland”. The SNS “program represented direct opposition to the extremist Serb democratic party” (Đukić, 2008: 754). Some SNS members of parliament claimed to have applied in Croatian army for working on computers “because Croatia is not only defended with a rifle” (NIT 4, 1994, p.14), while some SNS regional leaders were members of the Croatian army and were decorated with “Memorial of the Homeland War 1992”, by the Croatian state.

165 Author's interview with Veselin Pejnović, Skopje 23.12.2013.

166 Author's interview with Veselin Pejnović, Skopje 23.12.2013.

Former members of SNS admit that Croatian authorities supported the party. “The state leadership understood that it was necessary for the Serbs who remained to be politically engaged so that there will be a balance. In that period, for Serbs there was SNS that appealed to urban Serbs who accepted Croatia as a state, and you had SDSS that dominated in the rural areas and in Krajina”.¹⁶⁷ SNS did not have party branches in RSK. Structurally the party included Serbs from Croatia proper, mainly from the larger cities. For example, SNS had local branches in Zagreb, Osijek, Slavonski Brod, Sisak, and Grubišno polje, Karlovac, Rijeka and Cres-Lošinj. During the conflict SNS was represented in the *Sabor* and Milan Đukić was elected deputy speaker. SNS had joint political and symbolic activities with Croatian authorities. For example, on 24 November 1992 a joint delegation visited the only Orthodox priest in “free Eastern Croatia” (Mišković, 1998: 121). The event was heavily criticized by TV Beli Manastir, in SAO East Slavonia, and a newspaper from Novi Sad in Serbia, and described as treason (Mišković, 1998: 122). Media in Serbia and RSK declared the formation of SNS a “crazy idea” and people from the initiative board were called “Serb traitors” (Đukić, 2008: 753). SNS was labeled as a “regime party” and they were called “Tuđman's Serbs”.¹⁶⁸ SNS tried to shake off the labels repeatedly for example, in its party program (SNS, 1991: 5) and in their party bulletin (NIT, 1993: 7-8)

SNS was not just colluding with Croatian authorities against Serbs in RSK. It was also working to improve Serb rights in Croatia. A programmatic principle of SNS was that Serbs in Croatia are part of the Serb people and have specific needs (e.g. national, cultural, and religious) (SNS, 1991: 3-4). SNS representatives were opposed to discriminatory and derogatory treatment of Serbs. For example, when President Franjo Tuđman insulted Serbs, Milan Đukić wrote him a public letter saying: “today Mr. President, when you call us “četnici”, we still remain hard patriots of our homeland Croatia. This

¹⁶⁷ Author's interview with Branislav Vorkapić, Osijek, 07.10.2013.

¹⁶⁸ Author's interview with Veljko Đakula, Zagreb, 01.03.2011.

speech of yours – full of insults to Serb people in Croatia – will not contribute for Serbs to return their trust in Croatian authorities” (Đukić, 2008). SNS representatives visited arrested Serbs in Croatian prisons and offered them legal aid. SNS tried to provide direct help for Serbs who had problems with citizenship, working and housing rights. SNS' reports from 1994 show that 10,000 people approached them about problems with citizenship (NIT, 1994: 9).

Between 1991 and 1995 SNS prepared nine policy documents for a peaceful resolution of the crisis, some of which were done in cooperation with and were adopted by the Croatian authorities (SNS program, 1994; Đukić, 2008: 99). In the first they made modest demands for cultural autonomy of Serbs in Croatia. However, in their last proposal SNS demanded Serb political autonomy, accepted the borders of Krajina, and asked for Croatia to constitutionally accept Krajina as a 'state within the state'. (Đukić, 2008: 733). However, SNS' timing was off. It was too late for them to support Krajina. By the end of 1995 the Croatian army regained control of parts of the territory through operations “Flash” and “Storm” and with the Erdut Agreement the last part of RSK was peacefully reintegrated. In this process SDSS in Eastern Slavonia rose as the main Serb representative. Croatian authorities were cooperating only with SDSS because they had control and support in former RSK. “SNS was eliminated” from the process of peaceful reintegration “with administrative decisions”.¹⁶⁹ This led to SNS' marginalization. SDSS was seen and portrayed as the party that represented the Serbs in Croatia and they were reluctant to cooperate with SNS (Đukić, 2008: 773). High ranking SDSS' representatives say that it was because Đukić wanted to have the position of main Serb leader in Croatia. However, the predominant opinion among founders of SDSS, and former RSK politicians, is that “after the conflict we all got together to take SNS out”.

169 Author's interview with Veselin Pejnović, Skopje 23.12.2013.

SNS did not have direct access to spoils and resources. They were not included in the executive, public administration or in county and local governance (NIT, 1993: 22). The Croatian authorities were not always responsive to Serb demands and needs (NIT, 1993: 23). Also, SNS' activities during the conflict became a major liability after the conflict. Former SNS officials say that:

When I think of it today, it would have been better for me to go in Krajina in those days. It showed today that Serb officials are all people from those areas. If I went to Krajina, and did what they did, and in the process of peaceful reintegration all is forgotten, and now they are distinguished Serbs.... and I am nobody. Today there are still headcounts which Serbs were in Krajina, and which stayed here [in Croatia proper, D.T]. That [staying in Croatia, D.T] is a minus for political career in the post-conflict period¹⁷⁰.

SNS won in the Serb minority electoral unit in 2000 because SDSS did not run their strongest candidate. Also, SNS had support in SAO Krajina, where Milan Đukić was from. For example, in the local elections in 2001 a third of SNS' support came from former SAO East, and two thirds were from SAO Krajina. 40% of SNS' total votes were from three municipalities (Donji Lapac, Knin and Udbina). SDSS still did not have party branches, while Milan Đukić was from this region. Đukić defeated SDSS again in Donji Lapac in 2005. Even though he received only 536 votes, it makes for a third of SNS' votes won in 2005. On the other hand, the structure of voter support in national legislative elections in 2003 and 2007 shows that SNS had higher support in municipalities which were part of Croatia proper.

SNS was on the wrong side at the wrong time. SNS was and remained to be a party advocating Serb integration in Croatia, even in times when it was not imaginable. However, its rejection of violence, support for the Croatian state, efforts for peaceful resolution and pushing to improve Serb rights in Croatia did not bring it positive results in the post-conflict period. SNS was not built on war time

170 Author's interview with Branislav Vorkapić, 07.10.2013 in Osijek.

networks from RSK. Quite the opposite. Some SNS members supported the Croatian authorities, or joined the Croatian army, willingly or forcefully. Their role during the conflict did not bring them symbolic capital, but a symbolic burden. When SNS was in parliament, it had minimal possibilities to provide direct benefits to Serbs, mainly by appealing to state authorities. However, when SNS was out of parliament, it had no possibilities to extend patronage. Even though it was the strongest competitor to SDSS in the early stages of the post-conflict period, in the long run SNS was completely marginalized.

Partija Podunavskih Srba (Party of Podunavlje Serbs, PPS) appeared as an ethnic outbidder in the post-conflict period. PPS was registered on 27 February 1998 and was the second Serb party in Eastern Slavonia after the peaceful reintegration. PPS to a large extent was built on war time networks of Srpska Radikalna Stranka (Serb Radical Party, SRS) led by Vojislav Šešelj from Serbia (Barić, 2005). SRS was a “legal follower of the Serb Freedom Movement and Serb Četnik Movement” (Art. 5, SRS, 1992a). SRS in RSK was founded in Vukovar in July 1992 and were “an even more radical rival or alliance partner to the SDS” (Caspersen, 2010: 107). Members and sympathizers of the party waged “war in the first front line” (SRS in RSK, 1994). SRS had sixteen deputies in the parliament of RSK and at one point participated in the government of RSK.¹⁷¹ Rade Leskovac was the leader of both SRS in RSK in 1992 and PPS in 1998. In his words, he was “engaged in the creation of government of Slavonia, Baranja and West Srem [SAO East Slavonia, D.T], in which I participated as minister for information”.¹⁷² Leskovac also included other politicians from former SDS in PPS, for example Ljubica Šolaja, a PPS candidate for MP in 2003 and 2007 elections, who was President of SDS-Krajina.¹⁷³

171 Agreement for RSK's government formation between SDS-Krajina and SRS. Author's copy obtained from the Croatian Memorial Documentation Center of the Fatherland War in Zagreb. Archive “Political Parties in RSK” (undated), in February 2010.

172 For more see Rade Leskovac's interview for Serb diaspora, Serb Internet News, “For Croats we are still aggressors”, 02.05.2007 (available at <http://www.srpskadijaspora.info/vest.asp?id=8558>, last accessed on 7 October 2013)

173 There is a Public Announcement (press release) of SDS- Krajina, Knin 3.3.1992, signed by her. Author's copy obtained

The goal of SRS in RSK was to “help the material, mental and moral advancement of Serb people” (Art.2, SRS in RSK, 1992: 1) and similarly, PPS advocates material, mental and moral development of Serb ethnic community in Croatia (Art. 1, PPS, 1998). However, while the main programmatic goal of SRS in RSK was “establishing a free, independent and democratic Serb state where all Serbs and Serb territories would be united” - which meant uniting Republic of Serbia with Republic Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic Srpska Krajina in Croatia (SRS in RSK, 1993), PPS advocates overall development of Podunavlje region in Croatia (Art. 1, PPS, 1998).

Notwithstanding the radical positions and activities during the conflict, PPS pursued a different course after the peaceful reintegration. Leskovac advocated Serbs in Croatia to turn more to Zagreb than to Belgrade, because they “are citizens of the Republic of Croatia, equal with all other citizens”, even though he admitted that in “in 1991 and before that I thought that other solutions are better”.¹⁷⁴ PPS also wanted to cooperate with SDSS for the 2000 parliamentary elections. On the other hand, he was very critical of SDSS leadership, saying that they failed to act to protect attacks on Serbs and therefore are responsible for it.¹⁷⁵ In line with his change from radical to moderate, Leskovac laid flowers to victims from both communities on 18 November, the day of contested meaning for Croats and Serbs in Vukovar. His act was taken well neither by Croats, nor by Serbs. He claimed, and rightly so, such symbolic acts were needed for a joint future of the two communities in Croatia.¹⁷⁶

from the Croatian Memorial Documentation Center of the Fatherland War in Zagreb. Archive “Political Parties in RSK” (undated), in February 2010. In RSK Šolaja had radical positions, advocating unification with Serbs in Bosnia. She was changed by Milan Babić as president of SDS-Krajina.

174 For more see Voice of America (VOA) “All political representatives of Serbs in Croatia have to understand that it is important to build a new Serb image that brakes away with the residues of the Yugo-communist past” claims president of Party of Podunavlje Serbs Rade Leskovac, 21 October 1998, available at <http://web.archive.org/web/19991009121152/http://www.voa.gov/misc/croatia/leskoc.html> last accessed on 27 January 2014.

175 For more see “Погубно је стављати политичку вољу изнад права и чињеница“, 15 Dana, No 8, 14.06.1999, ZVO: Vukovar, p.15.

176 For more see Rade Leskovac interview for Serb diaspora, Serb Internet News, “For Croats we are still aggressors”,

The change from radical to moderate did not bring electoral success for PPS in 2000. It did, however, bring them accusations from Serb organizations that they are colluding with Croatian authorities.¹⁷⁷ Leskovac dismissed such accusation, and typical of ethnic parties, attacked Serb representatives for being puppets of the Croatian government.¹⁷⁸ Failing to win support and be accepted as moderate, Leskovac and PPS again turned to radicalism. In view of the 2007 parliamentary elections, PPS put up a poster in Vukovar with a picture of Leskovac simulating “three finger sign”, which is a symbolic association of Greater Serbia. The posters were placed over the Croatian organized program to mark 18 November and caused a lot of controversy.¹⁷⁹ However, , this act did not draw enough support for PPS in the 2007 parliamentary elections, even though Leskovac was the fourth highest placed candidate and followed closely the candidates of SDSS. Leskovac ran his son as PPS candidate for mayor of Vukovar in 2009 and got modest support.

PPS is a party built on wartime networks of Serb hard line radicals, primarily SRS in RSK. After the conflict they tried to be moderate, to bridge ethnic divisions in Vukovar, and called for greater cooperation between Serb parties. However, they again turned to ethnic radical gestures in 2007 and heavily criticized SDSS. The analysis of variance, of the electoral support in 2003 and 2007, shows that voter support for PPS is highest in SAO East, and a bit higher in SAO Krajina. This means that the party gets support in places where former war time networks existed or still exist. This is again corroborated when looking at the structure of support for the average party results and support for

02.05.2007 (available at <http://www.srpskadijaspora.info/vest.asp?id=8558>, last accessed on 7 October 2013)

177 For more see Political organization and representation in “Срби у Хрватској 2007, Попис српских институција и организација“ [Serbs in Croatia 2007, List of Serb institutions and organizations], *Vijeće srpske nacionalne manjine grada Zagreba* [Council of the Serb national minority – City of Zagreb]: Zagreb, 2007, p. 9.

178 For more see Rade Leskovac's interview with Rade for Serb diaspora, Serb Internet News, “For Croats we are still aggressors”, 02.05.2007 (available at <http://www.srpskadijaspora.info/vest.asp?id=8558>, last accessed on 7 October 2013)

179 For more see 24 Sata, “Provokacija?! Troprsti Rade Leskovac u Vukovaru”, 14 November 2007, available at <http://www.24sata.hr/reporteri/provokacija-troprsti-rade-leskovac-u-vukovaru-37064> last accessed on 16 February 2014.

individual candidates. However, PPS did not manage to get sufficient support to get elected. PPS did not have political control of public resources; hence it did not have possibilities to extend patronage.

Nova Srpska Stranka (New Serb Party, NSS) and *Naša Stranka* (Our Party, NS) are splinter parties from SDSS. They developed solid political programs, but failed to win elections. NSS was founded on 1 February 2009 in Vukovar. Svetislav Lađarević was elected president, and Mirko Jagetić and Ljubomir Radić were elected vice-presidents. Lađarević and Jagetić were among the founders of SDSS and long time prominent members. Mirko Jagetić was deputy head of Vukovarsko-srijemska county in 1999, from SDSS, and was also vice president of ZVO. He was local politician in RSK as well. Svetislav Lađarević was deputy Mayor of Vukovar from SDSS in 1999.

NSS' initial aim was to be active in Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-Srijemska counties. The party was founded before the local elections in 2009, as a third Serb political option in Eastern Slavonia, because it claimed other parties did not sufficiently improve the position of Serbs in Croatia.¹⁸⁰ The program of NSS is balanced between democratic orientation and special attention for rights of Serbs in Croatia. For example, NSS defined itself as a party with “democratic orientation that approaches the Serb issue as an issue of building civic society in the Republic of Croatia, society of social equality and multiculturalism” (NSS, 2009b: 1). NSS supports regionalism, investments in production, agriculture and tourism, support for SMEs, and just social policy. NSS demanded educational and cultural autonomy of Serbs; however, not for creating Serb ghettos but for promoting “multi-ethnic and multicultural concept of schooling” and “intercultural relations” (NSS, 2009b: 6). NSS advocacy for Serb rights, and return of refugees, is underlined with a multicultural approach. For them it means

¹⁸⁰ For more see Jutarnji List, “New Serb Party founded in Vukovar”, 01 February 2009, available at <http://www.jutarnji.hr/u-vukovaru-osnovana-nova-srpska-stranka/285363/> last accessed on 27 January 2014; E-novine “New Serb party founded”, 01 February 2009, available at <http://www.e-novine.com/index.php?news=22039> last accessed on 27 January 2014.

improving tolerance and co-existence and equal support for “special Serb rights and identity as well as general rights and identity of Croatian people” (NSS, 2009b: 2).

NSS does not directly address post-conflict issues. The program rejects use of violence in political aims and “condemns the creators of war scenario, the ones who pronounced the darkest side of war, and especially the ones who committed war crimes” (NSS, 2009b: 1). Therefore, NSS demands to punish all who committed war crimes and supports “decisive dealing with the past” and “critical enlightenment of all that was bad”, so it will be “base for a different politics that will not repeat the past” (NSS, 2009b: 1).

NS is another splinter party from SDSS. Jovan Ajduković, president of NS, formed the party on 8 January 2011 in Borovo, close to Vukovar. Jovan Ajduković was assistant minister for justice in RSK, but was not a member of SDS. After the conflict he was president of SDSS' executive board, vice president for two mandates and was president of ZVO (2001-2005). Ajduković claims that he left SDSS because of conflict with Pupovac: “I was pushing a stronger Serb agenda, and Pupovac was following a line of lesser resistance. Also, I wanted to follow and be oriented more towards Belgrade, as our kin state. Without it we are lost”.¹⁸¹ Notwithstanding the differences between the two, former party comrades claim Ajduković had more prosaic reasons: “he did not pass in intra-party elections [for Serb deputy head of county in 2011, D.T] and could not be candidate of SDSS. He went alone as independent candidate. That is a serious breach of the statute and he was kicked out”.¹⁸² Hence, the relations between Ajduković, NS, and SDSS are not the best”.¹⁸³ For example, the party program states existing Serb representatives are like “stuffed animals” and therefore “the purpose of founding *Naša*

181 Author's interview with Jovan Ajduković, Vukovar, 17.10.2013.

182 Author's interview with SDSS high party official, Vukovar, 15.10.2013

183 Author's interview with Jovan Ajduković, Vukovar, 17.10.2013.

Stranka is to react on this impotent situation” (NS, 2011b: 1).

The basic goal of NS is “the spiritual renewal of Serb people and strengthening its self-consciences, to remove as soon as possible the national indifference which is a consequence of managing the Serbs through “soaked” representatives” (NS, 2011b: 3). The program of NS puts a heavy focus on economic development and usage of EU funds, but with an ethnic and clientelistic twist. For example, NS asks for Serbs to be part of development agencies, entrepreneurial incubators and industry zones and sees its role in making Serbs capable “for entrepreneurial capitalism” (NS, 2011b: 2); and claims that “the work of the party has to bring material benefit to the people, and not to be just another storyteller” (NS, 2011b: 3). NS puts a focus on policies relevant in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and West Srem (i.e. Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-srijemska counties), in agriculture, energy and educational autonomy.

On the other hand, NS advocates the whole specter of post-conflict issues relevant for Serbs, for example return of refugees, return of property rights and all other related rights (e.g. convalidation, lost pensions and compensation for civilian victims), employment of Serbs in state administration – provided in the Constitutional law, preservation of cultural and historic monuments including “Serb military cemeteries and cemeteries of victims from all wars” (NS, 2011b: 2). NS even goes a step further and demands all criminal charges for war crimes to be made public, “compensation for Serbs for lost profit for not being able to participate in the privatization process in Croatia”, support for the association of families of people who disappeared or were forcefully taken away from Vukovar and return of property for the Serb Orthodox Church.

NSS and NS are parties built on war time networks which joined SDSS after the conflict in Eastern

Slavonia. However, their symbolic capital is limited. The leaders of NSS and NS did not have any significant role during the conflict or in the post-conflict reconstruction process. They take part in commemorations, but have secondary roles to SDSS. NSS distanced itself from the past conflict and supports multiculturalism. NS advocates 'ethnic market capitalism' and promotes policies of ethnic clientelism in its program. NS and NSS do not have possibilities to extend a patronage.

NSS and NS candidates competed for Serb deputy head of counties in 2009 and 2013 in Osječko-baranjska and Vukovarsko-srijemska counties. These counties extent over the region that used be former UNTAES zone (i.e. SAO East Slavonia). This is the region where SDSS was originally built, where it has the most symbolic capital, and greatest possibilities to extend patronage through ZVO. Hence, their candidates were no match for SDSS'. While NSS and NS candidates received around 15 percent of the turnout, the candidates of SDSS got 50 to 70 percent.

IV. ALBANIAN PARTIES IN MACEDONIA

IV.1. The conflict and post-conflict environment for minority politics in Macedonia

The Albanian Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP) was among the first parties to be registered in Macedonia, when political pluralism was allowed in 1990. Albanian political parties filled about one sixths of the seats in parliament in the 1990s (ICG, 1998). Their activities were focused on minority issues in Macedonia, but also on the situation of Albanians in Kosovo.¹⁸⁴ PDP was a junior coalition partner in government from 1992 to 1998 (ICG, 1998) and their competitor Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) was in government from 1998-2002. Multiethnic coalitions have a political and security rationale in Macedonia.¹⁸⁵ Despite the participation in parliament and inclusion in government, there was a strong perception among Albanians that they are second class citizens. The preamble of the new constitution defined Macedonia as a state of ethnic Macedonians and national minorities. In response, Albanians organized a referendum for secession and formed paramilitary formations.¹⁸⁶ The referendum was not recognized and organizers of paramilitaries were arrested and sentenced to prison.

Inter-ethnic relations were tense throughout the 1990s (ICG, 1998). There were inter-ethnic incidents and clashes between Albanians and the police in Skopje in 1993 and in Tetovo and Gostivar, where Albanians are the majority, in 1997. In the latter case several persons died and the Albanian mayors were arrested and sent to prison. Albanians were underrepresented in local government, police and the army and they demanded greater usage of Albanian language and national symbols (ICG, 1998). Their

184 AIM Skopje. "Are Albanians Leaving the Government and Parliament", 24.01.1996

185 Author's interview with Branko Crvenkovski, Skopje, 05.09.2011.

186 It is very likely that Albanians were organizing paramilitaries against possible threats from Slobodan Milošević and JNA. Ethnic Macedonian diaspora organized paramilitary groups for same reasons. Author's interview with Ljubomir Frchkovski, Skopje, 24.01.2014

demands were met with nationalist reactions from ethnic Macedonians. For example, radical nationalistic protests were organized when the government wanted to improve education in Albanian language and open university classes for Albanian teachers in 1997.¹⁸⁷ This contributed to Albanian frustrations.

At the same time Albanian transnational armed groups were formed, like the National Liberation Army (NLA) in Macedonia. NLA members point out that the armed group was formed because Albanians were disappointed about their status in Macedonia.¹⁸⁸ “NLA started to form when people realized that the rights of Albanians cannot be realized in legal way”¹⁸⁹ and that Macedonia was not open to meet Albanian interests.¹⁹⁰

NLA bombed and attacked several police stations and courts between 1998 and 2000 (Stojarová, 2006; Kostova, 2005: 20; MoI, 2001). They claimed that Albanian rights were infringed and that their demands were ignored. The new government, formed between VMRO-DPMNE and DPA in 1998, tried to improve the position of Albanians. They employed Albanians in the police, appointed an Albanian minister for local self-government and started a TV channel in Albanian language (Georgievski, 2010). But it seemed to be too little and too late. From one point of view Macedonia was oasis of peace where Albanians were included in power-sharing and enjoyed some rights; however, from an opposite point of view there were violent incidents and institutional discrimination which gave another perspective (Sulejmani, 2010).

An inter-ethnic conflict erupted in 2001. The origins of the crisis were both “external and internal”

187 Author's interview with Branko Crvenkovski, Skopje, 05.09.2011.

188 Author's interview with Raim Limani, Skopje, 18.12.2012.

189 Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

190 Author's interview with Besim Hoda, Tetovo, 26.05. 2013.

(Hatay, 2005: 28). Internally, there were long standing grievances and frustrations among Albanians in Macedonia, and externally, there was a spill-over effect from Kosovo (Lyon, 2002), such as proliferation of Albanian paramilitaries (Hislope, 2003) and logistical support for the armed groups (Frchkovski, 2010: 17). However, most of NLA members were from Macedonia, notwithstanding their close connections with KLA in Kosovo. Between 1999 and 2001 there was one extent transnational Albanian armed group who operated between Kosovo, Southern Serbia and Macedonia (Menaj, 2008: 15; Phillips, 2008; Veliu, 2008). Other factors, such as transnational crime networks, cross-border smuggling and corruption (Hislope, 2002) connected to processes of social transformation within the Albanian community (Belamy, 2002) contributed to the conflict. The conflict also challenged the ruling Albanian elite in Macedonia (Stojarová, 2006). “NLA members, during the course of the war and since ... were consistently critical of Albanian politicians in Macedonia” (Rusi, 2004: 7).

The conflict started in January/February 2001. NLA shelled a police station on 22 January¹⁹¹ and the first battle was fought on 16 February 2001 in village that served as KLA based during the conflict in Kosovo (Pendarovski, 2005: 100). The government and international community condemned the violence and denounced the attacks as “extremists”.¹⁹² DPA, the governing Albanian party, was similarly critical. Arben Xhaferi, leader of DPA, considered that the conflict aimed to replace the legitimate political representatives of Albanians in Macedonia,¹⁹³ while Menduh Thaci, his deputy, and other DPA officials called NLA traitors and asked the government to deal with them (Rusi, 2004: 7; Demjaha, 2012: 172). DPA considered that they were losing political gravity and were feeling threatened.¹⁹⁴ PDP was more supportive of NLA and they saw the conflict as a possibility to remedy the positions of Albanians in Macedonia.

191 Original document is reproduced in MoI (2001), White Book, Appendix III.

192 Dnevnik. “Extremists have been isolated. It's time to collect weapons”, 06.04.2001

193 Public statement of Arben Xhaferi, quoted in Ismanovski, 2008: 56, ft. 91

194 Author's interview with Aziz Pollozhani, Skopje, 17.06.2013.

Initially, NLA claimed to be fighting against the uniform of the Macedonian occupiers, but soon moved to demand constitutional changes and greater rights for Albanians. However, not all NLA members were interested in peaceful resolution and improvement of minority rights.¹⁹⁵ Some claim that the final aim was to unify Albanian populated areas if not in Greater Albania, then in Greater Kosovo (Menaj, 2008: 125). Some soldiers were disappointed when a peaceful resolution was found (Ajdini, 2010), because they saw it as a partial solution (Veliu, 2008: 105).

On the other hand, Ali Ahmeti, leader of NLA, supported a peaceful resolution (Karapejovski, 2011) and persisted strongly that NLA “fought for the rights of Albanians in Macedonia”.¹⁹⁶ In March 2001 NLA issued communique No.6 in which they claimed support for the territorial integrity of Macedonia, asked for peaceful resolution of the conflict and improvements of Albanian rights.¹⁹⁷ These requests reiterated many of the demands put forward by the Albanian political parties in the 1990s and were “not only demands of NLA, but of the Albanian people in Macedonia.”¹⁹⁸ This contributed to the Albanian community to homogenize in support of NLA,¹⁹⁹ and to mobilize more fighters. There were armed clashes in Tetovo and close to the capital Skopje. The conflict was escalating and spreading. Some NLA commanders claim that the spreading of the conflict was done to “attract the attention of the international factor” and that NLA “did not intend to divide Macedonia” as it was explained in Communique No 6.²⁰⁰ Ahmeti and NLA, based on their experience from Kosovo, wanted the international community to get involved in the conflict resolution (Ismanovski, 2008: 65). Ahmeti sent letters to the Secretary General's of UN and NATO, President of European Commission and OSCE

195 Author's interview with Besim Hoda, Tetovo, 26.05.2013.

196 Interview with Ali Ahmeti, quoted in Ismanovski, 2008: 67

197 Author's copy obtained from a former high level NLA leader.

198 Author's interview with G'zim Ostreni, Debar, 14.07.2013.

199 Author's interview with Gjorgji Spasov, Skopje, 11.07.2013.

200 Interview with Hazbi Lika, aka Commander Chella, in Menaj, 2008: 163

asking their involvement to “make Macedonia a model of ethnic coexistence in the Balkans” (Rusi, 2004: 5).

International actors had a largely unfavorable view of NLA at the beginning of the conflict (Frchkovski, 2010: 18). However, as the conflict was radicalizing they took all the necessary steps to get the situation back under control.²⁰¹ On one side, it seemed that Macedonian state institutions did not adequately respond to the security challenge (Gaber, 2011), and on the other side the demands of NLA seemed reasonable compared to other rebel groups.²⁰² International actors played a decisive role in the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Macedonia (Ilievski and Taleski, 2009; Laity, 2009).

The first action of the international actors was to form a grand coalition government. The largest parties of ethnic Macedonians, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, and the largest parties of ethnic Albanians, PDP and DPA, entered the government which functioned throughout the conflict. The second was to unify the positions and demands of Albanian actors in Macedonia. NLA wanted to be included in the peace talks;²⁰³ however, international actors were against it and considered that only PDP and DPA can be included (Menaj, 2008: 149; Laity, 2009: 22). International actors urged DPA and PDP to come up with a joint platform of Albanian demands.²⁰⁴ International actors pushed NLA to commit to the Geneva Convention²⁰⁵ and to peaceful resolution which would entail demilitarization of NLA and improvements of Albanian rights.²⁰⁶ In this way the stage was set to have closer cooperation between NLA and Albanian parties in Macedonia. International actors, and some intellectuals from Kosovo,

201 Author's interview with Branko Crvenkovski, Skopje, 05.09.2011.

202 The New York Review of Books. “Is there a good terrorist?”, 29.11.2001 (available at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2001/nov/29/is-there-a-good-terrorist/?pagination=false> last accessed on 29 July, 2013).

203 Interview of Fazli Veliu for “Voice of Kosovo”, 2 August 2001, reproduced in Veliu, 2008: 89-93

204 Author's interview with Rizvan Sulejmani, Skopje, 08.07.2013

205 Statement of NLA from 08.05.2001, reproduced in Veliu, 2008: 11.

206 “NLA project to end the war in Macedonia”. The original document is reproduced in Iseini et al, 2008: 28-30.

mediated a meeting between NLA and Albanian parties in Prizren.²⁰⁷ At the meeting Arben Xhaferi, president of DPA, Imer Imeri, president of PDP, and Ali Ahmeti, as the political representative of NLA, signed a joint declaration.²⁰⁸ In the declaration they committed to a peaceful resolution and requested constitutional changes to improve the rights of Albanians. Most of the points from the Prizren declaration were later incorporated in the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA).²⁰⁹ The Prizren declaration also envisaged measures to transform and integrate NLA in “various civilian occupations including those within government institutions”. The Prizren declaration “sought to reduce” differences between NLA, DPA and PDP and to offer “a peaceful solution to the crisis”.²¹⁰ The declaration linked “the real strength and influence of the NLA with the formal legitimacy of DPA and PDP” (2004: 9). DPA and PDP had a mandate to represent NLA in the negotiations and to play “the role of interlocutors between the armed structures, state institutions and international community”.²¹¹

Peace negotiations, between the main parties representing ethnic Macedonians, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, and the main parties representing Albanians, PDP and DPA, took place under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Macedonia. Special envoys from NATO and EU served as facilitators. Ahmeti was in phone contact with the leaders of DPA and PDP during the negotiations in Ohrid (Menaj, 2008: 133) and was also informed by NATO (Ahmeti, 2011: 8). The involvement of NLA was needed because otherwise “NLA would not declare cease fire and would not return weapons” (Laity, 2009: 53).

The negotiations ended with the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) on 13 August

207 Interview with Imer Imeri in Menaj, 2008: 158

208 The original document is reproduced in Ljatifi, 2008: 41-42.

209 Author's interview with Stevo Pendarovski, Skopje, 07.09.2011.

210 Ali Ahmeti's interview for Fakti (daily newspaper in Albanian language), quoted in Rusi, 2004: 8.

211 Author's interview with Aziz Pollozhani, Skopje, 17.06.2013.

2001. The agreement prescribed a demilitarization and dismemberment of NLA. It also envisaged that amnesty to all combatants will be promulgated in parliament. OFA stipulated a number of institutional changes. The electoral system was changed to PR and there were mechanisms introduced for the protection and inclusion of minorities. In specific, minorities were given veto right in parliament, and a principle of 'equitable representation' was enacted for minority employment in public administration. Further on, a process of decentralization was envisaged. Decentralization was aimed at increasing the competences of the local municipalities therefore allowing minorities' greater access to resources. Special laws for usage of national symbols of ethnic groups were promulgated, and languages spoken by ethnic groups which make over 20 percent of the population could be officially used in parliament and local municipalities. OFA changed the institutional environment for minority politics in post-conflict Macedonia and paved the way for transformation of NLA and their integration in politics.²¹²

NLA supported OFA and one day after it was signed, concluded an agreement with NATO to disarm and demobilize.²¹³ NATO organized “Essential Harvest” to collect weapons from NLA. NLA used the gun collection activity to get media publicity. NLA's members and commanders put on a media show when giving back the weapons, posing with NATO and giving media interviews. Some were inclined to point out that “Ahmeti obviously wanted to establish a political career in Macedonia” (Phillips, 2009: 153).

Armed clashes finally ended after the OFA was ratified in Parliament on 16 November 2001.

Constitutional changes were made and new laws were enacted as prescribed in OFA. During the conflict “the state did not have effective power and control in about 100 populated places, or in 17% of

212 Author's interview with Gjorgji Spasov, Skopje, 11.07.2013.

213 Kosova E Lirë. “Disarmament agreement between NATO and the NLA”, 14.08.2001 and 16.08.2001 (available at http://www.kosovaelire.com/irjm_carmatosja_nato_uck.php last accessed on 29 July, 2013)

its territory” (Pendarovski, 2005: 101). NLA losses are estimated at 50-60 members (Ostreni, 2011: 258-263), while Macedonian security forces losses were lower. There were civilian casualties on both sides, but in smaller numbers. The total number of casualties was estimated below 200 and there were over 170, 000 internally displaced (Hatay, 2005: 14) of whom almost all returned to their homes by 2005/2006.

The implementation of OFA changed the institutional environment for minority politics in the post-conflict period. OFA introduced elements of consociational democracy (e.g. veto rights and decentralization). Some minority rights, such as usage of languages and employment in public administration, were pegged to the size of ethnic group. As a consequence, access to these resources became based on identity. Some point out that once the laws for usage of language and symbols were changed, then public sector employments remained the only benefits for Albanians (Osmani, 2011: 15). On the other hand decentralization brought more competences and resources to the local level, but it seems that it does not adequately satisfy all of the Albanian expectations (Osmani, 2011: 14).

Criticism toward OFA was mounting over the years. It came from ethnic Macedonians, but also from some ethnic Albanians. Ethnic Macedonians oppose OFA because they see it as giving too much to Albanians. On the other hand, some Albanians oppose OFA because they think that the implementation is not adequate and that OFA is not functioning. Other Albanians have a very positive view of OFA. For them OFA is the greatest accomplishment for Albanians in Macedonia. They think that, thanks to the conflict in 2001 and the role of NLA, OFA substantially changed and improved the position of Albanians in Macedonia and that it is the model for the future (Ahmeti, 2011: 10). OFA gave Albanian parties in power possibilities to extend patronage. Different parties have used these possibilities but with varying electoral success. The *Democratic Union for Integration* (Bashkimi Demokratik për

Integrim, BDI), which derives from NLA, became a dominant Albanian party in the post-conflict period. They won elections both as incumbent and oppositional party. To understand their performance I first trace their origins.

IV.2. Formation and functioning of NLA

Albanian communities in Macedonia and Kosovo have close family and political ties. Ali Ahmeti, as young student, and Fazli Veliu, his uncle, were part of the protest movement requesting Kosovo to become a republic in 1981. After they were arrested and served a prison sentence they immigrated to Switzerland and were active in the National Liberation Front for Kosovo in the Albanian diaspora. In that time, their political goals were to improve the status of Albanians in Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY), at a minimum, or to unite the territories where Albanians live in the Balkans in one state, at a maximum.

Key NLA leaders like Ali Ahmeti, Fazli Veliu, and Emrush Xhemali, were part of the core group which founded the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in Kosovo (Phillips, 2009; Hislope, 2002). However, the origins of NLA remain unclear (Rusi, 2004). Ali Ahmeti led KLA operations in Macedonia, and was a prime suspect, along with his uncle, for the bombings and attacks between 1998 and 2000.²¹⁴ KLA and NLA were “sister groups”, closely connected to UCPMB in Preshevo valley and supported by the Albanian diaspora and transnational criminal structures (Lyon, 2002; Hislope, 2002; Mincheva, 2005). NLA headquarters for some part of the conflict was in the village of Shipkovica in North-Western Macedonia, and for the greater part it was in Prizren in Kosovo (Menaj, 2008: 126). However, when the conflict in Macedonia started, political leaders and former KLA commanders in Kosovo, “Ibrahim Rugova, Hashim Thaci and Ramush Haradinaj, issued several joint and individual

214 Author's interview with Stevo Pendarovski, Skopje, 7.11.2011.

statements calling on NLA to suspend organization and lay down their arms” (Rusi, 2004: 13) even though smaller, and more radical, parties in Kosovo supported NLA (Iseini et al, 2008). The calls from Kosovo's political leaders did not have a big impact on NLA and on Ahmeti. “Ironically, it was probably Ali Ahmeti's involvement in the creation and funding of KLA that empowered him to ignore his former commanders” (Rusi, 2004: 13).

One year before the conflict in Macedonia NLA on their web site “published a document in which it shows that after the battle for Kosovo, the next goal is to open a front in South Serbia and Macedonia” (Pendarovski, 2005: 99). NLA posted its program and demands on their website on 13 January 2000. The website is not functional today.²¹⁵ The initial statement claimed that Albanians were not satisfied with their position in Macedonia and that international actors should be involved in the negotiations with the Macedonian state. Further, the statement claimed that “NLA is an army that will wage war with arms until Macedonia, according to the Constitution, becomes Macedonian-Albanian state” (Kostova, 2005: 30).

Albanians from Albania and Kosovo were members in NLA, for example, Petrit Menaj (2008:181) who states that he was first active in KLA, then in UCPMB, and finally joined NLA, and Samidin Xhezairi, aka the “Hoxha from Prizren”. But “one can with certainty say that 90% of NLA fighters were from Macedonia” (Iseini et al, 2008: 6). NLA had support and backing from the Albanian diaspora, mainly in Switzerland and Germany. Fazli Veliu and Musa Xhaferi were among the key representatives of NLA in Switzerland.²¹⁶ Their role was to fund-raise among the Albanian diaspora, and advocate for international support. “NLA had army headquarters and political leadership”, was supported by

²¹⁵Parts of the program are reproduced in Ismanovski, 2008: 51-52.

²¹⁶ BBC. “The Albanian fund-raising machine”, 28.05.2001 (available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1356196.stm> last accessed on 9 April, 2014)

Albanians from Macedonia, Kosovo and the diaspora, and by different political parties in Macedonia.²¹⁷

NLA had five brigades “which operated in Kumanovo (113th brigade), in Skopje (114th brigade), Tetovo (112th brigade) and in the surroundings of Gostivar (116th brigade) and Radusha (115th brigade)” (Stojarová 2006: 12). There are claims that at the height of the conflict the whole NLA, under arms and all supporting civilian structures (e.g. communication, logistics and medical personnel) had about 5-6,000 members (Ostreni, 2011: 254-255). However, others estimate that NLA had 800 armed men in May 2001 and that their number rose to 2,000 by August 2001 (Phillips, 2009: 116). Other experts estimate that NLA had even fewer armed men and that most of them were 'weekend warriors'.²¹⁸

NLA was believed to be a “loose network of different armed groups including Marxist, nationalist and a majority of people who simply wanted to defend their villages” (Belamy, 2002: 132). One NLA report from July 2001 shows that the armed group did not have strict hierarchy and discipline. It reads that:

NLA combatants “enter in cafes and public places and sit for hours, as they do not have assignments. They talk everywhere about problems that to a certain extent are a secret. There are some that are proud to say things which are not true and claim undeserved heroism ... Different soldiers, self proclaimed commanders, moved in vehicles in speed leaving a bitter feeling among the people. The military police in some cases of uncontrolled apprehension demonstrated that they are out of any order and control. Common policemen became generals. Some so-called capable as soldiers, without one or two committed actions, their pride grew and they act without control, calling themselves not-controllable, going everywhere and thinking that they can say everything”.²¹⁹

217 Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

218 Author's interview with Stevo Pendarovski, Skopje, 07.09.2011.

219 NLA, Command of the 112 brigade “Mujdin Aliu”, No 13, 19.07.2001, Shipkovic, Report “Moral-political condition of the army, healthy bases for increasing the support from the people to reach victory in war”, reproduced in Menaj,

This shows that NLA had a very loose structure. It is very likely that NLA did not have a centralized command and hierarchical organization in the beginning of the conflict. Then Ali Ahmeti called G'zim Ostreni, who was a general in KLA and later was Joint Chief of Staff in the Kosovo Protection Corp, to come from Kosovo (Ostreni, 2011). Ostreni prepared the organizational structure, the chain of command and NLA's internal rules and regulations (Ostreni, 2011: 245-248). Ostreni became the main military commander of NLA and was subordinate to Ahmeti, who was the main political leader. However, in the beginning of the conflict it was not clear that Ahmeti was the main leader of NLA. Some regarded Fazli Veliu, his uncle, to be the leader (Belamy, 2002), while others pointed out that Veliu was regarded as the ideologue and that he chose Ahmeti as his successor (Maleska, 2010). Ali Ahmeti “emerged as a public figure [in Macedonia, D.T] at the end of March-April 2001” (Rusi, 2004: 2). Previous to that Ahmeti was not publicly known. “Albanians in Macedonia heard about Ahmeti in May 2001”.²²⁰

During the conflict the NLA issued a statement on its legal status, signed by Ali Ahmeti as Political Head of the National Liberation Army.²²¹ Even though G'zim Ostreni (2011) claims that NLA commanders were submitting reports to him twice per day, “there was little evidence of coordination between NLA elements around Tetovo, Kumanovo and Skopje” (Belamy, 2002: 136). Personal accounts from NLA combatants claim that “taking orders and respect was made more from friendly fellowship rather than because it was the main concept and military order” (Menaj, 2008: 123). One vivid example is the moment when Ali Ahmeti negotiated a cease fire with NATO and ordered NLA to redraw from Tetovo in the beginning of July 2001. Some of the commanders did not want to redraw

2008: 167

220 Author's interview with Bujar Osmani, Skopje, 16.05.2013.

221 Original document is reproduced in MoI (2001), White Book, Appendix III.

and stop the fighting.

“In this talks for persuasion, Hoxha from Prizren took the phone and talked to Abaz [code name for Ali Ahmeti, D.T], and he said something like this: 'There is no way to implement the cease fire, even more to condition us to redraw on positions before the war. We cannot redraw from the village of Poroj, where we had nine casualties. How can a soldier redraw from a village where unprotected civilians were killed (one woman and two children)? I suggest that you tell those NATO representatives that you cannot decide without us, that we object and will not implement the order'. Abaz on the other side of the phone was upset and confronted the opinion of Hoxha from Prizren, Then Hoxha from Prizren again interfered saying: 'Tell those international representatives that there is one Hoxha who shall wage war for twenty more years. And you listen to me, I will repeat what I said when I went to war, if you stop the war and betray me; from then onwards I will be in war with you. The phone moved from Hazbi, to Ilir and Hoxha from Prizren, but when Ilir and Hoxha backed down, all remained on Hazbi, and he consulted with me about what Ali suggested. The talks ended when Ali said to Hazbi brute: 'I am NLA general commander and as general commander I order you to implement the cease fire and all of its conditions’ (Menaj, 2008: 129)

Another similar example is found when NLA seized control of Arachinovo, Albanian village North-East of the capital Skopje. They were threatening to shell the capital and the nearby airport.

International actors decided to intervene and to get NLA out of the village, but were not sure what the exact chain of command was. The actions of NLA in the wider North-Eastern part of Macedonia were led by Xhezair Shaqiri, aka Commandant Hoxha. Even though he was given direct order from Ahmeti to withdraw from Arachinovo, “Peter Feith [NATO's special envoy in Macedonia in 2001, D.T] still appeared dubious and devoted great energy to trying to persuade Hoxha to withdraw” (Rusi, 2004: 12).

Also, on one hand, Ahmeti strongly supported a peaceful resolution and he staunchly argued that the fight in Macedonia was about improving the positions and rights of Albanians. However, the public

statements from NLA's 113th brigade was with a different tone²²² while NLA's 112th brigade issued a statement saying that the Slav Macedonian government left “no room for cooperation but rather [for, D.T] division” (Menaj, 2008: 163). When the negotiations in Ohrid started, Ali Ahmeti issued a public statement supporting the process, while on the same day NLA ambushed a military convoy killing 10 soldiers. NLA actions were either inconsistent with their words, which is not implausible under those conditions, or their command was not highly centralized. Because of this, and similar other episodes, international actors did not trust that Ahmeti had full command over NLA. They were frustrated with him and with the overall situation (Laity, 2010: 40)

In the beginning international actors condemned the conflict and labeled NLA and Ahmeti as terrorist organizations. International actors appealed and pressured NLA to put down the weapons and to stop the fighting.²²³ However, as the conflict was escalating, international actors considered that it was necessary to engage with NLA, to persuade them to be constructive and to support a peaceful resolution. For example, President Boris Trajkovski requested NATO to serve as a mediator and to arrange a ceasefire in July 2001. Peter Feith met with Ali Ahmeti to arrange that. Ahmeti agreed to a cease fire and agreed to disarm and dismember the organization.²²⁴ Ahmeti was not interested to preserve NLA as an armed formation; however, he was interested about a possible future political career in Macedonia. International representatives were highly skeptical of that idea, considering it was too early for Ahmeti to be involved in politics. However, Ahmeti claimed that his principal goal in 2001 was political: to improve the position of Albanians in Macedonia (Menaj, 2008: 147-155). Therefore, NLA was careful not to spread the conflict and create unnecessary damage to life and property. He further adds that NLA did not want to destabilize the country or to create secession of territories.

222 Original document is reproduced in MoI (2001), White Book, Appendix III.

223 Author's interview with Rizvan Sulejmani, Skopje, 08.07.2013.

224 Author's interview with Stevo Pendarovski, Skopje, 07.09.2011.

Ali Ahmeti publicly proclaimed that NLA was dissolved on 27 September 2001 and DUI was founded on 5 June 2002 (Stojarová 2006: 13). “Political representatives and the headquarters of NLA had a press conference in Shipkovica. They declared end, that is to say demilitarization of NLA. That was the end for us” (Aliti, 2010: 50). That was the end of NLA, but the development of a political party was just beginning. One day before NLA was publicly dissolved, the leadership of NLA were discussing future perspectives. Fazli Veliu believed that NLA should create a new party, and that this party should use the Prizren Declaration as its program (Veliu, 2008:142). In the post-conflict period Ahmeti and the leadership of NLA tried to structure Albanian political representation through a coordinating council. When that failed, they formed DUI. The central leadership of NLA, along with most of the war time networks, remained with DUI. Some NLA combatants joined other parties. The transformation of war time networks and the institutionalization of the legacies of the conflict made a strong impact on Albanian political parties in Macedonia.

IV.3. Transformation of NLA to DUI

After OFA was signed Ali Ahmeti hinted that he will not enter politics in Macedonia, saying that “we did not start a war in order to get involved in politics”.²²⁵ NLA members claim that they did not have political ambition prior to the conflict in 2001.²²⁶ However, some believe otherwise, because Ahmeti stood in local election in Kosovo in 2000, where he got less than 1% of the vote and failed to get elected.²²⁷ It seemed logical that Ahmeti would try to build a political career after the conflict in Macedonia. The leadership of NLA discussed the possibility to form a “political subject” which will “inherit NLA” (Veliu, 2008: 82). They claimed that there was demand from the local population for

²²⁵ Ali Ahmeti's interview for Radio Free Europe, quoted in Rusi, 2004: 13.

²²⁶ Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

²²⁷ Author's interview with Stevo Pendarovski, Skopje, 07.09.2011.

NLA to become politically active (Veliu, 2008: 113).

The first step of Ahmeti and NLA was to structure Albanian political representation. Ahmeti considered that even though OFA was primarily the NLA's accomplishment, they needed to cooperate with Albanian parties to get it implemented.²²⁸ Following the experience with the Prizren declaration “NLA, the army and political wing, brought decision to call all Albanian political subjects to form a coordination body of all Albanians in Macedonia”.²²⁹ The idea was to have a council which will coordinate Albanian demands in the process of OFA's implementation. Ahmeti's rationale was that OFA implementation would go faster in that way (Menaj 2008, 150). Albanian parties would nominate two representatives; however, NLA would get three and “Ali Ahmeti was supposed to be at the helm”.²³⁰ Within NLA, there were strong opinions that Albanian parties should be subordinate to and follow NLA.²³¹ The argument was that Albanian political parties would be secondary to NLA, if NLA became politically active (Veliu, 2008: 194).

DPA and PDP initially agreed to be part of the coordinating council. However, part of the PDP leadership was concerned that they would lose significance, seeing that the “coordinating council [was] dominated by the former NLA” (Rusi, 2004: 14). And others in PDP were already aware that the party was becoming marginalized and opted to stay with Ahmeti, and help him to form a party.²³² On the other hand, DPA as an incumbent party thought it would lose its power if it became too much in line with NLA. Therefore, “DPA tried to hijack the Council and to bring Ahmeti under their influence, thereby eliminating any electoral rivals and securing the party's position in the elections of 2002. When that

228 Ali Ahmeti's interview for Fakti (daily newspaper in Albanian language), quoted in Rusi, 2004: 8.

229 Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

230 Author's interview with Raim Limani, Skopje, 18.12.2012.

231 Interview of Fazli Veliu for “Voice of Kosovo” 2 August 2001, reproduced in Veliu, 2008: 91.

232 Author's interview with Aziz Pollozhani, Skopje, 17.06.2013.

failed, DPA concentrated on destroying the Council, again with the aim of reducing Ahmeti's power” (Rusi, 2004: 14). DPA left the council and the council stopped functioning soon after that.

After the coordination council failed, “NLA concluded that the existing Albanian parties do not wish to cooperate and that a new political party should be formed”.²³³ NLA commanders appealed to Ahmeti to form a new party. Albanian parties started to attract former NLA combatants and the commanders considered it negative for the future political perspectives of NLA.²³⁴ Ali Ahmeti was a well known but controversial public figure. A poll carried out in February 2002 asked respondents whether they had positive or negative attitudes toward him. A vast majority had negative attitudes. However, among Albanians there was almost unanimous support for him. The results, shown in the table below, are statistically significant and show a strong and consistent relationship.

Table IV. 1. Attitudes toward Ali Ahmeti in Macedonia, February 2002

Attitudes about Ali Ahmeti in percent		
	All	Albanians
Positive	17.7	96.8
Negative	81.3	2.1

N= 1,055

Chi square .000
 Directional measures Lambda: .751; Eta: .883
 Symmetric measures Cramer's V: .569; Contingency: .702

Source: Institute for Democracy, Solidarity and Civil Society (IDSCS), Skopje

The idea of Ahmeti leading a party was acceptable for many Albanians. The results from a poll taken in

²³³Author's interview with Raim Limani, Skopje, 18.12.2012.

²³⁴Author's interview with Besim Hoda, Tetovo, 26.05.2013

May 2002 show this. The results are statistically significant and show a consistent relationship. About 14% of all Albanians said they would support a party led by Ali Ahmeti. This placed the still unformed party, on the third place in the poll. DPA had the lead and PDP was second. The results are shown in the table below.

Table IV.2. Support for Albanian parties in Macedonia, May 2002

Support for Albanian parties in percent, May 2002		
	All	Albanians
PDP	3.5	20
DPA	6.1	34.6
NDP	1	5.9
party of Ali Ahmeti	2.5	14.1

N= 1,055

Chi square .000
 Directional measures Lambda: .210; Eta: .478
 Symmetric measures Cramer's V: .383; Contingency: .684

Source: Institute for Democracy, Solidarity and Civil Society (IDSCS), Skopje

The post-conflict national legislative elections were scheduled for September 2002. In the summer of 2002, NLA announced a new political party, the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI). The decision to form a new political party was brought jointly by the political and army wing of NLA. “Ali Ahmeti called all brigade commanders. He asked whether we should form a new political party. We all supported the idea. The political leadership and the brigade commanders brought the decision together”.²³⁵ When it was formed DUI had four vice-presidents, two of NLA's high ranking commanders and two prominent Albanian intellectuals. Also, several MPs from PDP transferred to DUI. NLA from the start had a clear idea and strategy to broaden its appeal and to include various people in the new party.

²³⁵Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

The inaugural assembly of DUI was held in Tetovo on 5 June 2002. DUI's manifesto was the same as the one of the coordinating council. The full implementation of OFA was the main goal of DUI in the founding manifesto (DUI, 2002). Other goals included the stability of Macedonia and support for multi-ethnicity, elimination of organized crime and corruption, integration in EU and NATO, building a functional economy and democracy and rule of law. DUI's manifesto also called for reintegration of former fighters, return of refugees and reconstruction of homes, improvement of inter-ethnic trust and urgent actions to reduce poverty. DUI put on its agenda to decentralize the government and develop local democracy, to solve Albanian higher education problems, and to involve the diaspora.

The goals of DUI have not changed significantly in the past 12 years. Implementation of OFA remains top priority. For DUI, and also for Ahmeti, OFA remains the biggest accomplishment for Albanians in Macedonia. It improved the positions and rights for Albanians and secured their future (Ahmeti, 2011: 8). DUI sees Macedonia as a multi-ethnic democracy and opposes secession or division of the country (Ahmeti, 2011: 9). They point out that “preservation of the coherence and independence of Macedonia” was underlined in the Prizren declaration and in OFA, and are DUI's “long term political attitudes”.²³⁶

DUI had its first party congress on 19 November 2005. At this point the party had local branches in 34 municipalities, mainly Albanian-populated.²³⁷ Ali Ahmeti was unanimously re-elected as party president in 2005 and again in 2009. There were no other candidates. In 2005, the party adopted a new party program, a declaration for European integration of Macedonia and a declaration for independence of Kosovo. The party program was focused on implementation of OFA, and building multi-ethnic

236 Interview of G'zim Ostreni for Radio Free Europe. “G'zim Ostreni, presidential candidate of DUI. The future of Republic of Macedonia has to be seen with optimism”, 21.03.2004

237 Radio Free Europe. “Tetovo: First Congress of DUI”, 19.11.2005

democracy in Macedonia.²³⁸ In the view of Ahmeti, OFA was a “social contract, basis for reconciliation of biggest ethnic groups and for building trust in society”, and therefore it was needed to “transform the state from monoethnic to multiethnic”.²³⁹ OFA, and its achievements, were praised in DUI's electoral programs in 2008 and in the new party program in 2009. Building a multi-ethnic and multicultural democracy in Macedonia is a long-term commitment for DUI (DUI, 2009). Other tasks for DUI are to improve the usage of Albanian language and national symbols, to promote Albanian history culture and tradition and push for equitable representation in public institutions. They further demanded more decentralization with a focus on fiscal decentralization and increasing tax revenues for the municipalities (Kadriu, 2011: 148). Because of all this some consider DUI to be a left leaning Albanian ethnic party (Kadriu, 2011).

DUI was junior coalition partner in government from 2002 to 2006 and then from 2008 onward. Participation in government called for wider range of policies because they controlled different line ministries. Therefore, their platforms also include chapters on economy, infrastructure, education, culture, multilateral diplomacy, NATO and EU integration, and various reform processes. The party program from the second congress shows that DUI's policies go well beyond ethnic issues (DUI, 2009). The main electoral promises that target Albanian voters were: ensuring a law for Albanian as a second official language, increasing Albanian representation in state institutions and recognition of Kosovo. However, DUI made additional offers which are of wider interests such as: annual economic growth of 6-8%, creation of 100,000 new jobs, and greater tax revenues for municipalities, among others.

The founding manifesto of DUI did not make direct reference to NLA. However, the introduction

238 Utrinski Vesnik. “Ali Ahmeti unanimously elected for leader of DUI” (available at <http://star.utrinski.com.mk/?pBroj=1935&stID=56808&pR=2> last accessed on 22 April 2014)

239 Lobi, Online Press. “DUI had a Congress and adopted resolution for independence of Kosovo” (available at <http://www.pressonline.com.mk/?ItemID=4B31EA45D3110642913E601C55E339E7> last accessed on 22 April, 2014)

section, “Who we are”, of the party program in 2009 described DUI as a product of the “uprising in 2001” (DUI, 2009: 1). The founding manifesto was more modest and referred only to progressive powers which “brought an essential change in the positions of Albanians in Macedonia” (Rusi, 2004: 15) when addressing the foundation of DUI. Since their formation, DUI have promoted their lineage with the NLA. When DUI was formed their party web site described them as the ones “who knew to wage war [and, D.T] know how to wage peace”, and continued to glorify “the struggle of our people organized in UCK” (Friedman, 2006: 13). DUI's program in 2002 stated that the conflict in 2001 was started by NLA, then it “reached international understanding” and led to the creation of OFA (Friedman, 2006: 15). DUI took full credit for OFA and claimed that the war was necessary.

Local experts and officials from DUI agree that the legitimacy of DUI flows from the NLA.²⁴⁰ For some, “demobilization and reintegration of former combatants in pre-electoral Macedonia received a bizarre form: the fighters were suppose to disarm and to become 'politicians'” (Vankovska 2003:29). In a sense DUI's involvement in politics was seen as a continuation of NLA's armed struggle. But the bullets were replaced with ballots. The aim and goals of DUI are not substantially different than the ones proclaimed by NLA. The main points of the political agenda were crafted in the Prizren declaration, then appropriated in OFA and outlined in the coordination council. What sets DUI apart from other Albanian political parties is that it institutionalized the legacies of the conflict. Structural and symbolic legacies became important resources for the party. Also, when DUI was in power it had political control of institutions and possibilities to extend patronage, for example, by using OFA's principle of equitable representation to offer employment in public institutions.

240Author's interviews with Baskim Bakiu, Skopje 20.12.2010 and with Bekim Rexhepi, Skopje 15.12.2010.

IV.3.1 Structural Legacies: DUI built on NLA

When the coordinating council failed, the combatants were faced with a dilemma “whether to enter politics, or to forget about our capital [political and symbolic, D.T] and the fighters to return to every day leaving the political processes to the existing political subjects”.²⁴¹ Ali Ahmeti and his brigade commanders decided to form a party. They were conscious about their political and symbolic capital. They enjoyed local support and used NLA as the basis for DUI. At the same time they included politicians from other parties and intellectuals to broaden their appeal. This quote illustrates that point:

There was a great wave when it was announce that UCK and Ali Ahmeti were making a party. The support for the local branches came from all sides. At the beginning the soldiers made a larger part of the local branches. DUI developed slowly on the ground. The structures of NLA were the basis and new faces joined in.²⁴²

The leadership of DUI was practically equivalent to the leadership of NLA (Ademi, 2011). Ali Ahmeti, who was the leader of NLA, became the leader of DUI. The people closest to him in NLA assumed high positions in the party structures. For example, Fazli Veliu, became DUI's vice president and G'zim Ostreni, became the secretary general and later vice president. He was elected in Parliament and was head of DUI's electoral campaign headquarters from 2002 to 2011. He was DUI's presidential candidate in 2004. Musa Xhaferi was NLA international affairs liaison. After the conflict he became general secretary of DUI, a post he resigned to Ostreni after he was chosen to be deputy prime minister between 2002 and 2006. Xhaferi had different ministerial positions and became deputy prime minister in charge of the government secretariat for OFA implementation in 2011.

The overlap between DUI and NLA structures continues in the lower ranks as well. For example,

²⁴¹Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

²⁴² Author's interview with Besim Hoda, Tetovo, 26.05.2013

“Fatmir Dehari first appeared close to Ahmeti, as the chief of his personal security, in pictures in Shipkovic. Now he is in the party presidency, went to become deputy Minister of Interior and to run and win as Mayor of Oslomej”.²⁴³ Dehari was elected mayor of Kichevo in the local elections in 2013. Also, the heads of DUI's local branches in several different municipalities were NLA commanders in those municipalities. This was the case with Hazbi Lika in Tetovo, Talat Xhaferi in Tearce, Sadula Duraku in Lipkovo, and Nevzat Bejta in Gostivar among others. DUI's officials do not hide the fact that “when local branches were started NLA commanders and combatants were in charge. Local leaders of NLA became DUI's local leaders. NLA fighters were the core of DUI”.²⁴⁴ It seems that the intellectuals and other public persona were the face of DUI for the public; however, the structure of the party and its presence in the local communities was essentially a re-branding of the NLA.

The strategy to transform NLA and to create a new political party was discussed during the conflict. Different entries in Veliu's war journal show that he was concerned, and even upset, that existing Albanian parties, primarily DPA, would use the capital and legacy of NLA. The idea of Veliu was that “the future political subject should encapsulate NLA members, subjects who were close to it, supporters, members for logistics, influential persons who helped and propagated the fight of our people, the youth, students, peasants and workers...” (Veliu, 2008: 117). In other words, Veliu argued that DUI should first be built on NLA structures and their war time networks, but also that the new party should be open to include wider structures.

The transformation of NLA to DUI followed a similar purposeful strategy. “Local branches of DUI in the beginning were created by NLA fighters. The fighters and structures of NLA were the corner stone

243 Author's interview with Stevo Pendarovski, Skopje, 07.09.2011.

244 Author's interview with Bujar Osmani, Skopje, 16.05.2013.

of all local branches”.²⁴⁵ Some NLA members joined other parties, or remained independent; however, the core leadership and structures remained with DUI. “The main tendency of NLA members was to be members of DUI”.²⁴⁶ DUI also attracted other people which had nothing to do with NLA, such as popular intellectuals and politicians, mainly from PDP. Founding members note that “there was great enthusiasm and euphoria among all Albanians for the new party. There was mass influx of new members, but also members from other political parties were coming to DUI”.²⁴⁷

The inclusion of new people was necessary because of the public image, for DUI not to be only party of ex-combatants. Politicians from other parties brought practical political experience. New faces which joined DUI helped them to increase and widen their electoral appeal. For example, Bujar Osmani was the best student in his generation at the Faculty of Medicine. During the conflict he was part of NLA medic support, but it was not publicly known. After DUI was formed and became junior coalition partner in government, Osmani was called by a DUI high level official who was serving as a minister in government, and was asked to join DUI. The young Bujar Osmani served as minister for health from 2008 to 2011, and after was spokesperson of DUI.

DUI tried to transform its image and change its appeal. It even opened branches in Eastern Macedonia where very few Albanians live. The party insisted that the motive for this action is the realization of the “idea for multiethnic (i.e. inclusive) party politics”. However, “ethnic Macedonians refuted the idea or had attitudes that people will join DUI out of financial and material reasons (i.e. financial reimbursement and/or promised economic advantages) in the Western parts of the country” (Vankovska, 2003: 66).

245 Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

246 Author's interview with Raim Limani, Skopje, 18.12.2012.

247 Author's interview with Raim Limani, Skopje, 18.12.2012.

The push to attract new party cadres has created two factions inside DUI, NLA combatants and peace time politicians.²⁴⁸ It is largely believed that combatants still have the upper hand in the party and new faces are regarded less powerful. They are all in coalition with Ali Ahmeti, who is the main power broker and has highest authority. One indicator for the strength of NLA structures within DUI is the candidate selection. Most of DUI's candidates in the 2002 parliamentary elections came from NLA.²⁴⁹ In the first electoral unit the list was headed by Rafiz Aliti, aka Commander M'suesi and Fazli Veliu were second. In the second electoral unit the list was headed by Hisni Shaqiri and Nazmi Beqiri, NLA commandant and close associate of Ahmeti, was second. The list in the second electoral unit also featured Sadula Duraku, another NLA commandant, and Hajrula Misini, aka Commandant Shpati and NLA spokesperson. G'zim Ostreni was the first on DUI's party list in the fifth electoral unit. In the sixth electoral unit Ali Ahmeti headed the list and Hazbi Lika (aka Commandant Challa) featured prominently on it.

The table below shows the number of former combatants among DUI MPs from 2002 to 2011. Despite its best efforts to change their image and broaden the appeal, a large part of DUI is still based on the structural legacies of NLA.

Table IV.3. MPs from DUI: former combatants and others

	2002	2006	2008	2011
All	16	15	18	10
Former combatants	10	8	13	5
Others	6	7	5	15

248 Author's interview with Stevo Pendarovski, Skopje, 07.09.2011.

249 Utrinski Vesnik. "NLA commanders on the move to conquer parliament" (available at <http://star.utrinski.com.mk/?pBroj=938&stID=581&pR=2> last accessed on 26 April 2014).

Beside NLA's structures DUI could also rely on other war time networks for support. Parts of these networks were built during the conflict. They were networks of local supporters and villagers who aided NLA. They helped NLA with food and shelter during the conflict. After the conflict they supported the political activities of DUI. The war journal of Fazli Veliu offers one account of the support from these networks.

“In the place in which we are (Shipkovica) we have moral and economic support... from the locals and from surrounding villages. They offered shelter, food and resources. These days they sit with us to motivate us for coexistence and joint actions” (Veliu, 2008: 158).

After the conflict DUI kept close cooperation with the Association of NLA's veterans. This organization served as flanking organization for the party. The Association of NLA's veterans is headed by Fazli Veliu. The Association gathers war time networks which support DUI. It also provides an avenue for DUI to target patronage to former NLA combatants and their families. The following quote illustrates the activities of the organization of veterans and shows the links with DUI:

“They organize charitable events every year. They collect donations from employed, from appointed officials...a solidarity fund is made to help NLA fighters who need help, for families of fallen fighters, for invalids – for all that need help. That is done once or twice per year. There are humanitarian actions like that. You cannot make a difference whether NLA veterans or DUI is making that. People see us as part of the same family. We work together. NLA organization of veterans and DUI are one extended family”²⁵⁰.

The organization of NLA's veterans plays another very important role which is to organize commemorative events and other public manifestations to sustain the symbolic capital from the

250 Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

conflict.

IV.3.2. Symbolic Legacies: Symbolic capital for electoral gains

Writing about the transformation of NLA to DUI in 2002, Iso Rusi noted that “the history of the NLA's foundation and struggle looks certain to be used as political capital” (Rusi, 2004: 14). He understood, very early, the significance which symbolic capital would play in the post-conflict period. NLA commanders were the best material to build a new party in the post-conflict environment. They had symbolic capital and authority in their local communities. The structural and symbolic legacies of NLA overlapped and served the electoral interests of DUI. This quote is illustrative of that:

“the initiative board [of DUI, D.T] considered that the key people that waged the war can call the people to vote for their political option. Therefore, we, who were leaders [of armed groups, D.T] we took on a different role for leading and organizing the political interests and aspirations of the people in those regions on ethnic grounds.”²⁵¹

It seemed that at the end of the conflict NLA were quite aware of the symbolic capital that it had. This symbolic capital could easily be translated in political capital and used for electoral gains. This was not only their observation, but also of the other Albanian political parties. PDP and DPA wanted to attract NLA fighters to join them. “It was clear to them that the fighters who brought OFA were popular and had authority with the people. Their estimate was that these people can be great authority for winning elections”.²⁵²

The symbolic capital started to be built during the conflict. In the words of NLA commanders they had “full support of the local population. They had enough of being tortured. What we did was a true

251 Author's interview with Hajrula Misini, Skopje, 16.07.2013.

252 Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

revolution”, and the local population confirms that for them NLA combatants “were our children. They protected us. They sacrificed their lives for our rights” (Ismanovski, 2008: 8-9).

The symbolic capital was further enhanced and sustained with social practices in memory of fallen NLA fighters or battles. Fazli Veliu writes in his war journal that he visited different NLA brigades and had ceremonies to commemorate the fallen fighters and paid visits to their families (Veliu, 2008: 65), for example in “Vejce, Brodec, Selce, Larce etc” (Veliu, 2008: 84). On these occasions, Veliu and others would hold speeches glorifying the heroism of the fallen fighters and their struggle (Veliu, 2008: 101 and 137). In this way they initiated social practices to built and sustain their symbolic capital. Also, when NLA combatants would enter an Albanian village, they claim were greeted as heroes. They enjoyed respect and popular support. Children wanted to take photos with the NLA fighters, were imitating the soldiers and wanted to wear their hats and shirts (Veliu, 2008: 115) and recited poems in their favor (Veliu, 2008: 96). During the conflict combatants were buried where they died. After the conflict some were exhumed and re-buried “in newly-built memorials or elaborate graves” (Neofotistos, 2012: 4). They were buried in the uniform of NLA and the coffin was usually wrapped with the Albanian national flag. “Most of the memorials are built on village squares or on the side of the main roads and, hence, are an integral part of the landscape through which Albanians physically move everyday” (Neofotistos, 2012: 7).

The popular support for NLA during the conflict was beneficial for the political gains of DUI. After the conflict there were “additional possibilities to built profits from the armed conflict in 2001 on basis of myths, to say that all ours were heroes, and theirs were villains and vice versa, slowly all turn into heroes, and the villains are gone” (Milchin, 2010: 6). The main Albanian discourse about the conflict in 2001 and OFA describes NLA combatants as heroes who improved people's life. Among Albanians

NLA combatants “are experienced as heroes, as liberators, if you will and as carriers of the agenda for better political and legal treatment” (Mehmeti, 2010: 23). A young Albanian who was employed in public institution after the conflict, under OFA equitable provisions, considered that “if it were not for the martyrs, I would still be unemployed” (Neofotistos, 2012: 6).

After the conflict, former fighters became important public figures in their local communities. Their families tend to enjoy social prestige among their fellow citizens. And this gives them a competitive advantage in elections. “NLA veterans who are politically active in DUI are still considered important as strong politicians and strong candidates for elections. They have big support in the party and among the voters”.²⁵³ Even DPA, the main political opponent of DUI, acknowledges that DUI has, or uses, symbolic capital from the conflict for political gain. In its 2008 electoral program, DPA wrote that:

“this political party [DUI, D.T] is built and continues to build its political legitimacy on the premise of crisis. Fears it will lose the mysterious image, of bravest people alive, most likely prevents peace, order and security. The leaders of this party find it hard to agree with the fact that they are ordinary people, nothing extraordinary, in all aspects: moral, political or intellectual. They were legitimized by the war, which gave a false credibility in the heads of the people. Without this dimension, without this trick, given their intellectual abilities, their weight in society, they will not be able in any way to win people's support” (DPA, 2008: 1).

Albanian parties were aware of NLA's symbolic capital and its potency for attracting electoral support. This is why they offered NLA combatants positions on their lists or high positions in the party hierarchy.²⁵⁴ And that is the main reason why DUI wanted to preserve their symbolic capital. They invested purposefully in social practices and physical objects which come together “to produce a

253 Author's interview with Raim Limani, Skopje, 18.12.2012.

254 Author's interview with MPs from RDK, Skopje, 24.02.2014

version of history in Macedonia, whereby the NLA insurgency in 2001 was a struggle for equality and those who fought it were rightful defenders of the Albanian people and Albanian national martyrs” (Neofosistos, 2012). The understanding of the local Albanian community is that NLA combatants died to improve the rights and status of Albanians in Macedonia. Their sacrifice lead to OFA and the implementation of OFA brought more possibilities for Albanians in Macedonia. In that way DUI is investing in a discourse which provides for their popular support.

DUI and the Association of NLA's veteran have developed an annual program for commemorations from the day the conflict started to the day when OFA was signed. “Commemorations take place between February and August of each year on the anniversaries of the so-called liberation (*çlirim*) from state rule in the villages that the NLA brought under its military control in 2001” (Neofotistos, 2012: 9). The commemorative events start on 16 February, which is the day when the first battle was waged. On this day Ali Ahmeti, addressing the crowd in 2014, said that “I would like to remember and give respect to all those brave fighters from Kumanovo, Karadak, Tetovo and Skopje, Gostivar and Struga, because their blood is the foundation on which today we build our future”.²⁵⁵ On 13 August, the day when OFA was signed, DUI organized visits on graves of NLA fallen fighters to “give respect to ones who gave their lives for peace” and in “all places where there are monuments and cemeteries of fallen fighters”.²⁵⁶

255 Alsat-M. TV. “Marking of the anniversary of the start of the armed conflict”, 16.02.2014 (available at http://alsat.mk/index.php/vesti/od_zemjata/7472-%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%B6%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B8%D1%88%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0-%D0%BE%D0%B4-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D1%87%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%BA%D0%BE%D1%82-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B2%D0%BE%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%83%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BE%D1%82-%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D1%84%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%BA%D1%82.html last accessed on 22 April 2014)

256 Alsat-M TV. “Slupchane protests. Government delegation today will pay respect for died in 2001”, 13.08.2013 (available at http://alsat.mk/index.php/vesti/od_zemjata/4481-%D0%A1%D0%BB%D1%83%D0%BF%D1%87%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B5-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%B0-%D0%92%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%B3%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B0-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BD

DUI officials and supporters are among the prominent guests. They, along with Fazli Veliu, mostly deliver speeches in these events. The public commemorations serve to “present the 2001 conflict as part of a long struggle for national emancipation from Slavic (both Serb and Macedonian) rule and promote unequivocally an understanding of the 2001 conflict as heroic resistance of Albanians in Macedonia and the Balkans more generally. Remarks about “heroes”, “the blood of martyrs”, “sacrifice” and “homeland”, abound” (Neofotistos, 2012: 10).

In Slupchane, a conflict-affected village, Ali Ahmeti opened a museum dedicated to NLA on 21 November 2012. The museum is in the vicinity of the graveyard of NLA combatants and civilian casualties from the 2001 conflict. The museum is situated in a small house. The permanent exhibit features NLA's equipment and uniforms, along with books and other publications. Former NLA combatants and families of casualties attended the event, among many other guests. The keynote address was given by Ali Ahmeti who said that:

“This is a special moment. One symbolic day, when we make eternal and glorify the erasable marks left by NLA, founded in a museum that looks small, but has a big soul, has big meaning and big message. These are the erasable traces of contemporary history. This is the most recent history of Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia”.²⁵⁷

Sadula Duraku, the Mayor of Lipkovo municipality, in which Slupchane is situated, also addressed the gathering.²⁵⁸ According to him NLA was not an armed aggressor but a liberator. It wanted to contribute

<http://www.plusinfo.mk/vest/67451/Muzej-na-UChK-otvoren-deneska-vo-Slupchane> last accessed on 20 March 2014)

257 PlusInfo web portal. “Museum of NLA opened today in Slupchane” 21.11.2012 (available at <http://www.plusinfo.mk/vest/67451/Muzej-na-UChK-otvoren-deneska-vo-Slupchane> last accessed on 20 March 2014)

258 Sadula Duraku was NLA commander accused for stopping the water supply system for the city of Kumanovo in 2001.

to the democratization of the country. DUI organizes commemorative events in Slupchane every year on 5 May, which is considered the day of NLA fallen fighters, and on 13 August. However, this activity created a big stir in 2012, when the graveyard was visited by Fatmir Besimi, Minister of Defense. Even though Besimi himself had not been an NLA member, and is widely considered a moderate politician, he was accompanied by members of his cabinet who were army personnel and were wearing official Army uniforms. The event was seen as the Macedonian army paying respect to NLA. The public reactions were strong to the extent that there was serious crisis in the government between DUI and VMRO-DPMNE.²⁵⁹

VMRO-DPMNE in reaction submitted a proposal for a law granting benefits to members of Macedonian security forces during the conflict. The law did not apply to NLA members, and it labeled them as “terrorists”. DUI, and the wider Albanian community, were outraged because of the labeling. And even more that NLA combatants were not to be given any social benefits. This issue has featured prominently among DUI's policy goals. DUI blocked the law in parliament. It filed thousands of amendments, and it was filibustered by Talat Xhaferi, former NLA commander. Due to unclear rules of procedures it seemed that Xhaferi could filibuster indefinitely, including reading poetry, books and keeping silent. After several weeks the proposal was eventually dropped and after a government reshuffle Xhaferi became Minister of Defense. In 2013, following the footsteps of Fatmir Besimi, Talat Xhaferi also went to Slupchane as Minister of Defense, but this time he was not accompanied by army

This left a municipality of over 100,000 people without water, and earned Duraku the label Commandant “Ventili”. He was charged for war crimes for his activities in 2001. He was arrested and detained in 2002, after being elected as MP on the list from DUI, but was soon released. He was granted amnesty by Parliament in 2011, along with other NLA members suspected of war crimes.

259 Balkan Insight. “The Macedonian coalition will consolidate or fall apart”, 11 September 2012 (available at <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/%D0%BC%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0-%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B0-%D0%B8%D0%BB%D0%B8-%D1%9C%D0%B5-%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%B0-%D0%B8%D0%BB%D0%B8-%D1%9C%D0%B5-%D1%81%D0%B5-%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%82%D1%83%D1%80%D0%B8> last accessed on 20 March 2014)

personnel. He went to pay respect to the fallen NLA fighters, “to celebrate 12 years from the start of war in Slupchane and proclaiming NLA free territory”, and in his speech noted that “the ideals of NLA's sacrifices from 2001 should be realized all the way”.²⁶⁰

DUI tried to preserve and sustain NLA's symbolic capital even 12 years after the conflict ended. “DUI officials and supporters have built upon a discourse of martyrdom to produce and publicly disseminate a particular version of nationhood” which led to “political appropriation of the legacy of the NLA by DUI” (Neofotistos, 2012: 3-4). DUI high officials argue that because if the main leaders of NLA are heading DUI, then DUI is NLA. G'zim Ostreni summarizes the argument saying “if Ali Ahmeti is there [in DUI, D.T], if I am there, the commanders [are there, D.T]: this was the NLA”.²⁶¹ DUI also wants to keep the symbolic capital exclusive. When DUI and the Association of NLA's veterans organize commemorative events and other public manifestations, they do not invite representatives from other Albanian parties.²⁶² DUI's Albanian competitors consider that symbolic capital from the conflict gave DUI advantage in different electoral cycles after the conflict.²⁶³ They note that the symbolic capital was more potent when the memory of the conflict was fresher. But regardless, DUI tries to preserve the symbolic capital as much as it can and tries to use it in different electoral cycles. For example, Fatmir Dehari, as DUI's candidate for Mayor of Kichevo, used an old picture of him from 2001 for his electoral posters in 2013. In the picture he is armed and wearing a NLA uniform.

Some Albanian politicians, such as Menduh Thaci, leader of DPA, have heavily criticized DUI for trying to keep NLA's symbolic capital exclusive. Thaci has argued “that the NLA combatants were

260 24Vesti. “The Minister of Defense paid respect to NLA fighters in Slupchane”, 03.05.2013 (available at <http://24vesti.mk/ministerot-za-odbrana-gi-chestvuvashе-borcite-na-ona-vo-slupchane> last accessed on 20 March 2014)

261 Author's interview with G'zim Ostreni, Debar, 14.07.2013.

262 Author's interview with MPs from RDK, Skopje, 24.02.2014

263 Author's interview with MPs from RDK, Skopje, 24.02.2014

“victims” (*viktimë*), who were manipulated by Ali Ahmeti into joining the NLA and helping Ahmeti establish himself as a politician” (Neofotistos, 2012: 3-4). Local population tends to see the commemorative events as “marketing visits”. In words of one local man, who lost his son in the conflict “it hurts when I hear that ministers from DUI will come to pay respect the graves. They are not to be found the entire year, but on that day they will come to take a photo. That is classical marketing”.²⁶⁴ Local villagers protested against the politization of commemorations in 2013 and 2014. They saw them as electoral marketing, and chance for the parties only to promote themselves. They were infuriated because little has changed in their everyday lives. Unemployment remains high, social conditions are dire and local public infrastructure has deteriorated. The reactions of the local population show that there are limits to the usage of symbolic capital for electoral gains in the post-conflict period. It is very likely that symbolic capital wears off with time. Even NLA commanders which have used it for electoral gains note that symbolic capital on its own cannot indefinitely be a guarantee for electoral success.

There are former members of NLA who run for office, but fail to get elected. Why? Because they do not have results. People know that the war is over. Patriotism does not get you support. If you bring people water, if you built the infrastructure, if you improve their life, then you get support.²⁶⁵

Nonetheless, DUI has institutionalized the symbolic legacy of the conflict and used it as valuable resources. They relied on the symbolic capital of key leaders which were leading both NLA and DUI. They develop social practices (e.g. commemorations) and invested in physical objects (e.g. monuments and museums) that serve to develop a discourse about the conflict in 2001 and OFA which is entirely in their favor. NLA fighters are regarded as “martyrs and heroes” and OFA is considered as their

²⁶⁴ Utrinski vesnik. Reportage “Except the monument of NLA in Slupchane there is nothing else”, 06.08.2013 (available at <http://www.utrinski.mk/?ItemID=30D1AFB7AE27794D8F1C8E22893F3444> last accessed on 20 March 2014)

²⁶⁵ Author's interview with Hajrula Misini, Skopje, 16.07.2013.

achievement which improved the situation of Albanians in Macedonia. However, it seems that the symbolic capital wears off over time. And when the memory of the conflict fades, primary socio-economic interest surface. Under such conditions patronage and clientelism become important instruments for gaining and sustaining electoral support.

IV.3.3. Patronage and clientelism

Patronage and clientelism were present in Macedonia even before the conflict in 2001 (Hislope, 2002). Spoils were divided between government coalition partners. Albanian parties, as junior coalition partners, had possibilities to employ party faithful, engage in corruption, extend patronage and even collude with organized crime syndicates (Hislope, 2002). The conflict and post-conflict phase brought new ways how to extend patronage.

For example, NLA was channeling the post-conflict reconstruction. NLA commanders had control of territory and were effectively in charge of post-conflict municipalities. At the same time there were elected local mayors and council persons, from DPA, PDP and smaller parties, but they were not seen as important. In order to start the reconstruction of houses and public infrastructure, the support and approval of local NLA commanders was needed.²⁶⁶ This meant that NLA combatants controlled local governance in the post-conflict region. Around 5,500 houses were partially or completely destroyed during the conflict in Macedonia (Pendarovski, 2005). The damage was mainly caused in Albanian populated areas. After the conflict ended and before the parliamentary elections in September 2002, NLA was demobilized and DUI was not formed. NLA-DUI structures did not have electoral legitimacy, but they did have effective political control on ground and thus had governance competences. NLA

²⁶⁶ Author's interview with local engineer working for international sponsored post-conflict reconstruction projects in 2002, Skopje 25.07.2013.

tried to provide direct benefits to their members and families. NLA took as their prerogative and obligation to built and rebuild their houses and to “cover symbolic expenses of families of fallen fighters!” (Veliu, 2008: 150). People working on post-conflict reconstruction testify to that:

“First when we entered to rebuild the houses, we went to the mayor. I think he was DPA. He told us from which houses to start. The next day there was a commotion when we arrived. NLA guys were there. They did not let the workers continue. They wanted other houses to be rebuilt first. The mayor came, but they chased him away. It was tense, but not dangerous. They were not waving guns and shooting or something like that. But it was very clear that they [former NLA, D.T] have the last word. We had to go through them, and we forgot about the Mayor”.²⁶⁷

This shows that NLA had the power to channel the post-conflict reconstruction for their purposes. NLA was also directly involved in the post-conflict reconstruction and rebuilding. For example, NLA combatants took part to rebuild a village road in the area of Tetovo, which was officially opened by high ranking commanders (Veliu, 2008: 134). Local villagers recognized that NLA had effective political control and that they could provide them with access to resources. After the conflict they approached the leadership of NLA, yet to become DUI, to get access to some public goods. The local combatants or commandant served as the interlocutor. For example, in his war journal Fazliu testifies that local population urged NLA to demand water supply in one village (Veliu, 2008: 179). When the works started NLA commanders were overseeing the process. In the post-conflict period NLA had possibilities to extend 'club' goods such as building roads and water supply for Albanians and they had possibilities to extend 'private' goods such as rebuilding houses for their combatants. After the elections in 2002 the newly formed DUI was included in government and got even more access to spoils and resources.

²⁶⁷ Author's interview with local engineer working for international sponsored post-conflict reconstruction projects in 2002, Skopje 25.07.2013.

The majority of the ethnic Macedonian population did not support former guerrillas to be part of the government. For the international community and SDSM, which won in 2002 and would lead the new government, it was clear that DUI needed to be included. The negotiations for government formation between SDSM and DUI started. The whole process was managed rather intelligently. The idea was to create an impression that the formation of government is stalling and if the government was not formed, then it would be detrimental for the stability of the country.²⁶⁸ The government between SDSM and DUI was formed and functioned from 2002 to 2006. The implementation of OFA was one of the main political priorities. This was very important for DUI and for Albanians in general. The implementation process did not go easily. On one hand, it had to satisfy the growing expectations of Albanians; on the other side, revolt from ethnic Macedonians needed to be avoided.²⁶⁹ This especially applied to possibilities for employment in public institutions. The cooperation between the two parties went well. Most of OFA was implemented. Laws for usage of symbols and language were passed. Education in Albanian was improved. A decentralization process was initiated. The security situation improved and inter-ethnic tensions deescalated.

When DUI entered the government after the conflict, they got access to spoils and resources. It seems that in the first period patronage was directed to their war time networks as 'private' goods, but later patronage was extended as 'club' goods to ethnic Albanians. For example, DUI believed NLA commanders have priority for filling up high level positions in government. “Former KLA commanders believed that it was the right moment to be rewarded for their war time heroism, so they were pushing the leadership to insist for more and for higher positions in the political bargaining with SDSM” (Vankovska, 2003: 64). However, SDSM did not accept high profile NLA commanders in high

268 Author's interview with Gjorgji Spasov, Skopje, 11.07.2013.

269 Author's interview with Aziz Pollozhani, Skopje, 17.06.2013.

positions, but instead were very cooperative when it came to division of spoils and resources. The division was done in accordance with OFA principle for 'equitable representation', meaning secured proportional representation. With the inclusion in government DUI got many positions on national and local levels. This quote illustrates how spoils were divided:

We divided everything according to the 25% rule. The whole division of power went on several levels. First the most important ministries were divided: interior, defense, foreign affairs and justice. From those four, DUI got 1, ministry for justice. We divide also places for deputy ministers, if they did not get a minister, then they could get a deputy minister, for example in finance, defense, and interior. So they would have control. The next ministries in relevance were economy, labor and social policy, education and health. They also got 1 ministry. Then came the public funds for pensions, health, social issues, where the money is. One of the funds went to Albanians. Then came agencies, for aviation control, for electric communication, for employment, all agencies. And there are other administrative organs. Everywhere they got 25%.²⁷⁰

DUI needed to fill the positions with its own cadres. Some went to NLA combatants; others provided a good opportunity to attract new people. In Albanian-majority municipalities DUI got even more of the positions in the public administration. If Albanians constituted 70-80% of the population, DUI would get similar percent of the positions. DUI got extra positions in municipalities where Albanians were majority, because it made no sense to get public positions in municipalities where practically there were no Albanians. The post-conflict divisions of spoils in the new government gave DUI political control of a vast part of the public sector. DUI won in most of municipalities where Albanians were majority in the local elections in 2005. This secured the possibilities for DUI to extend patronage.

However, DUI was not included in government after the elections in 2006. Despite the fact that DUI won most of the Albanian votes and had more seats in Parliament than DPA, it wasn't included in the

²⁷⁰ Author's interview with Gjorgji Spasov, Skopje, 11.07.2013.

government. VMRO-DPMNE, the party which won majority of the votes and would form the government, decided to include DPA as a junior coalition partner. DUI and the wider Albanian community were outraged. Ahmeti warned of “grave consequences” for “inter-ethnic relations” and sent an open letter to NATO, US and EU, while some of former NLA commanders considered a new armed campaign (Balkananalysis, 2006b). As a consequence, DUI left the Parliament in January 2007. Ali Ahmeti considered that the decision to leave parliament was not “preparation for some new war”.²⁷¹ However, he called a meeting with DUI's mayors from some 15 municipalities to discuss how the municipalities would behave toward the central government. DUI's principal demand was to be included in government, and they also made demands to speed up implementation of OFA.

International actors intervened to calm the situation. US and EU representatives initiated negotiations between VMRO-DPMNE and DUI. Nikola Gruevski, prime minister and leader of VMRO-DPMNE, and Ali Ahmeti signed a so-called “May agreement” on 29 May 2007. This ended the political crisis and DUI's boycott of Parliament. The agreement listed 45 laws that were to be voted with “double” majority.²⁷² The agreement also entailed obligation to enact a new law for the committee for inter-ethnic relations, to adopt a law for usage of the Albanian language, to find a solution for the legal status of NLA combatants and to discuss the method to form a government (Kadriu, 2011: 147). For DUI this was one step forward in implementation of OFA, but also widening and enhancing Albanian rights.

They returned to Parliament, but the ethnic tensions did not significantly ease up. During the negotiations between VMRO-DPMNE and DUI, DPA was threatening to leave the government. It saw its role as Albanian representatives marginalized by the actions of DUI. However, it stayed in

271Cf. Utrinski Vesnik. Leader of DUI claims that leaving Parliament should not be understood as threat of war. 30.01.2007. (available at <http://www.utrinski.mk/default-mk.asp?ItemID=F0070F873D912D4D86B16ACDC5E36EB9> accessed on 7 December 2013)

272Kanal 5 TV. VMRO-DPMNE and DUI can't agree even on the list of votes for Badinter, 22.03.2007 (available at <http://star.kanal5.com.mk/%28S%28lucfvpbovt3zkmd3eto3jn2%29%29/default.aspx?mId=37&eventId=23038&egId=13>, accessed on 7 December 2013)

government and welcomed the return of DUI in parliament. VMRO-DPMNE explained to DPA that DUI would not get pensions and benefits for NLA members and their families.²⁷³ The polarization between the Albanian parties, DUI and DPA, continued, as well as the inter-ethnic tensions between DUI and VMRO-DPMNE.

The implementation of the “May agreement” was going slowly which led Ali Ahmeti to make some radical statements that “if the problems of Albanians in Macedonia are not solved, the country will not enter NATO, but will enter a crisis like the one in 2001”.²⁷⁴ On the other hand, Menduh Thaci, leader of DPA and coalition partner of Prime Minister Gruevski, rejected the radical statements saying that “the call for armed rebellion for freeing Albanian areas and calls for assimilation cannot be tolerated”.²⁷⁵ Early elections in 2008 provided an exit from the political deadlock. The early elections were a joint decision of DUI and VMRO-DPMNE. Each party had its own reasons. VMRO-DPMNE saw a chance to win and increase its size in parliament. For DUI early elections were a chance to get back in government. Their argument was that when DUI was in government from 2002 to 2006, then OFA was implemented and the position of Albanians improved. Therefore, the people “did not want to go against that. They supported DUI in 2006. And this is why we had to have new elections in 2008.”²⁷⁶ DUI again won most of votes and was included in government.

DUI needed to be part of government to continue targeting benefits to former NLA members. One of their standing policy requests has been to secure housing and employment for families of fallen NLA

273Utrinski Vesnik. “Do not worry, there is no deal for fighters of NLA, says VMRO-DPMNE to their partner DPA”, 29.05.2007, (available at <http://www.utrinski.mk/default-mk.asp?ItemID=A05FCD14DD4B074DA9E3B5E54CF698AB>, accessed at 7 December 2013)

274Cf. Večer. “Interview of the leader of DUI for Greek newspaper Kathimerini”, 27.10.2007 (available at <http://www.vecer.com.mk/?ItemID=557B21242A818B4BA5DE94BBD8BEFB99> accessed on 7 December 2013)

275Cf. Večer. “The leader of DPA Menduh Thaci condemns treats from DUI for new armed rebellion of Albanians in Macedonia”, 29.10.2007 (available at <http://www.vecer.com.mk/?ItemID=C6F036CEB36E6A40BCC70C666D07BB35>, accessed on 7 December 2013)

276 Author's interview with Aziz Pollozhani, Skopje 14.07.2013.

combatants. However, DUI was not able to secure an agreement from VMRO-DPMNE, its coalition partner. On the other hand, Xhelal Bajrami, Minister for Labor and Social Policy from DUI was claiming that the social status of former NLA members will be solved. The uncertainty caused a lot of frustrations and even led Fazli Veliu to claim that “if the status of freedom fighters is not resolved, we will repeat our actions in 2001”.²⁷⁷ Fazli Veliu continued to push for the issue with tough rhetoric,²⁷⁸ however, with no apparent success. DUI was not able to deliver a policy solution for former NLA combatants and their families. However, DUI was able to use other government policies to cater to demands of former NLA. For example, flats in government sponsored, public investment, and housing projects were allocated primarily to NLA combatants and their families according to “lists from the Association of War Veterans, whose current president is Fazli Veliu”.²⁷⁹

DUI also has possibilities to extend patronage through implementation of OFA. For example, the OFA has a provision of 'equitable representation' of minorities in public administration. DUI read it as a possibility to employ party members and supporters in the public administration and was using it to employ NLA veterans and members of their families. DUI representatives claim that “the fighters of NLA and their families have advantage for employment” and “if sometimes there is resistance toward a candidate, but his family is connected to NLA, then the connection with NLA is the main argument and the resistance is smaller”.²⁸⁰ In this way DUI is purposefully targeting benefits and creating patron-client relationship with their supporters. These two quotes illustrate that point:

277 Lajm. “Rain Returns 2001”, 08.01.2010 (available at <http://lajmpress.com/lajme/maqedoni/2868.html> last accessed on 20 March 2014)

278 Macedonian Information Centre (MIC). “Ahmeti putting pressure via Veliu for resolving NLA fighters' status”, 26.12.2011 (available at <http://micnews.com.mk/node/29024> last accessed on 20 March 2014)

279 Koha. “No apartments for disabled NLA fighters: government project ignores Albanians”, 11 August 2009 (available at <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/No+apartments+for+disabled+NLA+fighters%3a+government+project+ignores...-a0206604463> last accessed on 20 March 2014)

280 Author's interview with party official from DUI, Skopje

“Part of NLA fighters who have secondary education or university degree are integrated, they entered public administration, in the police, army and customs. There are some who have not integrated, who do not have jobs, but they are in small numbers. Part of those who lost family members are integrated somewhere where we have power on local level. We make sure that someone from the family is employed, so that they could provide for their family”.²⁸¹

„DUI as a party can do little to help NLA veterans and their families. But there are instruments to do so when possibility is given to practice power. For example, when it comes to employment, advantage is given to NLA veterans or relatives of fallen fighters from the conflict in 2001 or to wound and invalids“.²⁸²

There are two rationales behind this. First, DUI sees itself as a successor to NLA and has to 'take care' of its former fighters and their families. Second, it is beneficial for maximizing electoral support. Politicians from other Albanian parties consider that war time networks expect DUI to deliver. On one hand, they see DUI as their mother party, and on the other “DUI was mainly in power since 2001, and only a party in government has the means to improve their situation”.²⁸³

However, it seems that DUI widened the scope of targeted benefits beyond their war time networks. Families of deceased NLA combatants claim that they got support from DUI only for a couple of years after the conflict.²⁸⁴ DUI started to extend 'private' goods, such as employment in public institutions under OFA equitable representation, wider in the Albanian community. Representatives of different Albanian parties claim that there are strong demands for clientelism and patronage. They say that it is a strong instrument to motivate voters and harness electoral support. “That means you support a party that will give you benefits, employment, subventions, that you have some material gains from the

281 Author's interview with Rafiz Aliti, Skopje, 20.12.2012.

282 Author's interview with Raim Limani, Skopje, 18.12.2012.

283 Author's interview with MPs from RDK, Skopje, 24.02.2014.

284 Utrinski vesnik. Reportage “Except the monument of NLA in Slupchane there is nothing else”, 06.08.2013 (available at <http://www.utrinski.mk/?ItemID=30D1AFB7AE27794D8F1C8E22893F3444> last accessed on 20 March 2014)

party”²⁸⁵.

Albanian parties were criticized for using OFA's equitable representation principle for party employment. The practice was started by DUI in 2002, but the same continued when DPA entered government in 2006 (Mehmeti, 2011: 46). 'Equitable representation' is implemented by the Secretariat for Implementation of OFA (SIOFA). It is headed by a representative from the Albanian junior coalition partner. One of SIOFA's competences is to check what the percentage of Albanians working in public administration is, and to remedy where necessary. This means that SIOFA oversees the employment of Albanians in public institutions. Through SIOFA Albanian parties in government have a tool to provide public jobs for party loyalists. DUI and DPA, when in power, have used SIOFA to their party advantage. DPA used the possibility to kick out DUI supporters and employ its own party loyalists in 2006. DUI returned the favor when they joined government in 2008. On several occasions employment has been promoted to the public in televised shows. In an official ceremony, party officials give out certificates for employment to new cadres. This sends the message, and shows to the public, that the party in control of SIOFA employs Albanians in the public sector. However, employment is sometimes done without planning and in cases where there is no need for new employees. Nonetheless, newly employed persons are put on the public budget payroll. They sit at home, receive salary from the state, but do not work until they are called (Frchkovski, 2010: 19).

Patronage and clientelism is not an exclusive practice of DUI, or DPA, or any other Albanian political party. Political control of the economy and the public sector has been continuously used to extend patronage. DUI has extended patronage throughout the entire post-conflict period. First, remnants of NLA, before DUI was formed, could channel the post-conflict reconstruction for their purpose. They

285 Author's interview with MPs from RDK, Skoje, 24.02.2014.

were also active in the rebuilding process. They initiated and oversaw some projects which extended 'club' goods to Albanians. Second, with inclusion in government they got access to spoils and resources. They were able to target benefits to their supporters, primarily NLA combatants and their families. DUI, and DPA as well, have used OFA's principle of equitable representation to employ party loyalists. In this way, political control of institutional instruments for minority inclusion was used as incentives to create patron-client relationship between Albanian parties and their supporters.

IV.4. Competition between Albanian parties in post-conflict Macedonia

Albanian parties compete in local and national legislative elections. There are no guaranteed seats, or special rules, for minority ethnic parties. In both national and local elections, political parties compete with closed party lists under PR rules. Albanian parties compete between themselves and with other parties. To analyze their competition I collected electoral results for all Albanian parties in over 60 municipalities in all post-conflict elections (2002 – 2013). I created two data sets, one for the local elections and the other for national legislative elections. I only included municipalities where Albanian parties received at least one vote. I opted for a very low threshold in order to have more cases, and variation, in the data sets. Setting the level of analysis on municipalities allowed me to measure other relevant variables on municipal level such as the number of voters and turnout per municipality, total population and number of Albanians in each municipality, whether the municipality was affected by the conflict or not and which party had political control in the municipality. Electoral data come from the State Electoral Commission (SEC) of the Republic of Macedonia, and is available at www.sec.mk. Data for population and number of Albanians come from the census in 2002.

One caveat should be noted here. The last census in Macedonia was taken in 2002. There was a more

recent attempt in 2011 to take a census, but it failed. Therefore, the most recent census data are from 2002; notwithstanding that there might be changes in the demographics since then. On the other hand, even if there are changes, probably they are not very big since demographic patterns under normal circumstances are usually more durable. The first post-conflict elections that I analyze, national legislative in 2002, were in the same year when the census was taken, while the last one, local elections in 2013, were 11 years after the census. The census data should be more valid for elections which were closer to the year it was taken.

The electoral results of Albanian parties are measurement of their performance. I used a dummy variable to measure whether the municipality was conflict-affected or not. If there were armed clashes or reported activities of NLA during 2001, then the municipality was coded 1 for conflict-affected and 0 otherwise. The measurement was based on my thorough research of the conflict in 2001. I take conflict-affected municipalities as a proxy for the strength of war time networks. Arguably, war time networks were wider and denser in conflict-affected municipalities and one would expect that parties from rebels will have higher support there. I also used a dummy variable to measure political control of municipality. I take political control of the municipality as a proxy for parties' possibilities to extend patronage. To measure political control I coded the political affiliation of the mayor. I expect the party which had political control of the municipality to have most possibilities to extend patronage and thus be able to get higher voter support.

Over 70% of municipalities in the sample were not affected by the conflict and the turnout in these municipalities was higher.²⁸⁶ The turnout in conflict-affected municipalities was lower. However, over 70% of Albanians live in conflict-affected municipalities. Albanians are clustered in the former conflict

²⁸⁶ Tables with information about the sample are in the appendix.

region. This means that Albanian parties get most votes, and compete most intensively, in conflict-affected municipalities. DPA had political control in most of Albanian majority municipalities until the local elections in 2005. After that DUI won and had control of most Albanian majority municipalities.

The main competition between Albanian parties is for the national legislative elections. There were four cycles between 2002 and 2011. The first post-conflict elections were held in September 2002 and after the regular elections in 2006 there were two cycles of early elections in 2008 and 2011. The turnout was highest in the parliamentary elections in 2002 (75%). Then it dropped in 2006 and 2008 (55-56%), and increased in 2011 (61%). DUI won in all post-conflict national legislative elections with a steady electoral support. The results are presented in table 4.

Table IV.4. Results of Albanian parties in national legislative elections (2002-2011)

	2002 (N=65)		2006 (N=82)		2008 (N=66)		2011 (N=66)	
Registered voters	1, 239, 397		1, 711, 515		1, 486, 721		1, 526, 043	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Turnout	934, 294	75.38	961, 831	56.19	831, 781	55.95	942, 643	61.77
DUI	143, 676	15.38	113, 519	11.8	125, 699	15.11	115, 091	12.2
DPA	63, 124	6.76	70, 259	7.3	82, 376	9.9	66, 312	7.03
PDP	26, 378	2.82	-	-	7, 213	0.86	277	0.03
NDP	25, 837	2.76	4, 077	0.42	-	-	-	-
NA	-	-	3, 507	0.36	-	-	-	-
NDS-DAAM	-	-	4, 117	0.43	-	-	-	-
NDU	-	-	-	-	1, 651	0.19	470	0.05
DUA	-	-	-	-	6, 484	0.78	4, 029	0.43
RDK	-	-	-	-	-	-	29, 996	3.18
ND	-	-	-	-	-	-	19, 958	2.11

My argument is that DUI was the most successful Albanian party because it was built on war time networks and had possibilities to extend patronage. To test the support from war time networks I analyzed the variance of electoral support for Albanian parties in relation to conflict-affected municipalities. I expect that DUI will have higher support in conflict-affected municipalities. I used one way ANOVA to compare the parties' mean results in each electoral cycle. The results are presented in the tables below. Levene's test shows that there is sufficient variance between conflict-affected and non conflict-affected municipalities. The F values show the strongest and significant effect for DUI. The comparison of the mean electoral support shows that DUI had by far the highest score in conflict-affected municipalities compared to other parties. Electoral support for DUI was almost 10 ten times higher in conflict-affected municipalities, compared to the support the party got in non conflict-affected municipalities in 2002 and 2006. The results for DPA have a similar structure, but their mean scores are much lower then DUI's.

Table IV.5. 2002 national elections. One way ANOVA: conflict-affected municipalities and voter support

conflict-affected	N	DUI	DPA	PDP	NDP
Yes	18	6223.22 (5188.37)	2535.28 (2181.39)	1121.61 (1140.04)	729.33 (869.82)
No	47	673.57 (1826.85)	372.11 (904.97)	131.68 (302.12)	270.4 (743.17)
Levene's test		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.152
F		41.32***	32.36***	30.56***	4.51**

***. Significant at 0.01. **. Significant at 0.05. *. Significant at 0.1. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

Table IV.6. 2006 elections. One way ANOVA: conflict-affected municipalities and voter support

conflict-affected	N	DUI	DPA	NDP	NA	NDS-DAAM
Yes	18	4, 717.94 (3, 504.13)	2, 935.28 (3, 019.33)	18 (114.11)	126.44 (157.08)	187.5 (341.63)
No	64	446.81 (1, 269.64)	272.25 (823.35)	64 (31.61)	19.23 (97.71)	11.59 (47.19)

Levene's test		0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000
F		66.07***	40.31***	11.56***	12.65***	16.37***

***. Significant at 0.01. **. Significant at 0.05. *. Significant at 0.1. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

Table IV.7. 2008 elections. One way ANOVA: conflict-affected municipalities and voter support

conflict-affected	N	DUI	DPA	NDU	PDP	DUA
Yes	18	4, 873.33 (3, 306.91)	3, 405.83 (3, 566.75)	64.06 (196.28)	366.89 (468.83)	270.11 (483.22)
No	48	791.23 (2, 062.64)	438.98 (1, 055.39)	10.38 (27.57)	12.69 (40.92)	33.79 (107.67)
Levene's test		0.009	0.000	0.005	0.000	0.000
F		36.18***	27.45***	3.49*	27.55***	10.37**

***. Significant at 0.01. **. Significant at 0.05. *. Significant at 0.1. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

Table IV.8. 2011 elections. One way ANOVA: conflict-affected municipalities and voter support

conflict-affected	N	DUI	DPA	RDK	ND	DUA	NDU	PDP
Yes	18	4, 267.44 (3, 223.04)	2, 700.06 (3, 377.06)	1, 314.39 (1, 990.04)	632.39 (731.25)	172.17 (393.54)	15.61 (14.67)	15.39 (24.06)
No	48	797.44 (1, 864.25)	368.98 (1, 050.9)	132.02 (363.24)	178.65 (451.85)	19.38 (63.56)	3.94 (9.54)	0
Levene's test		0.005	0.001	0.001	0.002	0.000	0.001	0.000
F		29.68***	18.52***	15.93***	9.23***	6.92**	14.39***	20.16***

***. Significant at 0.01. **. Significant at 0.05. *. Significant at 0.1. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

The results confirm my hypothesis. If one assumes that war time networks were a strong factor in conflict-affected municipalities for mobilizing electoral support, then it is clear that the odds were in favor of DUI. The 2002 elections were held one year after the conflict ended. The linkages between DUI and NLA were fresh and strong. DUI institutionalized the structural and symbolic legacies of the conflict. Local branches were built on local NLA structures and their symbolic capital strengthened their electoral appeal. As a result, DUI convincingly won the elections.

In next elections DUI's mean electoral result in conflict-affected municipalities remained higher than the other parties, and substantially higher than in non-affected municipalities. DUI still had control of most of the war time networks and initiated social practices to preserve their symbolic capital and got access to spoils and resources so they could extend patronage. Over the years DUI's mean electoral support in conflict-affected municipalities remained on the same level. This is an indication of strong and continuous support mitigated by the institutionalization of war time networks. And it is very surprising that the effect is present 10 years after the conflict ended.

To test for the effects from political control I correlated electoral results of Albanian parties with different explanatory variables. I expect that if an Albanian party has political control in municipalities, then they would be able to extend patronage, and would get higher voter support. Running correlations gave me possibility to check inferences with the number of Albanians in the municipality, the number of voters and turnout in the municipality. The census data and the number of voters are very similar in the sense that they should indicate a high positive relationship with Albanian party support. This means that if the percent of Albanians in a municipality is higher, then the support for Albanian parties would also be higher. A higher turnout means more electoral opportunities for Albanian parties. The results of the correlations for national legislative elections are presented in the tables below.

Table IV.9. 2002 elections. Correlation: voter support for Albanian parties

N = 65	DUI	DPA	PDP	NDP
No of Albanians	0.966**	0.946**	0.728**	0.739**
No of Voters	0.264*	0.256*	0.216	0.307*
Turnout	0.431**	0.408**	0.285*	0.313*
conflict-affected	0.629**	0.583**	0.572**	0.259**
DPA control	0.635**	0.587**	0.528**	0.236

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table IV.10. 2006 elections. Correlation: voter support for Albanian parties

N = 82	DUI	DPA	NDP	NA	NDS-DAAM
No of Albanians	0.967**	0.950**	0.686**	0.628**	0.385**
No of Voters	0.449**	0.450**	0.439**	0.363**	0.291**
Turnout	0.352**	0.359**	0.368**	0.286**	0.264**
conflict-affected	0.673**	0.579**	0.355**	0.370**	0.412**
DUI control	0.720**	0.601**	0.428**	0.500**	0.214

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table IV.11. 2008 elections. Correlation: voter support for Albanian parties

N = 66	DUI	DPA	NDU	PDP	DUA
No of Albanians	0.967**	0.936**	0.317**	0.643**	0.773**
No of Voters	0.523**	0.489**	0.485**	0.256*	0.465**
Turnout	0.436**	0.430**	0.446**	0.229	0.433**
conflict-affected	0.601**	0.548**	0.288	0.549**	0.373**
DUI control	0.673**	0.595**	0.012	0.459**	0.449**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table IV.12. 2011 elections. Correlation: voter support for Albanian parties

N = 66	DUI	DPA	RDK	ND	DUA	NDU	PDP
No of Albanians	0.968**	0.895**	0.788**	0.604**	0.590**	0.736**	0.613**
No of voters	0.540**	0.504**	0.471**	0.443**	0.383**	0.606**	0.264*
Turnout	0.416**	0.403**	0.344**	0.368**	0.335**	0.533**	0.166
conflict-affected	0.563**	0.474**	0.446**	0.355**	0.313*	0.428**	0.489**
DUI control	0.492**	0.348**	0.254*	0.462**	-0.002'	0.303**	0.294*

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results partly confirm my hypothesis. DUI's coefficients are higher than other parties in municipalities where they had political control. This means that once DUI had political control, they were likely to get more votes than other Albanian parties. However, DPA had political control of municipalities in 2002 and their coefficient is lower than DUI's. If one assumes that political control worked for DUI, why it did not work for DPA? On one hand, municipalities had limited competences and budgets in 2002. Hence, DPA's mayors had limited possibilities to extend patronage. Hence political control of municipalities was not very relevant for harnessing votes. On the other hand, my

measure for political control captures only the official governance. As a consequence of the conflict, NLA/DUI structures had strong control on ground. Prior to the 2002 elections, as shown in the previous chapter, NLA's war time networks assumed political control. They acted as security providers and local governance figures. NLA structures were able to influence and channel the post-conflict reconstruction. Thus, after the conflict NLA/DUI could offer more 'club' (e.g. building roads and water supply) and 'private' (e.g. rebuilding houses) goods than DPA's mayors. Hence, their transformation to a party guaranteed their electoral success. The other Albanian political parties did not have a level playing field. The structural and symbolic legacies of NLA, and their channeling of post-conflict reconstruction, provided electoral support for DUI. Without such capacities, the other Albanian parties could not match DUI's electoral success.

On the other hand, there is a great overlap between conflict-affected municipalities and DPA controlled municipalities in the data set. Albanians mainly live clustered between North-East and North-West in Macedonia. The conflict and Albanian majority municipalities are in the same region. As a result of the clustering we find positive correlation between electoral results of Albanian parties and number of Albanians. High number of Albanians indicates more votes for Albanian parties. Therefore, the number of Albanians could have spurious effect on other explanatory variables, meaning that once the electoral results of an Albanian party are positively correlated with number of Albanians, then the party's electoral results will also be positively correlated with conflict-affected municipalities and with political control. This methodological bias impacts all Albanian parties. They all show, more or less, positive correlations with number of Albanians, conflict-affected municipalities and political control. However, it is DUI which has the highest coefficients.

The results of the local elections provide another corroboration of my argument. Local legislative

elections were quite competitive in the post-conflict period. Table 10 shows the results of different Albanian parties in the three cycles of local elections. The turnout was roughly similar in 2005 and 2009 and a bit higher in 2013. DUI had the best results in all three elections. DUI won 22.4% of the turnout in 2005, while the coalition DPA-PDP won 16.9%. DUI won 15.1% in 2009, while ND was second with 6.7%, and DPA third 5.9%. In 2013 DUI won 19.5%, DPA got 11% and RDK won 4% of the turnout.

Table IV.13. Results of Albanian parties in local elections (2005 – 2013)

	2005 (N=40)		2009 (N=40)		2013 (N=37)	
Registered voters	1, 043, 919		1, 196, 559		1, 123, 849	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Turnout	550, 663	52.74	617, 481	51.6	700, 501	62.33
DUI	123, 453	22.42	93, 584	15.16	137, 083	19.57
DPA-PDP	93, 440	16.97	-	-	-	-
NDP	6, 572	1.19	-	-	-	-
DPA	-	-	36, 619	5.93	77, 724	11.09
PDP	-	-	1, 700	0.28	-	-
ND	-	-	41, 414	6.7	-	-
RDK	-	-	-	-	28, 515	4.07

DUI won in almost all Albanian majority municipalities. I run one-way ANOVA to analyze the variance of the electoral results in relation to conflict-affected municipalities. However, there was not enough variance between the categories for all parties to get conclusive results. The F values were significant for DUI. The data show that DUI's mean electoral results in conflict-affected municipalities were substantially higher than the results of other parties. Also, the electoral support for DUI was almost three times higher than the mean result it gets in non-affected municipalities. This is another indication that DUI enjoys strong support in conflict-affected municipalities. If we take conflict-affected

municipalities as a proxy for the strength of war time networks, then one can draw an initial conclusion that DUI gets the most electoral support where the war time networks were stronger. This holds for all local elections, including the ones in 2013, which were 12 years after the conflict.

In the table below I show the structure of DUI's votes in relation to conflict-affected municipalities to better illustrate what this means for DUI's electoral support. 70% of the electoral support for DUI in 2005 and 2013, and 66% in 2009, came from conflict-affected municipalities.

Table IV.14. DUI's votes in local elections in relation to conflict-affected municipalities, in percent

conflict-affected	2005 (N=40)	2009 (N=40)	2013 (N=37)
Yes	70.06	66.53	70.38
No	29.94	33.47	29.62

I take this as another indicator that DUI benefits from the institutionalization of conflict's legacies. War time networks were stronger in conflict-affected municipalities. They became DUI's micro social units for communication and mobilization of voters. DUI initiated social practices (e.g. commemorations) and invested in physical objects (e.g. monument and museums) to institutionalize their symbolic capital. This was mainly done in conflict-affected municipalities. At the same time, DUI increased their possibilities to extend patronage. They became part of the national government in 2002 and they controlled almost all Albanian-majority municipalities from 2005. They got access to spoils and resources. The process tracing shows that they targeted benefits to NLA combatants and used OFA's equitable representation principle to offer employment in public administration as patronage. With the institutionalization of conflict's legacies, DUI had a competitive advantage compared to other Albanian parties. They preserved higher electoral support in conflict-affected municipalities, which I argue is thanks to their war time networks. Once they had patronage possibilities on national level, they were

also able to win in local elections. The strategy to institutionalize conflict's legacies and to extend patronage has served DUI well. However, other Albanian parties have used the same model in national legislative elections. They were not as successful as DUI, but presented a real challenge for the party. At the same time DUI was defeated in local elections because of local idiosyncrasies.

IV.4.1. Can DUI lose elections?

The main challenge to DUI in the first post-conflict elections came from the National Democratic Party (NDP). They were also relying on institutionalization of conflict's legacies and possibilities to extend patronage in 2002. NDP was founded on 11 March 2001 (Haxhirexha, 2005). NDP was formed out of two main reasons. On one side, it was claimed that the acting Albanian representatives were not working properly to improve the rights and status of Albanians. On the other hand, “the dissatisfaction of Albanians from their constitutional and legal position was growing every day” (Haxhirexha, 2005: 129). Kastriot Haxhirexha, MP from DPA, was the first president of NDP. He served 8 years in prison for participation in nationalistic protest in Kosovo in 1981. Haxhirexha became the vice president of the association of Albanian political prisoners in 1999.

NDP had close contacts with NLA during the conflict (Rusi, 2004; Veliu, 2008) but was not included in NLA. NDP rejected use of violence, “but still put itself in defense of the rebels and asked the authorities to negotiate with them (Haxhirexha, 2005: 131). NDP was not satisfied with OFA. NDP wanted Albanians to be a constituent nation in Macedonia and the country to be federalized (Haxhirexha, 2005: 131; Rusi, 2004). Haxhirexha as an MP in parliament denounced OFA and vowed the Albanian struggle to continue. However, several days later he made a public statement, accompanied by the UK Ambassador in Skopje, that OFA was the best option for Macedonia and

expressed support for multiethnic democracy. NDP was seen as “marginal party... best known for its proposal of a federal solution for Macedonia” (Friedman, 2006: 13).

Xhezair Shaqiri, aka Commander Hoxha in NLA, joined NDP after the conflict. His war time networks went with him. For the national legislative elections in 2002, he led NDP's list in electoral unit 2. This electoral unit spans over the North-Eastern conflict areas of Macedonia where Commandant Hoxha led some NLA actions, like in Arachinovo. It is unclear to which extent he followed and obeyed the orders of Ali Ahmeti during the conflict and the central headquarters of NLA. After the conflict he had strong control on the ground and he channeled international donor assistance for post-conflict reconstruction. This quote illustrates that point:

“When we were bringing the building materials, we had to get Hoxha's approval before entering the village. The project leader knew that he was in control of the situation. There were elected political leaders, Mayor and council persons, from DPA. But they did not matter. It was Hoxha and NLA members who had control. They were not wearing uniforms, but everyone knew who they were. To get our job done on time, we agreed to first rebuild the houses that he wanted. Sometimes we left construction material unsupervised, even though we knew we would not find it there the next day”.²⁸⁷

NDP had several other NLA combatants on their lists. For example, Muzafer Haruni and Jusuf Ademi, former NLA combatants, were on top of the list in the first electoral unit. However, they were not very high in NLA's hierarchy. Kastriot Haxhirexha was first in the sixth electoral unit, and behind him was Shehadie Ademi, “sister of a dead NLA commandant, Naser Ademi, to whom a monument was erected” in his village.²⁸⁸

287 Author's interview with local engineer working for international sponsored post-conflict reconstruction projects in 2002, Skopje 25.07.2013.

288 Utrinski Vesnik. “NLA commanders on the move to conquer parliament” (available at <http://star.utrinski.com.mk/?pBroj=938&stID=581&pR=2> last accessed on 26 April 2014).

NDP won over 25, 000 votes in the parliamentary elections in 2002. They had the best result in electoral unit 2, where Xhezair Shaqiri was leading the party list. Shaqiri's-led list got 12, 635 votes, which is almost 50% of the total votes which NDP got on national level. Shaqiri was the only NDP candidate to win a mandate at the elections. In comparison, NDP's president Kastriot Haxhirexha led the party list in the sixth electoral unit where Albanians are majority, and thus had more potential voters than Shaqiri. However, Haxhirexha got only 7, 639 votes which are 60% fewer than Shaqiri. Shaqiri was more competitive because he relied on structural and symbolic legacies from the NLA. He was able to channel the post-conflict reconstruction process and to target selective benefits to members of his ethnic group.

DUI saw NDP as a real challenge and took actions to assimilate the party. Kastriot Haxhirexha and Ali Ahmeti signed a cooperation agreement in DUI's headquarters in Mala Rechica in June 2003. After that most of NDP merged with DUI. Shaqiri objected to the merger and ran in local elections in 2005 and national in 2006. He failed to win sufficient support and later joined another Albanian party.

There is a second example which shows that conflict's legacies in conjunction with patronage improve the performance of Albanian parties in Macedonia. The Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) improved its results between 2002 and 2008 because it was emulating DUI's strategy. DPA appeared as a splinter party from PDP in 1994 and is considered to be a right-leaning Albanian ethnic party (Kadriu, 2011). Arben Xhaferi, DPA's president from 1994 to 2007, promoted federalization of Macedonia.²⁸⁹ Xhaferi was considered a leading Albanian intellectual pushing forward ethno-nationalistic ideas in the

²⁸⁹ The Economist. "Arben Xhaferi, Macedonia's pivotal Albanian", 29.03.2011 (available at <http://www.economist.com/node/555442> last accessed on 9 April, 2014)

1990s.²⁹⁰ He considered that ethnic Macedonians and Albanians should have an agreement to make Macedonia a “bi-national state” and the agreement should consist of “inherited rights, state formation, languages and flags, the referendum on political and territorial autonomy and formation of a two-chamber parliament”, among other issues (Xhaferi, 1998).

DPA was a junior coalition partner in the government when the conflict started in 2001. Arben Xhaferi described the conflict as an intra-Albanian affair, calling NLA “extremists, trying to recapture the glory of the Kosovo war without realizing that their time had passed”.²⁹¹ DPA was hostile to NLA and some Albanian politicians even claimed to “have information that in meetings with foreign diplomats and with Macedonian leaders DPA insisted that the UCK be defeated at any cost”.²⁹² And it appears that this was not a secret to NLA commanders who say that “Menduh Thaci and Mr. Xhaferi did not join us. There was a meeting in Prizren, but before that they [DPA, D.T] tried to destroy us”.²⁹³

DPA's position toward the NLA changed when the conflict spread. They made similar demands to improve the rights of Albanians; however, while DPA “was prepared to run a long race, others wanted to sprint”.²⁹⁴ DPA retracted from the verbal attacks on NLA, but did not want them to be included in the conflict resolution. To stop the conflict, DPA demanded dialogue “among legitimate Albanian representatives and Macedonian state authorities” under international mediation (Xhaferi, 2001). The Prizren declaration was signed and PDP and DPA negotiated the OFA. Arben Xhaferi was one of the signatories of OFA.

290 Interview with Arben Xhaferi in Menaj, 2008: 153

291 BBC. “Popular Albanian leader holds key role”, 02.04.2001 (available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1256855.stm> last accessed on 9 April, 2014)

292 Dnevnik. “We have recordings of Anti-Albanian talks by DPA”, 02.04.2001

293 Author's interview with NLA Commandander, Skopje, 14.07.2013.

294 IWPR. “An Optimist in Panic: an interview with Arben Xhaferi”, (available at <http://iwpr.net/report-news/optimist-panic-interview-arben-xhaferi> last accessed on 9 April, 2014).

The political program of DPA for the post-conflict national legislative elections in 2002 contained “very sharp rhetoric” (Friedman, 2006: 13) and unclear statements about whether Macedonia should be multi-ethnic or bi-national in the future. DPA incorporated some NLA combatants and had them on their party lists. These were either deputy commanders or rank and file NLA members, such as Zejdi Xhelili or Ruzhdi Matoshi, “deputy commander of the first battalion in the 112th brigade”.²⁹⁵ The strategy did not prove successful. DPA lost to DUI, but continued the same strategy after the elections. On one hand, DPA increased ethno-nationalistic demands, and on the other, continued to attract more NLA members.

DPA radicalized after the elections in 2002. They claimed that OFA's implementation was stuck and left Parliament. Leadership of DPA claimed that OFA was dead, and that the situation in Macedonia could destabilize. Xhaferi appealed to the West to “establish a protectorate in Macedonia, more efficient than the Kosovo one” (Balkananalysis, 2003c). In his view Albanians could either accept their subordinate position or to organize “confrontation, first ideological, and then political, economic, and why not even military” (Xhaferi, 2005: 48). Xhaferi favored territorial partition of Macedonia²⁹⁶ and demanded that Kosovo, and parts of Macedonia and Serbia, be annexed to Albania.²⁹⁷

In addition, to the radical nationalist ideas, DPA policy was “to encourage dissent in the ranks of DUI” and to recruit “former NLA veterans away from Ahmeti” (Balkananalysis, 2003a). For example, DPA attracted Daut Rexhepi (aka Commandant Leka) to join in 2003. He was NLA's brigade commander in

295 Utrinski Vesnik. “NLA commanders on the move to conquer parliament” (available at <http://star.utrinski.com.mk/?pBroj=938&stID=581&pR=2> last accessed on 26 April 2014).

296 Interview with Arben Xhaferi in Menaj, 2008: 154.

297 Southeast Europe Times. “Arben Xhaferi: “Kosovo, parts of Macedonia, Serbia should be Annexed to Albania”, 04.11.2005 (available at <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1515524/posts> last accessed on 9 April, 2014).

the region of Tetovo and then became head of DPA's party branch in Tetovo. Abedin Zimberi (aka The Hoxha from Slupchane) is another example. He was head of counter intelligence in NLA's 113th brigade "Ismet Jashari". During the conflict he was active in the North-Eastern parts of the country where he is originally from. Ten members of his family lost their lives during the conflict. Furthermore, the leadership of DPA asked Bardulj Mahmuti from Kosovo to get involved in politics in Macedonia.²⁹⁸ Mahmuti is originally from Macedonia. He was active in clandestine Albanian organizations and was spokesperson of KLA in Kosovo. When Mahmuti joined DPA, he was very critical of Ali Ahmeti and the former leadership of NLA. He accused them of national treason and corruption.²⁹⁹ He was not directly involved in NLA, but had strong credentials from KLA in Kosovo. He influenced a couple local branches of new Albanian parties, based on war time networks, to cross over to DPA in 2006.³⁰⁰ DPA made a conscious effort to attract war time networks, but not so much to gather symbolic capital from the conflict.

DPA did not take part in commemorative events dedicated to the conflict in Macedonia in 2001. However, some of its leaders took part in commemorative events in Kosovo. For example, in March 2001 Arben Xhaferi attended the commemoration of Adem Jashari, founder of KLA, and also attended the three day long celebration "KLA Glorious Path".³⁰¹ When DPA attracted NLA figures they appropriated some symbolic capital. Former NLA members acknowledge DPA's appropriation, but also point out to limitations. DPA attracted lower ranked NLA combatants. Even though they had some symbolic capital, it could not match the symbolic capital of the highest leadership of NLA. For

298 Globus Magazin. Interview with Bardulj Mahmuti, leader of DUA and spokesperson of KLA, "With murders and divisions we can't go in Europe", 20.11.2007 (available at <http://www.globusmagazin.com.mk/?ItemID=8A30E9BEFC4BF34D8580471B9E735EBB> last accessed on 26 April, 2014).

299 Utrinski Vesnik. "DPA: DUI manipulated with national funds" (available at <http://star.utrinski.com.mk/?pBroj=2157&stID=74979&pR=23> last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

300 Dnevnik. "NDS shrinks", 18.03.2006 (available at <http://star.dnevnik.com.mk/?pBroj=3015&stID=75335> last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

301 Dnevnik. "Arben Xhaferi attends commemoration of the KLA founder, Adem Jashari", 07.03.2001 (available at <http://www.ex-yupress.com/mkdnevnik/mkdnevnik30.html> last accessed on 9 April, 2014).

example, “Ruzhdi Matoshi was a deputy commander of the Tetovo brigade. He went to DPA and became general secretary. But his high commander, G'zim Ostreni, was with us and also we had Ali Ahmeti. Now Matoshi cannot have the same influence, because he was subordinate to Ali Ahmeti”.³⁰²

Even though DPA had fewer votes and MPs than DUI after the national legislative elections in 2006, they were included in the government with VMRO-DPMNE. This caused revolt for DUI, but also for the wider Albanian population. “A large part of the electorate took it as a blow to contributions from 2001, as degradation of OFA”.³⁰³ DUI radicalized, left Parliament and pushed for early elections. Notwithstanding the political crisis, DPA got access to spoils and resources. They made a coalition agreement with VMRO-DPMNE which offered 'club' goods to Albanians such as greater usage of Albanian language and Albanian flag, increasing Albanian representation in public institutions, solving International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia cases sent back to Macedonia, solving the status of invalids of the 2001 war, and recognizing the independence of Kosovo (Kadriu, 2011: 150). During its term, DPA was purposefully laying off members and sympathizers of DUI and employing their own party loyalists.³⁰⁴ “With one move they kicked out 2,500 officials from DUI on all levels. They were doing that to get their people in place and secure votes”.³⁰⁵ They also coerced and harassed voters so as to diminish the capacities of the war time networks. This led to an increase of electoral violence between Albanian parties when early elections were called in 2008 (OSCE/ODIHR, 2008).

DPA's electoral program for the 2008 elections was a testimonial of the 'club' and 'private' goods they provided to Albanians during the time they were in government (DPA, 2008). For example, they employed 800 new Albanian civil servants and 99 translators and interpreters in courts and

302 Author's interview with Hajrula Misini, Skopje, 16.07.2013.

303 Author's interview with Rizvan Sulejmani, Skopje, 08.07.2013.

304 Interview with G'zim Ostreni, Debar, 14.07.2013.

305 Interview with Hajrula Misini, Skopje, 16.07.2013.

administrative bodies. They created close to 1,000 positions for Albanians in the army and ministry of defense. Usage of Albanian language was ensured and more public money was given for cultural activities, infrastructure, educational institutions and healthcare services for Albanians.

DPA again lost the elections in 2008; however, they got even more votes and MPs compared to 2006. DUI replaced them in government and in response, DPA boycotted parliament (Balkananalysis, 2011). At this point Menduh Thaci became president of DPA, and most observers note that he is a difficult person to reconcile with. Bardulj Mahmuti already left the party and Daut Rexhepi – Leka was kicked out. A group of MPs also split from DPA. DPA's votes decreased in the next national legislative elections in 2011. DPA's electoral support ranges between 6.7% to almost 10% between 2002 and 2011. DPA's electoral support increased from the 2002 to the 2008 elections. This overlaps with its strategic decisions to radicalize and to include former NLA combatants. The results from the ANOVA show that DPA's mean electoral support in conflict-affected municipalities increased from 2, 535 in 2002 to 2, 935 in 2006 and to 3, 405. I take this as an indicator that with inclusion of former NLA members DPA also got more support from war time networks. Once former NLA members left DPA, the mean electoral support in conflict-affected municipalities fell to 2, 700 in 2011.

DPA increased support from war time networks, appropriated some symbolic capital, and had possibilities to extend patronage from 2006 to 2008. However, it again lost the parliamentary elections to DUI in 2008. Many believed that “DPA lost the elections in 2008, because it entered government [in 2006, D.T] as a loser. If it waited, things would be different”.³⁰⁶ Notwithstanding the counter-factual, the data shows that DPA's voter support was growing up until 2008. When DPA lost the support from war time networks, and the accompanying symbolic capital, and did not have possibilities to extend

306 Interview with MPs from RDK, Skopje, 24.02.2014.

patronage, its electoral success significantly diminished. The example of DPA also shows that *ceteris paribus* institutionalization of conflict's legacies is more important for harnessing voter support than patronage.

DUI lost mayoral races in local elections in 2009. This was mainly due to local idiosyncrasies connected to their competing candidates. One example is the victory of Rufi Osmani in Gostivar in 2009. Rufi Osmani was elected mayor of Gostivar as DPA's candidate in 1996. The next year he put the Albanian and Turkish flags to fly along with the flag of Macedonia in Gostivar. The Constitutional Court ordered the flags to be taken down. In response Osmani organized a protest rally where he said that “our territories in Macedonia are our territories ... the Albanian flag will fly over these territories forever”.³⁰⁷ He proclaimed Gostivar to be an Albanian town, asked people to disobey the government and called for regionalization of the country. He informed the Constitutional Court that he will not obey and started to organize the people for resistance, including gathering weapons and medicine.

The police intervened in Gostivar in 1997. They clashed and exchanged fire with local groups. One policeman was seriously wounded and two demonstrators were killed. Osmani was arrested and sentenced to prison, but was pardoned after one year and three months. His amnesty was part of the political deal between VMRO-DPMNE and DPA to form a government. Osmani appealed to the European Court of Human Rights, but his appeal was rejected by the court. His actions from 1997 resonated among the people for many years (Balkanalysis, 2009). Because of that he was elected as an independent candidate in Gostivar in 2009. Some argue that “it was expected for Rufi Osmani to win elections in Gostivar in 2009. People thought they owe him because his term in 1997 was abruptly

307 Forum. “European Court – Osmani vs Macedonia. Rufi Loses”, 28.12.2001 (available at <http://www.ex-yupress.com/mkforum/mkforum3.html> last accessed on 4 April, 2014).

ended. People wanted to give him another chance. He got plebiscite support”.³⁰⁸

IV.4.2. Why other Albanian parties didn't win?

Albanian parties competing with DUI had different strategies. DPA as incumbent party relied on patronage, while other parties (e.g. PDP, ND) were moderate. Outbidding was the most frequent strategy used by the other Albanian parties, including parties which had support of war time networks (e.g. DUA, NDU, and NA). However, none of the competing strategies matched DUI's institutionalization of conflict's legacies coupled with patronage. And it seems that conflict's legacies are more important than patronage.

This argument holds at least for the electoral defeat of DPA in 2002 and 2008. In both cases DPA was incumbent party and lost to DUI. One can argue that DPA had limited possibilities to extend patronage in 2002 and low support from war time networks. However, in 2008 DPA had more possibilities to extend patronage than DUI's; however, DUI had greater leverage because it institutionalized the legacies of the conflict. DPA included some NLA commanders and combatants, but it did not match DUI's support from war time networks and symbolic capital.

Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP) and New Democracy (ND) challenged DUI on different basis. They appealed as moderate ethnic parties. PDP was the first Albanian party formed in Macedonia in 1990. They were junior coalition partner in the government from 1992 to 1998. They believed that their participation in government “is the only possibility for constructing bridges of mutual confidence”.³⁰⁹

308 Author's interview with MPs from RDK, Skopje, 24.02.2014.

309 Puls. Interview with Abdurahman Aliti. “Albanian perspective. Aliti Discusses Cabinet Reshuffle in Macedonia”, 15 May, 1996 (available at <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/alt.news.macedonia/jv55yb75tNA> last accessed on 9 April, 2014).

PDP wanted either a civic concept of the state or to “to have Macedonians and Albanians on the same level” (Aliti, 2011: 30). The fundamental political demand of PDP was to have “a state and institutional structure which reflects the multiethnic reality of Macedonia” (Friedman, 2006: 16). PDP defined itself as Albanian party and party of the center and “rejected any extremism, right or left, every totalitarianism, and every form of racial, national, religious and ideological intolerance” (Kadriu, 2011: 152). PDP’s main goal was to secure the rights of Albanians in Macedonia, but also to respect cultural diversity, tolerance and compromise.

PDP's participation in government was largely seen as ineffective in regards to improving Albanian rights.³¹⁰ On the other hand, PDP officials claim that they were committed to creating changes in a peaceful manner, but their demands were not accepted by the majority and their proposals were outvoted in parliament.³¹¹ The inability of PDP to improve the positions of Albanians caused frustration among the wider Albanian population, but also within the party itself. At the party congress in 1994, PDP split in two factions. The moderates stayed within PDP, while the more radical faction went on to form DPA.

PDP lost its place in government to DPA in 1998 and had low electoral support in the following local elections in 2000. For some of PDP's senior members this was a clear sign that the party was losing the support of the Albanian population.³¹² During the conflict PDP was a party in opposition and became part of the government of national unity in May 2001. It remained in government until the elections in September 2002. It seems that for the international community, mainly the US, PDP was the most preferred Albanian party to join the government after the 2002 elections (Balkananalysis, 2003d). PDP

310AIM Skopje. “Are Albanians Leaving the Government and Parliament”, 24.01.1996

311 Interview with Imer Imeri in Menaj, 2008: 157

312 Author's interview with Rizvan Sulejmani, Skopje, 08.07.2013

delegation visited the US, and had meetings at the White House, before the elections in 2002.³¹³

However, PDP was seen as weak, “used up in coalition government in the 1990s, with many changes in the leadership and internal conflicts”.³¹⁴ Some PDP members joined NLA during the conflict. This was the case with Rafiz Aliti, aka Commandant M'suesi, commander of NLA 115th brigade (Balkanalysis, 2003d). Others, like Rizvan Sulejmani and Aziz Polozhani two prominent MPs, switched from PDP to DUI and many more followed.

Imer Imeri, the president of PDP, signed the Prizren Declaration and was one of the co-signers of OFA. After the conflict PDP continued to support OFA, but also considered that it could be improved (Aliti, 2011: 31). Shortly after signing OFA, Imeri stepped down, for personal health reasons. In the next couple of years PDP changed several presidents. Internal power struggles and frequent leadership changes further diminished the strength of PDP. PDP ran alone in the parliamentary elections in 2002, but then in subsequent elections switched from DPA in 2005 to DUI in 2006 as coalition partners. PDP broke off the coalition with DUI, but lost two out of three MPs, who stayed with DUI. PDP ran alone and had marginal support in local elections in 2009 and national legislative elections in 2011.

PDP was a moderate party before the conflict and remained as such after. PDP did not have support from war time networks, prior or after the conflict. They did not have NLA commanders on their lists for local or parliamentary elections. PDP did not organize or attend commemorative events dedicated to the conflict. Therefore, they did not have symbolic capital. After the conflict PDP didn't control public resources and therefore had no possibilities to extend patronage.

313 Voice of America. “Interview with Abdurahman Aliti”, 17 July 2002 (available at <http://mk.voanews.com/content/a-42-a-2002-07-17-1-1-86453902/444646.html> last accessed on 9 April, 2014).

314 Author's interview with Aziz Pollozhani, Skopje, 17.06.2013

New Democracy (ND), led by Imer Selmani, splintered from DPA in 2008. Imer Selmani started his political career as member of PDP in 1992, but then switched to DPA where he got a senior party position.³¹⁵ He was a popular mayor in Saraj, Albanian majority municipality in the capital Skopje, and minister of health. Because of him ND was expected to be a successful party (Gaber-Damjanovska and Jovevska, 2008: 43). NLA commanders, who joined DPA, such as Abedin Zimberi, Ruzhdi Matoshi and Daut Rexhepi – Leka, followed him. When ND was formed, it had five seats in parliament.

ND was supposed to be a “center-right party. The new party will be modern and it will focus on the citizens, the family, the business, and the national issues”.³¹⁶ ND wanted to attract Albanians who were disappointed in DUI and DPA, but also members of other ethnic communities. Imer Selmani ran as ND's presidential candidate in 2009. During his campaign he visited cities where there are very few Albanians, and “vowed to be a president of all citizens regardless of the language they speak, their ethnic and religious affiliation” (Gaber-Damjanovska and Jovevska, 2009: 37). In the first round he finished third. He won “about 15% of the general vote – including votes from 40,000 Macedonians, a first for any ethnic Albanian candidate” (Balkanalysis, 2009). ND also won mayor in Arachinovo and many council persons in different municipalities in 2009. According to the number of votes, ND was the second Albanian party. In several municipalities, ND established cooperation with DUI. There were expectations that ND may even join the governing coalition due to the close cooperation of Imer Selmani and Nikola Gruevski, prime minister and leader of VMRO-DPMNE.³¹⁷ However, this was strongly opposed by DUI and Ali Ahmeti.

315 Koha. “No clue for leader”, 12.11.2011 (available at <http://www.koha.mk/aktuale/8968.html> last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

316 Macedonian Information Centre. “Imer Selmani to form a new party”, 02.09.2008 (available at <http://micnews.com.mk/node/14966> last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

317 Macedonian Information Centre. “BDI does not want Selmani in government: Ahmeti's party opposes expansion of government coalition”, 21.05.2009 (available at <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/BDI+does+not+want+Selmani+in+government%3a+Ahmeti%27s+party+opposes...-a0201027501> last accessed on 26 April, 2014).

ND fully supported OFA and did not make new or radical demands concerning the rights and status of Albanians. Selmani had moderate views concerning inter-ethnic relations and objected to ideas of federalization. His views didn't resonate well among his former NLA party comrades, and he was criticized by Albanian nationalist politicians. Selmani was often seen as close partner of the prime minister, which for some Albanian media meant that ND was an extended arm of VMRO-DPMNE. ND succumbed to nationalistic criticism and undertook a more radical position. After a series of contentious government policies, which were seen as negative by the Albanian population, ND boycotted parliament in the beginning of 2011.³¹⁸ This move gave it more space to criticize DUI's participation in the government with VMRO-DPMNE, but also precluded possibilities for closer cooperation with DUI.

ND did not win any MPs in 2011 and Imer Selmani resigned two days after the elections. ND was built on a very charismatic politician. He was joined by several NLA commanders who left DPA together with him. Therefore, ND potentially had some support from war time networks and some symbolic capital. However, the positions of the party, and the electoral appeal of Selmani during the presidential elections, were completely opposite from the legacy of NLA. He appealed to different ethnic groups, had very moderate positions and no interests in the past conflict. This strategy delivered limited results for ND in 2009 elections. It was difficult to reconcile the appeal of Selmani with the legacy of his party comrades, and former NLA members. As a result of internal discord and the sudden shift of appeal from 2009 to 2011, ND had weak results in the parliamentary elections in 2011. After Imer Selmani left, ND disappeared all together.

318 According to Imer Selmani the boycott was due to the failure to have a new census in 2011 and the government sponsored project "Skopje 2014", erecting monuments and new buildings celebrating Ancient Macedonia seen derogatory by Albanians (for more see Radio Free Europe. "Interview – Imer Selmani". 13.03.2011 available at <http://www.makdenes.org/content/article/2336347.html> last accessed on 26 April, 2014).

DUI was also challenged by Albanian parties which included war time networks and made radical demands. These were the Democratic Union of Albanians (DUA), National Democratic Union (NDU) and National Alternative (NA). DUA, under the leadership of Bardulj Mahmuti, splintered from DPA in 2007. A local Albanian analyst saw this as a logical step after the elections in 2006 because “his engagement in DPA had only one function and only before the elections, to diminish the rating of DUI, and now DPA does not need a man like that”.³¹⁹ Mahmuti was very critical of DUI when he was in DPA, and was equally critical of DPA when he left them. Some believe that flip-flopping brought him negative political points.³²⁰

DUA, in their founding declaration, accused the government for ignoring Albanian demands.³²¹ DUA defined itself as the third Albanian political option in Macedonia and demanded full implementation of OFA, proportional and adequate representation of Albanians and their employment in state institutions, a law for legal status of NLA members and their families, rebuilding their homes and employing members of families of NLA's veterans, and DUA also demanded new territorial organization and equitable redistribution of farming subsidies so that Albanians are not discriminated (Kadriu, 2011: 153-154). DUA started a petition to change the constitution for Albanians to be equal citizens.³²²

Mahmuti had certain influence over war time networks in Macedonia because of his involvement in

319 BBC on Macedonian. “Resignation of the Minister for Culture”, 02.04.2007 (available at http://www.bbc.co.uk/macedonian/news/story/2007/04/printable/070402_mac_beqiri.shtml last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

320 Interview with Bujar Osmani, Skopje, 16.05.2013.

321 Kanal 5 TV. “Bardulj Mahmuti makes official his Democratic Union of Albanians”, 09.09.2007 (available at <http://star.kanal5.com.mk/%28S%281xlhnb45xy2kximdfaw1xemt%29%29/default.aspx?mId=37&eventId=26878&egId=13> last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

322 Globus Magazin. Interview with Bardulj Mahmuti, leader of DUA and spokesperson of KLA, “With murders and divisions we can't go in Europe”, 20.11.2007 (available at <http://www.globusmagazin.com.mk/?ItemID=8A30E9BEFC4BF34D8580471B9E735EBB> last accessed on 26 April, 2014).

KLA in Kosovo. When he entered DPA he influenced local branches of smaller Albanian parties, built on war time networks, to join DPA in 2006.³²³ However, his symbolic capital from KLA did not transfer well into Macedonia. Because he “was active in UCK in Kosovo, and is not important in Macedonia. It is not the same”.³²⁴ Furthermore, his war time networks were purposefully diminished. Mahmuti's local war time networks were the target of police raids two times. The first time was in March 2006 when Mahmuti was part of DPA, and DUI was a junior partner in the coalition government (Balkanalysis, 2006a). In the second time, DPA was in power, and Mahmuti left to form DUA. He accused the deputy minister for interior from DPA was responsible for mistreatment of arrested persons after the second police raid in the village of Brodec in 2007.³²⁵ Mahmuti requested international representatives to stop the repression of Albanians and warned that stability and security of Macedonia may be jeopardized.³²⁶ For DUA and Bardulj Mahmuti, the raids were a sign of dictatorship and pressures. Xhezair Shaqiri joined DUA before the elections in 2011. He headed DUA's list in the second electoral district, as he had done for NDP in 2002. However, this time Shaqiri faced some institutional constraints. He was not in the voter registry, and thus did not have the right to vote. He accused DUI and VMRO-DPMNE for politically discriminating against Albanian political parties.³²⁷ DUA did not have political control of resources and did not have possibilities to extend patronage. They ran in parliamentary elections in 2008 and 2011 and in both cases did not have significant electoral success.

National Democratic Union (NDU) was a party started by Hisni Shaqiri, who was elected MP from

323 Dnevnik. “NDS shrinks”, 18.03.2006 (available at <http://star.dnevnik.com.mk/?pBroj=3015&stID=75335> last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

324 Author's interview with G'zim Ostreni, Debar, 14.07.2013.

325 Globus Magazin. Interview with Bardulj Mahmuti, leader of DUA and spokesperson of KLA, “With murders and divisions we can't go in Europe”, 20.11.2007 (available at <http://www.globusmagazin.com.mk/?ItemID=8A30E9BEFC4BF34D8580471B9E735EBB> last accessed on 26 April, 2014).

326 Kiss TV. “Foreigners to help – demands the party of Bardulj Mahmuti”, 24.11.2007 (available at <http://kiss.com.mk/mak/novosti1.asp?id=2087> last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

327 Macedonian Information Centre. “Commander Hoxha not allowed to vote”, 02.06.2011 (available at <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Commander+Hoxha+not+allowed+to+vote.-a0259080030> last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

DPA in 1998. During the conflict, in 2001, he left Parliament to join NLA. After the conflict he was member of DUI. He was elected MP from DUI and served as deputy speaker of Parliament. He left DUI to form a new party before the 2006 elections. NDU's main policy goal was "a brand new concept in building the state, and that is federalization" (Kadriu, 2011: 154). According to NDU, the unitary character of Macedonia proved unsuccessful because it favors ethnic dominance. OFA was unsuccessful and only federalization would provide for equality. NDU received marginal support in the national legislative elections in 2008 and 2011. Hisni Shaqiri and his party were seen as politically marginal actors by the end of 2013.³²⁸ NDU has some structural lineage to NLA and was a splinter party from DUI. It is quite uncertain whether NDU had any support from war time networks. The symbolic capital of Hisni Shaqiri from the conflict was also put under question. A high level NLA commander claims that "Hisni Shaqiri joined when we did not need him. He was just another volunteer. He joined after the conflict was finished".³²⁹ NDU did not have political control of resources and could not extend patronage.

Harun Aliu started the National Alternative (NA) before the 2006 elections. He was a member of NLA, known as Commandant Kushtrim and was also member of KLA in Kosovo. He had close relations with Fazli Veliu during the conflict (Veliu, 2008). He was not satisfied with the position of NLA members in DUI. More importantly, he was not satisfied that DUI failed to find a political solution for the social status of NLA veterans and to secure institutional compensation and social benefits for the families which had casualties during the conflict. Therefore, Aliu formed NA, stood in elections but did not get significant support. In January 2008, he was tried and found guilty for the murder of several policemen. He fled Macedonia, allegedly to Kosovo. Aliu was killed in a shootout with the police in May 2010.

328 Dnevnik. "Once famous radicals, now marginals", 28.10.2013 (available at <http://www.dnevnik.mk/default-mk.asp?ItemID=DB296A9186474A4AB03D1B1BF6B2DA01> last accessed on 20 April, 2014).

329 Author's interview with G'zim Ostreni, Debar, 14.07.2013.

The police claimed that Aliu was smuggling weapons from Kosovo to Macedonia, while some former NLA members believe that it was a political assassination.³³⁰ According to their view, Aliu had significant influence over former NLA veterans and was mobilizing their support, either to increase his electoral success or to find other ways to change their social position. Therefore, he was seen as a possible threat from DUI and Ali Ahmeti. Notwithstanding that, Aliu had some support from war time networks, and some symbolic capital, but he could not extent patronage, and his first electoral results were rather poor.

In the case of DUA, NDU and NA the outbidding did not work. However, it seems that their support from war time networks was purposefully diminished. Supporters of Bardulj Mahmuti, DUA's president, were targeted in two police raids. The first time DUI was in government and Mahmuti was part of DPA. At the time of the second raid, Mahmuti left DPA and it was DPA who was in government. Mahmuti believed that it was the Albanian deputy minister of interior who was behind the raids. On the other hand, Mahmuti influenced NDU's local branches, built on war time networks, to join DPA in 2006. This weakened NDU. And last, but not least, Harun Aliu who formed NA died in a shootout with police under unclear circumstances.

Other Albanian political parties also tried to outbid DUI, but they were unsuccessful. For example, DPA and the National Democratic Revival (RDK) put forward political programs which demanded more rights for Albanians. DPA proposed a new political project, claiming that OFA “has lost its meaning, it is outdated and become an impediment to further development of society” in June 2009 (DPA, 2009: 1). DPA's project entailed federal elements, for example: to have consensual decision making, Albanian to be an official language, proportional budget allocation, new territorial

330 The Bulletin. “Macedonia and the mysterious death of Harun Aliu”, November, 2010 (available at <http://www.nikolajnielsen.com/?p=63> last accessed on 26 April, 2014).

reorganization and guarantees that one of the leading political positions (president, prime minister or speaker of parliament) would be allocated to Albanians. The political project was the core of DPA's political and electoral program in the local and presidential elections in 2009 and in the parliamentary elections in 2011. DPA achieved its weakest result, receiving below 40,000 votes, in the local elections in 2009. They managed to increase their support in the national elections in 2011 and to stabilize it in the local elections in 2013.

RDK was founded by Rupi Osmani in Gostivar in view of the upcoming parliamentary elections in 2011.³³¹ Osmani considered that there is a need for a new party of Albanians in Macedonia because Albanian “collective aspirations were not realized”³³² and that means “Albanians to be a constituent people and to be equal in all aspects with [ethnic, D.T] Macedonians”.³³³ The main political goal of RDK was to create “non-territorial federalization of the country, with democratic and consensual mechanisms and with more content in decentralization of power”, while the three main pillars were “rebirth of Albanian dignity, democratization of the country and improving the rights and freedoms of Albanians and other ethnic communities”.³³⁴ RDK and DUI had diverging views on OFA. For DUI OFA met the final aspiration of Albanians in Macedonia, while for RDK it was not so.³³⁵ Rupi Osmani saw OFA as a transitional solution with expired term (Osmani, 2011: 15). He proposed a new agreement that “will state that Macedonia is a state of Macedonians and Albanians”.³³⁶

331 Author's interview with MPs from RDK, Skopje, 24.02.2014.

332 Radio Free Europe. “Interview – Rupi Osmani”. 10.04.2011 (available at <http://www.makdenes.org/content/article/3552358.html> last accessed on 9 April, 2014).

333 Author's interview with MPs from RDK, Skopje, 24.02.2014.

334 Press 24. “Rupi Osmani founded a party”, 27.03.2011 (available at <http://star.press24.mk/story/makedonija/rupi-osmani-osnovashe-partijata> last accessed on 9 April, 2014)

335 Radio Free Europe. “Interview – Rupi Osmani”. 10.04.2011 (available at <http://www.makdenes.org/content/article/3552358.html> last accessed on 9 April, 2014).

336 FOCUS News Agency. “Skopje. After the local election win in the municipality of Gostivar Rupi Osmani returns to politics, Macedonian Dnevnik daily writes”, 21.04.2009 (available at <http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n178501> last accessed on 9 April, 2014).

RDK was built on the charisma of Rupi Osmani and his legacy from his first term as a mayor of Gostivar. In their political program they made more demands for Albanians. This was not sufficient to defeat DUI. They won over 30,000 votes, which was the third highest score, and secured two mandates in 2011. The bulk of votes for RDK came from Gostivar where Rupi Osmani was mayor.

V. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The inter-ethnic conflicts in Croatia and Macedonia were different. The conflict in Croatia lasted for four years and there were many casualties. One third of the territory was under Serb control. Serbs proclaimed a so-called 'Republic of Srpska Krajina' which had three parts. Two were militarily overtaken by the Croatian forces, and one was peacefully reintegrated. The size of the Serb minority dropped from 12% before the conflict to 4.5%. There was huge devastation to property and infrastructure. The conflict in Macedonia lasted for several months and there were few casualties. Some private property was destroyed, but the overall infrastructure was intact. The conflict did not affect the size of the Albania minority which constitutes over 25% of the population. The conflicts in both countries ended with peace agreements, Erdut in Croatia and OFA in Macedonia. The peace agreements prescribed power sharing arrangements. They changed the institutional environment for minority politics. They improved the position of minorities, increased their rights and introduced institutional instruments for minority integration. The changes were done without prejudice or preference for minority parties.

Minority politics was reconstructed in both countries. Some ethnic minority parties existed prior to the conflicts, and some appeared after the conflicts. In both countries, minority parties appeared to dominate in the post-conflict competition. For example, SDSS wins majority of Serb votes in Croatia, and DUI wins the majority of Albanian votes in Macedonia, in all post-conflict elections, from the first to most recent ones. Why is this? What makes these parties the most successful minority ethnic parties in the post-conflict period?

V.1. Legacies of conflict in conjunction with patronage

I argue that there are three factors which explain success of minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings. They are based on the local context and are sensitive to the post-conflict environment. I hold that the post-conflict political and socioeconomic environment is especially conducive for patronage and clientelism. Extending patronage is a minimal condition for any minority ethnic party to win elections. It would mean that the minority ethnic party which can extend most patronage or create the strongest clientelistic networks would be most likely to win majority votes within their ethnic group.

The current literature, on minority parties in competition, points out only to inclusion in national government as a pathway to distribute spoils. I argue that possibilities for minority parties to extend patronage in post-conflict settings are not only related to participation in national government. The focus should also be on the possibilities to extend patronage and not only on inclusion in government. In this way the causal mechanism is wider and applies to more cases. One can better understand how minority political parties adapt to the institutional environment for minority politics and how they use it to their advantage. In post-conflict settings, minority parties can have possibilities to extend patronage even if they are not included in national government. For example, in post-conflict settings there are relief and reconstruction efforts to aid minorities in post-conflict regions. If a minority party can channel these activities, or influence the distribution of goods, then it has the possibility to target 'club' and 'private' goods to members of their ethnic group. Also, the institutional environment for minority politics becomes redesigned in the post-conflict period. Peace agreements often prescribe power sharing arrangements. They introduce institutions and instruments for inclusion and integration of minorities, like employment quotas in public administration. These changes are done without preferences or prejudices to existing or future political parties. However, if a minority political party comes to control institutions and instruments for inclusion and integration of minorities, then it has

possibilities to extend patronage.

There are two other factors which are relevant for the performance of minority ethnic parties in post-conflict cases. These factors are connected to conflict's legacies. The structural legacy of the conflict is the first factor. This means that, in the post-conflict period, some minority parties are built on war time networks. War time networks are made of former combatants and members of affiliated, supporting, social and political organizations. Membership in armed groups and in affiliated social and political organization may overlap, but not necessarily. If there is a big overlap, then the networks are more dense, and if there is small overlap, then the networks are wider. Either way, minority ethnic parties can be built on structural legacies of the conflict. Some parties derive directly from rebel groups and others include former rebels, or are based on wider war time networks. The conceptualization of the possible links between former armed groups and political parties is presented in the table below.

Table V.1. Conceptualizing the links between political parties and armed conflicts

	Party members participated in the armed conflict		
		Yes	No
The party existed before the armed conflict	Yes	Actors in the conflict	Old parties
	No	Former rebels and supporters	New parties

Parties whose members took part in the conflict, through armed groups or supporting organizations, have structural continuity with war time networks. These parties can be old, for example parties which formed paramilitary groups during the conflict, or new, for example, parties which derive from rebel groups and their supporters. Rebel groups and war time networks may give rise not only to one but to several parties. All of them become competitors in the post-conflict period. And they all have symbolic

capital from the conflict.

The symbolic capital is the second legacy of the conflict. Symbolic capital can be ascribed to attributes of individuals, but it can also be found in social practices and discourses. The symbolic capital derives from the memory of the conflict. The capital is appropriated during the conflict and in the post-conflict reconstruction period. It comes from the actions and activities of the individuals. The more their actions and activities are seen as bringing good or benefit to their ethnic community, the higher their symbolic capital will be. Symbolic capital is not exclusive. Different individuals come to appropriate symbolic capital during the conflict. However, leaders have the highest concentration of symbolic capital. Symbolic capital is preserved, and enhanced, with the development of social practices in the post-conflict period (e.g. commemorations) and discourses which present the conflict and the consequences. Parties which include the core of the war time networks are more likely to have higher symbolic capital than other parties.

The guerrilla-to-party literature does not conceptualize the possible links between the armed groups and minority political parties in the post-conflict period. The guerrilla-to-party literature focuses on how rebel groups transform to political parties. That is a worthy endeavor in itself. The focus is justified if one wants to set the conditions under which the transformation is successful. However, if one wants to analyze the competition between minorities ethnic parties in post-conflict settings, then conflict's legacies need to be taken in consideration.

Structural legacies and symbolic capital become valuable resources for parties in the post-conflict period. Structural continuity of war time networks is strength for the new parties, and not their weakness. My argument about structural legacies is not about the centralization of power within the

party, notwithstanding that this makes a more efficient organization. My argument is about the utilization of war time networks. If the networks provided social services or humanitarian assistance during the conflict, then in the post-conflict period they would give the party higher credibility and legitimacy. Also, war time networks provide wide and deep social penetration for the party. They facilitate aggregation of interests. They are used to represent the party in the local community, to communicate with the voters and to mobilize them. And war time networks are also instrumental for distributing patronage.

The symbolic legacy of the conflict can also be utilized for electoral support. The symbolic capital is a form of social capital within the ethnic group. Former combatants can use symbolic capital to aggregate political support. Parties built on war time networks maintain and increase their social capital if they have intensive contacts with their group through which they constantly reaffirm their symbolic capital. They would translate and sustain that capital through institutionalization of memories, commemorative events, monuments or dirges dedicated to the conflict. After an inter-ethnic conflict, this would serve to increase identity-based politics and strengthen ethnic divisions. But it would also serve former combatants to harness political support within their group. The influence of the symbolic legacies should be most visible in the electoral appeals of parties. Such a strategy for creating political support would be identity-based, but the causal mechanism is not the political mobilization of identities, rather the utilization of symbolic capital from the conflict.

Structural and symbolic legacies are very likely to go together. They are distinct manifestations of the same phenomenon which I label institutionalization of conflict's legacies. The institutionalization of conflict's legacies points out to utilization of the legacies for harnessing voter support. The institutionalization of conflict's legacies provides competitive advantage for some parties in the post-

conflict period. Competition between minority parties in post-conflict settings is not a level playing field. The parties that institutionalize the legacies of the conflict are favored. And these are the parties which are built on war time networks and which have symbolic capital. I argue that utilization of war time networks and symbolic capital creates the highest electoral support for minority ethnic parties in the post-conflict period. Institutionalization of conflict's legacies is the main condition for minority ethnic parties to win most votes within their ethnic group in the post-conflict period.

The legacies of the conflict, war time networks and symbolic capital, form the electoral nucleus for minority ethnic parties. My main expectation was that if a minority ethnic party has wide support from war time networks and high concentration of symbolic capital, then it is most likely to win in the post-conflict period. If the party additionally has possibilities to extend patronage, then it will be the most successful minority ethnic party. The summary of my argument is given in the table below. The framework can be used to analyze the performance of minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings.

Table V.2. Factors of competition between minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings

	Party can extend patronage to voters		
		Yes	No
Party utilizes war time networks and symbolic capital	Yes	Highest chances for success	More likely to succeed
	No	Less likely to succeed	Lowest chances for success

Based on the framework in the table, I formulated several hypotheses. The main was that:

If a minority ethnic party is based on war time networks and uses symbolic capital and can extend patronage to voters, then it will be the most successful minority party in the post-conflict period.

I also took into consideration the dynamics of the competition. There could be more than one minority party which derives or includes war time networks. This would not be contradictory to my expectation, but would confirm it. I expected that: If there is more than one party built on war time networks, then the party which has the highest conjunction of structures, symbolic capital and possibilities to extend patronage will be most successful.

There could be cases where parties from rebels are new comers and competing against an incumbent minority ethnic party. The first will rely mainly on support mobilized through the war time networks and will use the symbolic capital. The second will mostly rely on extending patronage. I expected war time networks and symbolic capital to be more important than patronage. This is a crucial test for whether utilizing the legacies from the conflicts are indeed necessary conditions for success of minority ethnic parties.

Minority ethnic parties which are not based on war time networks and do not have symbolic capital or cannot extend patronage to voters will have the lowest chances for success.

V.2. Empirical evidence from Croatia and Macedonia

The conflict-affected minority political parties in Croatia and Macedonia.³³⁷ During the conflict substantial part of existing minority parties, or their members, supported the armed groups. Armed groups became a sort of gravitational point for them during the conflict. However, some minority parties opposed the armed groups. After the conflict, minority parties which functioned in RSK ceased to exist in Croatia, while existing minority parties continued in Macedonia. SDSS and DUI emerged

³³⁷ Time lines, graphically presenting the process, are found in the appendix.

from war time networks. Later, a third wave of minority parties appeared, some splintered from the existing ones and some were started anew. The conflict was a critical juncture for minority ethnic parties. The competition between minority parties and political representation of minorities was restructured. Parties built on war time networks became dominant. The links between former armed groups and minority ethnic parties in both countries are shown in tables 3 and 4.

Table V.3. The conflict and minority ethnic parties in Croatia

	Party members directly participated in the armed conflict		
The party existed before the armed conflict		Yes	No
	Yes	(SDS), (SRS in RSK)	SNS
	No	SDSS, PPS, NS, NSS, DPS	ZSH, ZSR

Table V.4. The conflict and minority ethnic parties in Macedonia

	Party members directly participated in the armed conflict		
The party existed before the armed conflict		Yes	No
	Yes	NDP, DPA, PDP	DAAM
	No	DUI, NA, NDS (NDU), DUA, ND	RDK

Minority ethnic parties existed prior to the conflict both in Croatia and in Macedonia. Some of these parties were actively involved in the conflict, others were not. Some Serb parties in Croatia, like SDS and SRS in RSK, were heavily involved in the conflict. SDS helped the formation of armed groups and SRS in RSK organized paramilitary groups. On the other side, SNS did not take part in the conflict and opposed the Serbs in RSK. The leadership of NDP, DPA and PDP were not involved in the conflict, but there were party members who joined NLA during the conflict. DAAM did not take part in the conflict at all.

SDS was banned after the conflict in Croatia and SRS ceased to exist. However, PPS to a large extent is continuation of SRS. New minority ethnic parties appeared which are based on war time networks to varying degree. These are SDSS, DPS, NS and NSS. At the beginning it was only SDSS. All of the war time networks joined together to form SDSS. Later the others split from it. The core of the war time networks in Eastern Slavonia stayed in SDSS. NS and NSS were based on parts of these networks, while DPS was mainly based on war time networks from Western Slavonia.

In Macedonia, the core of NLA transformed to DUI. However, some commandants and combatants went to NDP and DPA. Later NDS (NDU) and NA split from DUI, and DUA and ND split from DPA. These four new parties were partially based on war time networks. Some of their members were NLA commandants and combatants. ZSH and ZSR participated in different elections for Serb representatives in national legislative elections Croatia. They have no relation to the armed conflict. RDK is also a newcomer which has no relation to the armed conflict in Macedonia.

There were several minority ethnic parties which were based on war time networks and had symbolic capital. In the empirical chapters I first I looked at the formation of armed groups and the transformation of war time networks in SDSS and DUI. In Croatia, SDSS was built on war time networks in Eastern Slavonia. During the peaceful reintegration, moderates led by Vojislav Stanimirović came to the helm of Serb political leadership in Croatia. They built the new party largely on the old SDS, which supported and organized Serb armed groups in Croatia. There was substantial structural continuity between the old SDS and the new SDSS. Local branches were built by old SDS party cadres or returnees who were part of war time networks in RSK. In Macedonia, DUI appeared with the transformation of NLA. The leadership of NLA became the leadership of DUI and local

commanders organized the local party branches. War time networks gave SDSS and DUI deep social penetration and wide organizational branches in places where members of their ethnic group live. The functioning of these social units on a micro level provided the new parties with mechanisms to aggregate interests and mobilize support. Greater inclusion of war time networks gave a stronger effect.

The data from Croatia and Macedonia shows how symbolic capital was formed during the conflict and was translated to harness electoral support in the post-conflict period. Symbolic capital was created during the conflict and at that point it was associated with participation in armed structures.

Participation gave individuals higher credentials for political representation and for political appointments. Examples are found in the announcements and letters of Serb political parties in RSK and in the war journal of NLA leaders. Being on the right side at the wrong time was definitely considered a plus for a political career in the post-conflict period. People who were active in RSK in Croatia or were NLA members in Macedonia have a competitive advantage, overall, over others. This gave a leeway to Vojislav Stanimirović in Croatia and Ali Ahmeti in Macedonia compared to leaders of other parties. When they became presidents of the party which integrated most of the war time networks, they transferred and, probably, increased their symbolic capital. Both leaders pushed hard for implementation of the peace agreements, Erdut in Croatia and OFA in Macedonia, which brought benefits to their ethnic groups. This again contributed to the symbolic capital of their party.

SDSS and DUI, and their affiliated organizations, organized social practices, commemorations and dirges, to preserve the symbolic capital in the post-conflict period. High representatives of SDSS and DUI deliver political speeches at these events. If there are representatives from other minority parties, then they have a passive and secondary role. SNV, under control of SDSS, issued statements of memory and sponsored erection of memorial monuments in Croatia. DUI opened a museum dedicated

to NLA and together with NLA's association of veterans organized regular commemorative events. Both SDSS and DUI have utilized structural legacies of the conflicts and have invested in social practices to preserve their symbolic capital. Institutionalization of conflict's legacies was their main party strategy in the post-conflict period.

In addition, they were able to acquire possibilities to extend patronage. SDSS was handling the process of post-conflict reconstruction. SDSS brokered the transfer of public administration, including police and judiciary, public enterprises and public services from RSK to Croatia. In a way they had political control of the whole public sector employment possibilities for Serbs in Eastern Slavonia. Also, SDSS was channeling international donor support and humanitarian assistance. SDSS was pushing for Serbs to get pensions and social benefits, to which they were entitled as Croatian citizens. When SDSS became part of the government they secured 'club' goods for Serb returnees (e.g. rebuilding of roads, water supply, and housing). Being part of national and sub-national government gave SDSS possibilities to target benefits to Serbs. SDSS has also given direct donations and secured goods through organizations it controls (e.g. ZVO and SNV).

Before DUI was formed, NLA structures on the ground were channeling the post-conflict reconstruction process. Rebuilding of houses was done with their consent and they were choosing rebuilding priorities. War time structures were involved in providing 'club' goods (e.g. building roads and water supply) during the conflict. When DUI was included in government they got access to spoils and resources. They offered political positions and employment to their former combatants and their families. In the beginning DUI was targeting benefits to former NLA combatants, but then extended employment in public administration as patronage for other party loyalist. OFA's principle for equitable representation of minorities in public administration was used as an instrument to create patron-client

relations with the Albanian electorate.

The quantitative analysis of electoral data corroborates the finding. The analysis of variance in electoral support showed that the mean electoral support for SDSS and DUI is higher in conflict-affected municipalities than in non-affected. Their mean electoral support is much higher than other minority parties. It is quite surprising to see that SDSS and DUI retained high support in conflict-affected municipalities in all post-conflict elections. This is 16 years after the conflict ended in Croatia and 10 years in Macedonia. I take this as an indicator that SDSS and DUI institutionalized support from war time networks, which were more wide and dense in conflict regions. Correlation results showed that SDSS' and DUI's voter support is positively correlated with possibilities to extend patronage (i.e. municipalities in Croatia where ZVO has competences and political control of municipalities in Macedonia).

SDSS and DUI confirm my main hypothesis. They were both built on war time networks, used symbolic capital and had possibilities to extend patronage. The analysis in Croatia and Macedonia shows that institutionalization of conflict's legacies in conjunction with patronage was indeed the most successful strategy for competition between minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings. This explains why SDSS and DUI win the majority of the votes from their ethnic group.

SDSS and DUI included most of the war time networks and their leaders had the highest concentration of symbolic capital and over time they acquired possibilities to extend patronage. However, there were other parties which were based on war time networks or included them, had symbolic capital and also had possibilities to extend patronage. These were DPS in Croatia and DPA and NDP in Macedonia.

Some parties could rely only on war time network's support and symbolic capital or only on patronage.

And there were parties which could not rely on war time networks and symbolic capital nor on patronage. Tables 5 and 6 present different minority parties in competition in Croatia and Macedonia.

Table V.5. Analyzing the competition between Serb parties in Croatia

	Party can extend patronage to voters		
		Yes	No
Party utilizes war time networks and symbolic capital	Yes	SDSS, DPS	NS, NSS, PPS
	No	SNS	ZSH, ZSR

Table V.6. Analyzing the competition between Albanian parties in Macedonia

	Party can extend patronage to voters		
		Yes	No
Party utilizes war time networks and uses symbolic capital	Yes	DUI, NDP, DPA	DUA, NDS (NDU), NA, ND
	No	RDK	PDP, DAAM

DPS in Croatia and NDP and DPA in Macedonia had a similar strategy as SDSS and DUI. DPS, NDP and DPA were most successful challengers in the post-conflict period. DPS was built on war time networks in Western Slavonia led by Veljko Đakula and Miroslav Grozdanić. They transferred and retained their symbolic capital from the conflict and gained possibilities to target goods to Serbs through SDF. As a result DPS won sub-national elections in Western Slavonia in 2009 and 2013. NDP gave Xhezair Shaqiri lead position on their party list in the electoral unit in North-East Macedonia where Shaqiri (aka Commandant Hoxha) led NLA actions. He had symbolic capital in this region and was channeling reconstruction in the post-conflict period. NDP had the best score with Shaqiri and he was the only one from their list to win a mandate in 2002. Further, DPA purposefully attracted NLA combatants in the post-conflict period and gave them prominent positions in the party. For example, Daut Rexhepi (aka Commander Leka) became head of DPA's party branch in the same region where he

operated as NLA commander. DPA was included in the government in 2006 and started to employ party loyalists and extend other patronage to Albanians. Following this strategy DPA consistently improved their electoral results from 2002 to 2008, foremost in conflict-affected municipalities. However, once DPA changed their strategy and lost NLA combatants, their electoral support decreased. I take the cases of DPS in Croatia and NDP and DPA in Macedonia as another corroboration of my argument that institutionalization of conflict's legacies in conjunction with patronage is the most successful strategy for minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings.

However, DPS and NDP utilized war time networks and symbolic capital and extended patronage only on local level (e.g. DPS in Western Slavonia and NDP in North-East Macedonia). This is why they had good results there. On the other hand, SDSS and DUI were able to utilize more of the war time networks and symbolic capital and to extend more patronage on national level. This confirms my second hypothesis: if there are several parties built on war time networks, then the one with the highest conjunction of structures, symbolic capital and possibilities to extend patronage will be most successful. The other parties which were partially based on war time networks and had some symbolic capital (NS, NSS and PPS in Croatia, DUA, NDS (NDU), NA, and ND in Macedonia), but had no possibilities to extend patronage additionally corroborate the finding. They tried different strategies from ethnic moderation (NSS in Croatia and ND in Macedonia) to radical outbidding (PPS in Croatia and DUA, NDS (NDU) and NA in Macedonia) and promoting ethnic clientelism in their party program (NS). All of the strategies failed and the parties had much lower electoral results compared to SDSS and DUI.

DPA in Macedonia is another case that shows that limited inclusion of war time networks has limited results. However, DPA also presents a crucial case that confirms my third hypothesis, namely that

incumbent minority party relying mainly on patronage will not be as successful as parties which utilize war time networks and symbolic capital. DPA was a junior coalition partner in government for the elections in 2002 and 2008. It had limited possibilities to extend patronage in 2002, and it had more possibilities for patronage than DUI between 2006 and 2008. DPA were laying off DUI cadres and employing party loyalists, and they were targeting supplying other 'club' and 'private' goods to Albanian. Their electoral program in 2008 is a testimony of the patronage they extended to Albanians during their mandate. DUI had fewer possibilities to extend patronage than DPA, but more support from war time networks and symbolic capital. However, on both occasions, 2002 and 2008, DPA lost to DUI. This shows that utilization of war time structures and symbolic capital is necessary for minority ethnic parties to win in post-conflict settings.

The cases of SNS in Croatia and RDK in Macedonia also partly corroborate this point. SNS was incumbent in national legislative elections in 2003 and lost to SDSS, and RDK as incumbent party lost to DUI in the local elections in 2013. However, they are not as clear cut. SDSS in Croatia had possibilities to extend patronage in Eastern Slavonia, mainly through ZVO, while SNS could supply 'club' goods to Serbs only if Croatian authorities were willing to comply with their demands. Also, when RDK was in power in Gostivar, DUI was junior coalition partner in government and had greater access to spoils and resources.

My last hypothesis was that the parties which are not built on war time networks do not have symbolic capital and no possibilities to extend patronage will be least successful. The results of ZSH and ZSR in Croatia and DAAM, PDP and RDK in Macedonia confirm my expectation. The Croatian cases are clear cut, but the cases from Macedonia are a different story. DAAM did not stand alone in elections; hence one cannot judge the electoral performance of that party. The results of PDP and RDK confirm

my expectation. However, on average PDP and RDK had better results than most of the other Albanian parties which were based on war time networks but had no possibilities to extend patronage (e.g. DUA, NDS (NDU) and NA). PDP and RDK show that there are limits to the explanatory power of my theoretical framework. The limits are discussed in the next section.

V.3. Differences, similarities and limits

The post-conflict conditions in Croatia and Macedonia in terms of conflict resolution and international involvement, size of the ethnic groups and electoral participation of minorities were very different.

However, since the outcomes in terms of competition between minority parties are similar, one country serves as control for the other. In Croatia, the conflict ended after the Serbs were militarily defeated. In Macedonia, the conflict was resolved peacefully. A UN mission was deployed in Croatia to implement the Erdut agreement and the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia. In Macedonia, NATO and the EU mission were deployed which had peace keeping competences, while state institutions implemented the OFA. International representatives in Croatia were supportive of former war time networks in Eastern Slavonia and facilitated their involvement in politics. International representatives in Macedonia persuaded NLA to disarm and support peaceful resolution, but were skeptical about their involvement in politics in the post-conflict period. The number of Serb substantially diminished after the conflict and there were many internally displaced Serb in Croatia. The number of Albanians was not impacted and there were fewer internally displaced persons. The electoral regimes in which minority parties compete are quite different. Serbs have guaranteed seats on national and sub-national level where they compete between themselves and other parties in Croatia. There are no guaranteed seats in Macedonia and Albanian parties compete between themselves and other parties in national and local elections. However, these differences do not account for the dynamics in minority politics.

The Erdut agreement and OFA introduced power sharing arrangements. Instruments for minority inclusion and integration were introduced without prejudices and preferences for minority parties. Some were different, for example, ZVO was established as a *sui generis* minority institution in Croatia, and people working in public administration in RSK were transferred to Croatian public administration. Some instruments were similar in Croatia and in Macedonia, for example usage of minority languages, cultural rights and employment quotas in public administration. Political control of instruments for integration and inclusion of minorities gave minority parties possibilities to extend patronage. Also, the post-conflict reconstruction process opened additional possibilities for minority parties to extend patronage if they could influence the rebuilding process and/or distribution of goods.

The process of creating minority parties from war time networks was similar for SDSS and DUI. However, it should be said that most of the Serb military leadership left the country. The remaining war time networks where some had overlapping membership in former armed groups but were mainly from political structures in RSK, formed SDSS. The peaceful reintegration provided the opportunity, voter base and pool of resources to form SDSS. Serb IDPs residing in Eastern Slavonia were part of this process. Some of them, as returnees, helped to establish local branches in their home municipalities. SDSS, mainly relying on SDS cadres, used Serb returnees to open new party branches. In Macedonia NLA transformed to DUI and NLA local commanders were in charge of setting up DUI's local branches. In both countries local war time networks became micro social units in charge of communication with voters and their mobilization. Another similarity for war time networks in Croatia and Macedonia is that they had political control on the ground and were included in the post-conflict reconstruction process. In Croatia, they handled the peaceful reintegration process and were a partner to the international community and Croatian authorities. In Macedonia, the consent of war time networks

had to be acquired for the post-conflict reconstruction to go on.

A crucial similarity in Croatia and Macedonia is that key political leaders, important for peaceful resolution of the conflicts, became party leaders. These are Vojislav Stanimirović in Croatia and Ali Ahmeti in Macedonia. Both were political leaders during the conflict and had overlapping membership in the armed forces. Both were instrumental in implementing the provisions of the peace agreements, restoring peace and improving the status and rights of their respective ethnic group in the post-conflict period. Stanimirović has been leader of SDSS since 1997 and Ahmeti has been leader of DUI since 2002. They are the most important power brokers in their respective parties. Both have major symbolic capital within their ethnic group.

The formation of symbolic capital during the conflict was similar in Croatia and Macedonia. It was first accredited to participation in the armed conflict, and then to roles in the post-conflict period which were seen as positive for the ethnic group. Participation in the armed conflict was regarded as a plus for a political career in the post-conflict period. On the other hand, minority politicians who opposed the armed groups got a symbolic burden. SDSS and DUI invested in similar social practices (e.g. commemorations) to preserve their symbolic capital. They also, similarly, supported a discourse and understanding of the conflict and its consequences which appeals to their ethnic group. However, there is one key difference when it comes to symbolic capital.

Serbs were defeated in the conflict. Thousands of secret prosecutions against Serbs were raised for participating in the conflict. In the Croatian public discourse former members of Serb armed groups, or members of affiliated organizations, are defamed. Serbs are still verbally harassed and publicly shamed for participation in RSK structures. Therefore, the utilization of the symbolic capital has to be covert.

Within the Serb community it is known “who did what” during the conflict, meaning who was in RSK and who was not. The first are politically preferred and the latter are not. Commemorative events and declarations of memory serve to sustain that memory. These social practices are not exclusive in Croatia. Any Serb political party can initiate or join them, as long as it follows the appropriate discourse. In Macedonia, social practices for utilizing and sustaining the symbolic legacy are public and exclusive. DUI or affiliated organizations hold regular events to pay respect to fallen NLA fighters. Speeches at these events glorify NLA battles, and commitments are made to continue NLA's struggle. DUI officials opened a museum dedicated to NLA. Despite this difference I argue that the utilization of symbolic capital for harnessing electoral support is similar in both countries.

Minority parties similarly use the institutional provisions for minority inclusion and integration to create patron-client relations. However, there is one key difference. SDSS controls the elaborate institutional environment for minority politics in Croatia. SDSS controlled ZVO from the start of the peaceful reintegration. SDSS officials also control *Srpsko Narodno Vijece* which is an umbrella organization of *Vijeca Srpske Nacionalne Manjine*. SDSS has almost corporate control over the system for minority protection, on national, county and local level. Having political control gives them possibilities to extend patronage. Other Serb parties in Croatia do not have such possibilities and their main criticism toward SDSS is oriented toward the misuse of the institutions for minority politics. On the other hand, the post-conflict institutional environment for minority politics in Macedonia is not as elaborate as it is in Croatia. Decentralization increased the competences and budget of municipalities and equitable representation meant more public employment for minorities. The minority ethnic party which is in power on local level controls access to local spoils and resources. The Albanian junior coalition partner in government controls public employment of minorities. This gave possibilities to DUI to extend patronage when they were in government; However, the same was for DPA when they

were in power (2006-2008). Albanian parties cannot capture the institution for minority politics as it is the case with SDSS in Croatia. The political control whether the party is in power or not. However, since DUI has been in power the most, it had most possibilities to extend patronage and harness electoral support.

My argument is that institutionalization of conflict's legacies, which is to say utilization of war time networks and symbolic capital, in conjunction with patronage are the main causal mechanisms which allow minority parties to be successful in the post-conflict period. However, electoral rules, local idiosyncrasies or charismatic leaders, and existing party infrastructure limit the influence of the causal mechanisms.

The results of the elections for the guaranteed Serb seat in 2000 point out to one limitation. Electoral rules condition the representation of minorities. SDSS list led by Vojislav Stanimirović in general electoral unit 5 won more votes than SNS list in the Serb minority nation wide electoral unit led by Milan Đukić. SDSS had to pass a 5% threshold to get mandates and SNS only had to get majority of votes to win. Counter-factually, if Stanimirović led SDSS' list in the Serb minority electoral unit, then it is very likely that SDSS would win. This shows that the legacies of the conflict in conjunction with patronage will not work for the party if the electoral rules are less favorable than for other political parties. When minority ethnic parties compete under the same electoral regulations, then *ceteris paribus* the conjunction of three factors will yield strongest results.

The explanatory framework also does not account for local idiosyncrasies or charismatic leaders. For example, in Macedonia Rufi Osmani won the mayoral race in Gostivar as an independent candidate in 2009 and went to form RDK in 2011. Interviews reveal that his victory was largely due to the legacy of

his first mayoral term in 1997. Osmani was also a charismatic leader. He formed RDK without inclusion of war time networks and without using symbolic legacies from the conflict. He did not win, but had reasonably good results. Similarly ND in Macedonia was lead by the charismatic Imer Selmani, who was joined by some war time networks which left DPA. ND did not have better results than DUI, but came second best in local elections in 2009. These examples show that other conditions, local idiosyncrasies or personal charisma, can account for the success of some minority ethnic parties.

The results of the 'old' minority parties which existed prior to the conflict are another challenge for the explanatory framework. For example, in Macedonia PDP did fairly well, and had more success than NDP, DUA, NDS (NDU), or NA. Also, in Croatia SNS had better results than PPS in the 2003 parliamentary elections. The parties which existed prior to the conflict had party infrastructure and a voter base. Part of their structures merged with parties which included war time networks. Before that the early organizational development and mobilization of the 'old' parties worked to their advantage. On the other hand, it is also unclear why PDP twice lost party cadres to DUI, while war time networks that joined DPA did not go to DUI but formed new parties. This dynamic did not affect the explanatory power of the framework, but shows that the framework cannot fully account for electoral support of 'old' parties and for intra-party developments and splits.

The explanatory framework also does not fully account for the variance of support between smaller ethnic parties. For example, PPS in Croatia and ND in Macedonia partially included war time networks. PPS is similar to NS, NS or DPS and ND is similar to DUA, NA or NDS (NDU). However, from the framework it is unclear why some of these parties gain more votes than others. Local idiosyncrasies and personal charisma can probably explain these outcomes better.

Last, but not least, my theoretical framework is not time sensitive. I applied it to different national elections and the results are satisfying. However, the power of the causal mechanisms most likely changes over time. War time networks and symbolic capital are more important in the first cycles of post-conflict elections. Over time their influence fades away, and especially the influence of symbolic capital. The negative reactions of the villagers in Macedonia ten years after the conflict show that. War time networks as social units for aggregation and mobilization probably remain relevant for longer period. However, if new cadres enter the party and with individual party mobility, the networks probably get diluted over time. In the long run, control of institutional instruments and possibilities to extend patronage accounts more in the success of SDSS in Croatia and DUI in Macedonia.

V.4. Competing explanations

To deduce competing explanations about the performance of minority parties in post-conflict settings I look at studies of guerrilla-to-party transformation and minority ethnic parties in competition. My argument improves the explanation about the performance of parties from rebels and raises awareness about the specific post-conflict conditions which influence the competition between minority parties.

The guerrilla-to-party literature mainly looks at the conditions under which the transformation process is successful. The success or failures of guerrilla-to-party transformation is modeled as a function of factors within the local environment, within the rebel groups or the international environment, or conjunction of all. For example, if there is regime stability, and if rebels are included in the peace process and supported by international actors, then the transformation will be successful.

Transformation is also likely to be successful if the peace agreement offers institutional incentives, if rebels have popular support and if the leadership of the rebels is not challenged. Even though many of

the studies show the continuity, especially organizational, from rebel groups to parties, there is an implicit assumption that once the transformation ends, the new parties will function as any other party. Therefore, the guerrilla-to-party literature does not look at the performance of parties from rebels *per se*.

The empirical chapters tracing the formation of SDSS and DUI show that the guerrilla-to-party literature is quite successful in explaining the transformation process. Most of the outlined conditions applied both in Croatia and Macedonia. There was regime stability after the conflict, rebels were included in the peace process and they were supported by international organizations, more in Croatia than in Macedonia. The Erdut Agreement and OFA introduced power sharing arrangements which served as incentives for transformation. Rebels had popular support; however, the leadership did not go unchallenged. At the founding assembly of SDSS the moderate Stanimirović was elected party president in the second round of voting. Ali Ahmeti's orders during the conflict were challenged (e.g. orders to withdraw from Tetovo and Arachinovo), so NLA's chain of command was dubious. However, once DUI was formed and SDSS started to function, the party leadership was not challenged. DUI is a clear case of guerrilla-to-party transformation; however, SDSS is not that clear. Serb military leadership fled Croatia after the conflict. Triangulation of the data (personal interviews, media and archival sources) corroborates that there was overlapping membership between political parties and armed groups in RSK. Serbs who were members of parties or armed groups or both in RSK make the war time networks. SDSS was built on RSK's war time networks which remained active in Eastern Slavonia. Therefore, SDSS is more a party built on war time networks than transformed from rebel groups.

Nonetheless, if one assumes that the transformation of combatants to parties goes in two phases, revoking violence being the first and performing as party the second, then guerrilla-to-party literature is

successful in explaining the first; however, it fails to explain the second. The explanations for the performance of parties from rebels on one hand relate to the post-conflict institutional environment. For example, if post-conflict institutions favor parties from rebels, then they will be more successful and if parties from rebels are included in government, then they can provide spoils to their voters and get support. However, the Erdut agreement and OFA did not make special provisions for former rebels or war time networks. The institutional provisions for SDSS and DUI were the same as for the other minority parties. It is true that when SDSS and DUI were included in government they offered spoils to voters; however, they were included in government because they won in elections and not because of institutional provisions. Access to spoils was a consequence of their electoral victory and not the main cause. SDSS and DUI utilized war time networks and symbolic capital to gain competitive advantage over other minority ethnic parties.

On the other hand, the guerrilla-to-party literature explains the performance of parties from rebels looking at the characteristics of the rebel groups. For example, if parties derive from larger rebel groups, with many local branches which extended social services and were local security providers during a prolonged conflict, then they will be more successful than other parties. Also, if parties from rebels are centralized and coherent, similar to the armed group, and if they have past political experience and also include new party cadres, then they will be more successful than other parties in the post-conflict period. Even though SDSS derived from war time networks, and not a rebel group, one can argue that during the conflict they had many local branches, extended social services and were security providers. However, DUI derived directly from NLA, and NLA was none of the above. NLA did not have many branches, and for a greater part of the conflict had 300-500 members, they did not provide social service and it is unclear whether they were a security provider or a threat for the local population. Since Serb military leadership fled Croatia, SDSS' war time networks were not very

centralized and coherent. Also, NLA was more of a rowdy bunch than a coherent and centralized armed group. Members of SDSS had previous political experience, while NLA members had none and both included new party cadres. It is clear that the varying characteristics of rebel groups/war time networks cannot fully account for the electoral performance of SDSS and DUI. However, my argument can. And it is not about the characteristics of the rebel groups or the war time networks during the conflict. It is about the utilization of war time networks and symbolic capital in the post-conflict period. SDSS and DUI were most successful minority parties because they went through a similar process of institutionalization of conflict's legacies. This strategy in conjunction with patronage explains their dominance in the post-conflict period.

Guerrilla-to-party literature further expects that parties from rebels will get more support in former conflict regions, even though it is not clear for how long. Also, there is an expectation for the history or ideational capital of the rebel group to be important for the party's performance; however, it is unclear in which way and how is the effect mitigated. I tested the electoral results for all sub-national and national legislative elections from the first post-conflict elections to most recent ones. The results show that SDSS has continuous support for 16 years after the conflict in conflict-affected regions in Croatia and similarly DUI has continuous support for 10 years after the conflict in conflict-affected municipalities in Macedonia. This is a new and surprising finding, given that previous studies look only at the first post-conflict elections and give weight to organizational characteristics of rebel groups in former conflict regions. My approach provides better explanations. Structural continuity of parties built on war time networks is strength for the new party. War time networks become micro social units which are embedded in the local community. The institutionalization of war time networks allows the party to have strong social support. And the higher electoral support in former conflict regions, 10-16 years after the conflict testifies to that. In addition, the symbolic capital becomes transferred and is used

as electoral appeal of the party. Social, reiterative and regular, practices are initiated to preserve the symbolic capital. SDSS and DUI supported a discourse which is appealing to members of their ethnic group. The symbolic capital which I put forward is similar to history/ideational capital. However, in my argument I specify better the role of agency in formation and utilization of that capital.

On the other hand, my work contributes to literature about minority ethnic parties in competition. The main focus of this literature is to set conditions under which minority parties will chose to moderate or to radicalize. The literature looks primarily at the strategies of minority parties, and does not fully explore the variance of support. Also, it rarely looks at minority parties in post-conflict settings, and does not make the connection between former rebel groups and minority parties.

Some studies that look at paramilitary groups and parties in Northern Ireland make a similar argument as part of the guerrilla-to-party literature. That is, if peace agreements offer incentives, then radical parties will moderate. The literature on minority parties also shows that if minorities are territorially concentrated, and electoral rules are permissible, then there will be intra-group competition. My findings in Croatia and Macedonia confirm these expectations. Incentives from the Erdut Agreement and OFA induced SDSS and DUI to moderate in the post-conflict period. However, in the long term, other parties from war time networks, and not necessarily only splinters from SDSS and DUI, again were making radical demands, but were not engaged in radical actions. Serbs in Croatia and Albanians in Macedonia are territorially concentrated and electoral rules are permissive, hence there is intra-group competition.

If there is intra-group competition, then minority parties are expected to chose from a radical or moderate strategy depending on the conditions. For example, if minority ethnic parties compete in

various electoral arenas, then it is more likely that they will cooperate with various parties and therefore it is more likely that they will moderate. If minority ethnic parties are in opposition, then they will radicalize. My findings do not fully support these expectations. Serb parties in Croatia compete in various electoral arenas; however, some cooperate with various parties (e.g. SNS and SDSS) and moderate, while others do not (e.g. PPS). In Macedonia, Albanian parties compete in the same arenas with other parties and some chose to moderate (e.g. PDP and ND), while others chose to radicalize (e.g. DPA, DUA, and NDP). Albanian parties in opposition in Macedonia are more likely to radicalize than Serb parties in Croatia. For Serbs, the military defeat in the conflict, and some being harassed and discriminated in the post-conflict period, has served as a harsh reality check. Therefore, the terms on which the conflict ended may condition the choice of minority parties' strategies. This is one reason why competition in post-conflict settings should be considered as a specific subset in the literature about minority parties in competition.

However, the main reason for a distinction is the specific winning strategy which is available only in post-conflict settings. And that is the possibility to institutionalize conflict's legacies in conjunction with patronage. So far the main explanations for success of minority ethnic parties are, on one hand, outbidding and, on the other, inclusion in government and offering spoils to get electoral support. However, SDSS and DUI have done none of that. They were not outbidding in the first post-conflict elections and were not included in government. And yet they won. My argument explains that there are specific resources in post-conflict settings which are available only to some minority parties. These are the utilization of war time networks and symbolic capital. The competition between minority parties in post-conflict settings is not a level playing field. In Croatia, and Macedonia the parties that utilized the most war time networks and symbolic capital were the winning and dominant parties. There is merit in the argument that clientelism accounts for the success of minority parties; however, I better specify the

conditions in post-conflict settings. Inclusion in government is not necessarily the only avenue for possibilities to extend patronage. War time networks of SDSS and DUI influenced the reconstruction and distribution of goods in the post-conflict period to extend 'club' and 'private' goods. SDSS and DUI got access to spoils through sub-national governance. They came to control specific minority institutions (e.g. ZVO) and organizations (e.g. SNV and Association of NLA veterans) and extended patronage through them. SDSS in Croatia has control of the system for minority integration to the extent that it does not need to be included in government to have possibilities to extend patronage. And SDSS came to such position as a consequence of their development in the post-conflict period.

VI. CONCLUSION

Studies of democratization in post-conflict cases show that once the conflict ends, it is quite often that former rebel groups transform into political parties. They actively participate in political processes. They stand in elections and become elected representatives. Some of the research welcomes the inclusion of rebels, arguing that an inclusive approach is needed for sustainable peace building. Others point out that such developments bring forth dilemmas, such as moral and security hazards, in the post-conflict period. An emerging sub-field conceptualizes and explores the guerrilla-to-party transformation, while most of the post-conflict democratization literature explores the institutional design and actions of international actors to sustain peace building and democratization. Authors acknowledge that there is little focus on local actors, but do not address the gap.

After inter-ethnic conflicts, peace agreements usually introduce power sharing arrangements. New institutions are designed which provide for higher inclusion and integration of minorities. The environment for minority politics is reconstructed. Rebel groups may transform to minority ethnic parties. Minority parties adapt to the new post-conflict environment and operate in the post-conflict context. For example, Croatia and Macedonia are two cases of post-conflict democratizing countries. They were both part of former Yugoslavia and had inter-ethnic conflicts. Opposition organizations made of minority members contested the government in both cases. However, the characteristics of the conflict, the duration and gravity were different. The conflicts started in different circumstances and ended in different ways. In both countries minority ethnic parties which included most of the war time networks appeared. These are SDSS in Croatia and DUI in Macedonia. These parties were the most successful minority parties in the post-conflict period.

The question why SDSS in Croatia and DUI in Macedonia are the most successful minority parties guided my research. To find answers I looked at the guerrilla-to-party literature. It mainly looks at the conditions under which rebel groups transform into political parties. However, one can also use it to draw expectations about the performance of the parties from rebels. I also look at the literature about minority ethnic parties in competition. The literature does not account for post-conflict cases, but looks at the electoral strategies of minority parties in regards to whether they radicalize or moderate. The strategies of the parties account for their electoral success. Following the two strands of literature, I decided first, to see what happened after the conflict, how war time networks transformed into political parties and second, to see how minority ethnic parties performed in Croatia and in Macedonia.

I then proceeded to develop my own theoretical argument and explanatory framework. My approach is focused on the local actors and is sensitive to the post-conflict context and environment for minority politics. I argued that the current research does not properly conceptualize the links between former armed groups and political parties in the post-conflict period. My conceptualization shows that there are several possibilities ranging from parties who were actors in the conflict, parties which existed before the conflict but did not participate in it, parties which appeared after the conflict from rebel groups or war time networks, and parties which appeared after the conflict without any relations to former armed groups. I proposed an alternative approach based on legacies of the conflict and patronage. It is claimed that conflicts leave structural and psychocultural consequences and I think that this can be applied to minority politics in post-conflict settings. I also look at studies of clientelism and patronage. Political parties use patronage to attract electoral gains under different conditions. Minority ethnic parties are no exception and the post-conflict socioeconomic environment is conducive for patronage.

My explanatory framework for the success of minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings rests on conjunction of three causal mechanisms. Two come as legacies from the conflict and usually go together. The first is the utilization of war time networks. The second is the utilization of symbolic capital derived from the conflict. Minority ethnic parties institutionalize conflict's legacies to attract electoral support. The third factor is the possibility of the party to extend patronage. It comes from the ability of the party to control spoils and resources. My main expectation was that if a minority ethnic party utilizes the legacies of the conflict and can extend patronage, and then it will be the most successful minority ethnic party in the post-conflict period. I claim that utilizing the legacies of the conflict is the main condition for minority ethnic parties to win, while extending patronage is a minimal condition.

With the research design I controlled for different explanatory variables in the post-conflict period. The level of analysis was set on competition between minority parties in post-conflict settings. I looked at Serb parties in Croatia, but also at Albanian parties in Macedonia. The performance of minority ethnic parties in each country is the valid level of comparison. The post-conflict conditions are different, but the electoral outcomes are similar in both. One country serves as control for the other. This shows that my analysis and argument are not country specific, but that they cover both countries.

In the first part of the empirical chapters I traced the formation of SDSS and DUI. These parts of the empirical chapters answer the question what happened after the conflict. They show how SDSS and DUI were formed, how they utilized the legacies of the conflict and gained possibilities to extend patronage. I also presented cases where I showed why some competing parties were able to defeat them, or improve their results, and others lost. Moderation, radicalization and only patronage were not as successful as institutionalization of conflict's legacies in conjunction with patronage. In the second

part of the empirical chapters I did quantitative analysis of electoral data for all minority ethnic parties in all national and sub-national elections from the first post-conflict elections to most recent ones in both countries. The results of the quantitative analysis are consistent for all electoral cycles, in both countries. They show that SDSS and DUI have continuous electoral support in former conflict regions (SDSS for 16 years after the conflict and DUI for 10 years) and that their electoral support is correlated with municipalities where they have possibilities to extend patronage. The findings confirm my hypothesis and support my argument.

In the comparative analysis I brought together the empirical findings from both countries and discussed the differences, similarities and limitations of my approach. I also checked the competing explanations from the guerrilla-to-party and minority ethnic parties in competition literature. Some of the expectations were confirmed, in regards to the conditions for transformation of rebel groups and conditions for intra-group minority competition. However, competing explanations couldn't explain, satisfactorily, the performance of minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings.

My approach and the causal mechanisms which I propose seem to be better suited. The hypotheses that I drew were confirmed. Minority ethnic parties which include war time networks have symbolic capital, and possibilities to extend patronage are most likely to win elections against rival parties. This is confirmed by the results of the competition in national and sub-national elections between Serb parties in Croatia and between Albanian parties in Macedonia. If there are several minority ethnic parties which are built on war time networks, the one which includes most of the networks and has most symbolic capital will be most successful. New parties built on war time networks which have symbolic capital are more successful than incumbent minority ethnic parties. Utilization of the conflict's legacies (war time networks and symbolic capital) is the main condition for minority ethnic

parties to win. Extending patronage is a minimal condition.

Which ever party had a greater conjunction of the three factors won the elections in Croatia and Macedonia. For example, SDSS lost sub-national elections to DPS in Western Slavonia in 2009 and 2013, because DPS was based on local war time networks, which had higher symbolic capital on the local level and had possibilities to extend patronage. On the other hand, in Macedonia DPA made the effort to include more war time networks and definitely could extend more patronage than DUI for the 2008 elections. Following such strategy DPA's electoral support increased from 2002 to 2008; however, they lost the elections. DPA had more patronage, but DUI included more war time networks and had higher symbolic capital.

There are some limits to the causal mechanisms. They function only if minority ethnic parties compete under the same electoral rules and in the same electoral arena. My explanation does not fully account for the electoral support of 'old' parties, which had established infrastructure before the conflict, and for local idiosyncrasies or charismatic leaders. Any of these factors, under the right conditions, can affect the performance of minority ethnic parties in a way which is beyond my explanatory framework. Time sets another limitation to my explanation. It is very probable that the importance of war time networks as social units for aggregation and mobilization and their symbolic capital wears off in time; notwithstanding that social practices are developed to retain their influence. Minority ethnic parties invest to preserve resources which gave them electoral advantage. If patronage brings more votes than utilization of conflict's legacies, then it is very likely that the party strategy will be to extend more patronage.

VI.1. Theoretical implications

The conceptualization of the links between armed groups and minority political parties is a novel theoretical contribution. It acknowledges the continuity between armed groups and political parties and categorizes the variance of possible options. There is a life cycle of options for using violent or non-violent means to achieve political goals. If there is an internal conflict, political parties can chose to engage in violent conflict or stay aside. In the post-conflict period, parties can include or be built on war time networks, or have nothing to do with the conflict at all. The conceptualization shows the interplay between political parties and conflicts. It contributes to better understanding of the wider process of inclusion of war time networks in political parties. My own research contributes to greater understanding of what happens when ballots become the most preferred political means.

I developed an original framework for analyzing competition between minority ethnic parties in post-conflict context. Utilization of conflict's legacies and possibilities to extend patronage are the causal mechanisms on which the framework is built. The framework is an original contribution. It successfully explains the dominance of SDSS in Croatia and DUI in Macedonia. It also shows why DPS in Croatia and NDP and DPA in Macedonia can have good, yet limited results. Some results of 'old' parties which existed before the conflict in Croatia and Macedonia set a challenge for the explanatory framework. Parties which existed before the conflict probably had established organization and created a pool of voters. This is why they show good results in the post-conflict period, but not good enough to win. This does not negate the explanatory framework, but points out its limit.

The explanatory framework is also an original contribution to the guerrilla-to-party literature. In a way it is an extension of this literature. The framework makes a theoretical contribution in analyzing the performance of parties from rebels in comparison to other competing parties. In the guerrilla-to-party

literature, some authors (Kovacs, 2007) pointed out that the formation of parties from rebels should be seen as the first phase of the process, while the performance is the second phase. My research and contribution enlighten the second phase. The explanatory framework was created and tested for minority ethnic parties in Croatia and Macedonia. It showed satisfactory results for analyzing their competition and successfully predicted the position of most parties in all national level elections in the post-conflict period.

The implication for the guerrilla-to-party transformation literature is that the process should be seen as guerrilla-to-party transition. Transformation is a loaded concept and implies various changes. There is one crucial change. That is in the usage of means to achieve political goals. Ballots replace bullets. This is an essential change to start peacebuilding and to give democracy a chance. However, in the functioning of the parties, in their performance, there is a lot of structural and symbolic continuity. The legacies of the conflict become institutionalized and serve as the power base of the party. The legitimacy of the political parties from rebels comes from the conflict period. Therefore, I argue that guerrilla-to-party transition is more appropriate. It hints at the resources which parties from rebels are most likely to use in their electoral performance. With such understanding there is no need to assume that parties from rebels will be equal to any other party. Guerrilla-to-party transition assumes that there are specific resources which parties from rebels have.

My research confirmed the expectations from the guerrilla-to-party literature in regards to transformation of rebel groups. If the conditions are right, rebels will drop guns and form political parties. My research also confirmed that parties from rebels get higher electoral support in former conflict-affected regions. But I also show that this holds in prolonged period of time and explained what accounts for it. My research shows that when parties from rebels are formed, they utilize the

legacies of the conflict and assume political control of institutional instruments for inclusion and integration of minorities. This gives a better understanding of what happens after the conflict and how parties from rebels are formed. This finding contributes to post-conflict democratization literature and to guerrilla-to-party literature.

My research contributes to studies of minority ethnic parties in competition. I highlight specific conditions which apply to competition between minority groups in post-conflict cases. The utilization of conflict's legacies and control of minority institutions is something to bear in mind when analyzing competition between minority parties. The implication is that literature on minority ethnic parties in competition should be more sensitive about the context, and not only sensitive to the institutional environment. How the institutional environment was created was equally important for minority ethnic competition in Croatia and Macedonia.

My research confirmed some of the expectations in the literature on minority ethnic parties in competition and offers some improvements. The expectation that if minorities are territorially concentrated and if the electoral rules are permissive, then there will be intra-group competition was confirmed. But my research also accounts for the variance in support for minority ethnic parties in post-conflict settings. I better specify the possibilities to extend patronage. I also showed that there can be other reasons, besides inclusion/exclusion in government or participation in different electoral arenas, to account for moderation or radicalization of minority parties. Moderation or radicalization in post-conflict cases can also depend on how the conflict ended. Serbs were defeated in Croatia and suffered heavily after the conflict. The fears and reality check, as well as the exodus of wartime leaders, makes Serb political parties less prone to radicalization.

My research has implications for studies of post-conflict democratization and especially for post-conflict party politics. Studies of post-conflict party politics need to take legacies of the conflict and role of agency in closer consideration. The conflict should be seen as a critical juncture for minority politics. Minority politics is reconstructed after the conflict. Peace agreements bring a new institutional environment which is expected to function without prejudice and preferences to minority ethnic parties. The electoral and institutional conditions are the same for all. The assumption and intent is for minority ethnic parties to operate on a level playing field. New minority parties appear which include or are built on war time networks. These parties had competitive advantages in post-conflict Croatia and Macedonia. The war time networks provided social units for aggregation of interest and mobilization of support. Their symbolic capital was transferred and became part of their electoral appeal. They had political control on ground which gave them possibilities to extend patronage during the post-conflict reconstruction. The party which had the highest conjunction of these three factors was most likely to win in the post-conflict elections.

The first post-conflict elections were a formative moment for competition between minority parties in Croatia and Macedonia. There was some path dependency after the first post-conflict elections. New parties from rebels were legitimized. The factors which provided for their electoral victory were established. Parties continued to utilize and reinforce them to retain the electoral support. War time networks were preserved and enhanced. Social practices to retain symbolic capital were initiated and sustained. Political control of minority institutions was sought in order to have more possibilities to extend patronage. The three factors modeled the performance of minority ethnic parties in the post-conflict period.

Once this model was in place, it reached equilibrium. The parties which owned the model got a chance

to perpetuate their electoral dominance among ethnic competitors. To defeat the party which dominated, other minority ethnic parties needed to copy the model. It was difficult to do that on a national level. Splinter or new parties either included fewer war time networks and had less symbolic capital or had fewer possibilities to extend patronage and therefore had fewer chances for electoral success. However, it was possible to copy the model on the sub-national level and have electoral success in sub-national elections.

Last but not least, my research has an implication for studies of ethnic conflict and especially to claims of ethnic mobilization and homogeneity during the conflict. When the conflict started, members of different minority parties joined the armed groups in Croatia and Macedonia. However, some minority parties were adversaries to such developments, such as SNS in Croatia and DPA in Macedonia. Also, there was strong competition between parties in RSK. This shows that claims about ethnic homogeneity and mobilization, and especially during inter-ethnic conflicts, should be treated with caution. One should also look at organizations to analyze patterns of mobilization and violence, and not treat the whole ethnic group as the sole unit for analysis.

To check whether my findings hold for more cases, my explanation should be applied to competition between minority parties in other post-conflict countries. Variation in electoral support for minority ethnic parties can be found in different post-conflict countries in the world (e.g. Latin America, Africa, and Asia) which have both similar and different conditions than Croatia and Macedonia. It would also be interesting to see whether the explanatory framework can be used to analyze competition between main parties in post-conflict settings. Some of the post-conflict conditions would be the same and some different than in Croatia and Macedonia. But the casual mechanisms should be present: war time networks, symbolic capital and patronage. The electoral results of main parties in post-conflict settings

would merit attention to additional explanatory variables. The level playing field in which main parties operate is different than the one for minority ethnic parties. There are other institutional considerations and parties compete in a wider territory. Voters are not territorially concentrated. They are dispersed. There are countries which present an opportunity for such an extension in the same region and also in different parts of the world. Furthermore, the results of the explanatory framework can be compared to individual level data which assess voter preferences. Such a comparison can test the inferences between voter preferences and point out causal mechanisms. The comparison may confirm the validity of the casual mechanisms or it can point to other factors which have a stronger explanatory power.

VI.2. Policy implications

The results from my research have several policy implications. My research shows that inclusion of former rebels supports peace building. Moral hazards are valid; however, security concerns were not found in the case of Croatia and Macedonia. With the inclusion of former rebels in political parties and with their involvement in politics, security was better maintained. Minority ethnic parties which included war time networks cooperated with parties which represented the majority ethnic group. This helped ethnic tensions to diffuse. There was electoral violence in the case of Macedonia. However, it was within the Albanian ethnic community and was instigated as a result of the heightened competition between the minority parties. It did not lead to inter-ethnic conflict and inter-ethnic violence. The policy implication of this example is that demobilization and disarmament should be thoroughly implemented in the post-conflict period. Access to weapons and other resources present favorable conditions for intra-group violence in the post-conflict period and not only for inter-ethnic violence.

Another policy implication is that parties from rebels emerged as the main minority ethnic parties. The

moderates during the war became marginalized. Being on the right side at the wrong time paid off for SDSS and DUI. Also, they rose to prominence because of their political control on ground in the early post-conflict period. International and local actors acknowledged their importance and they were included in the post-conflict democratization process. However, this led to marginalization of the other minority ethnic parties. A comprehensive post-conflict democratization process should include all minority parties, both old and new, ones which include war time networks and ones which do not have links with them. Such an approach can bring an added value to the process. Inclusion of other minority parties in the early post-conflict period may also serve as deterrent to peace spoilers and radicalization.

On the other side, one should not judge harshly the parties which include war time networks. It would be simplistic and cynical to condemn SDSS and DUI. Both had positive and important accomplishments for minorities in the post-conflict period. Their actions improved the positions and rights of minorities in their respective countries. Both parties strongly supported the implementation of the peace agreements. SDSS deserves credit for retaining the Serbs in Croatia, supporting the return of refugees, and improving the positions and rights of Serbs in Croatia. DUI deserves credit for the implementation of OFA and for improving the status and rights of Albanians in Macedonia. Working to improve the conditions for their ethnic group, SDSS in Croatia and DUI in Macedonia came to control the institutions for minority politics and use them in their advantage. It is unclear whether other minority ethnic parties would operate differently. The empirical data in my research does not offer a satisfactory conclusion on that point.

Peacebuilding policy makers are aware that amnesty for combatants is needed in the post-conflict period. There is also awareness that war crimes should not be overlooked, but they should be investigated and prosecuted. However, raising numerous charges for war crimes, and keeping them

secret, as was the case in Croatia, creates instruments for fear and intimidation of the minority group. On the other hand, failing to address all alleged war crime cases, as was the case in Macedonia, impedes transitional justice and prevents full reconciliation in the post-conflict period.

Policy makers should be aware that amnesty gives leeway for utilization of war time networks. It is very likely that parties from rebels will use war time networks as a social unit for aggregation of interests and mobilization of electoral support. The transfer of symbolic capital will follow and social practices will become established to sustain the symbolic capital. Utilization of the conflict's legacies will be beneficial for minority ethnic parties, but it may hamper the post-conflict reconciliation. This holds in particular for symbolic legacies. If a minority ethnic party creates and maintains a discourse of symbolism deriving from the conflict, then it is very likely that distrust between the groups and the ethnic gap will remain.

Efforts to overcome such a situation should be made as early as possible. One solution would be to initiate joint commemorative practices and events for remembrance in the early post-conflict activities. Paying respect for all casualties of war, instead of allowing for ethnic differentiation, can help to bring ethnic communities closer. Depending on the post-conflict conditions, other policy options would be to initiate a truth and reconciliation commission at a minimum if the conditions are not appropriate to have a full post-conflict transitional justice process.

The last policy remark concerns the implementation of peace agreements. They often prescribe power sharing arrangements and reconstruct the institutions for minority politics. This is done without prejudice or preference for minority ethnic parties. However, parties come to control the institutions which provide for greater inclusion and integration of minorities. Then they have access to spoils which

they use to extend patronage. The competition between minority parties becomes closed off. This is an unforeseen consequence in the post-conflict period. To remedy this, oversight in implementation of peace agreements is needed. One policy option would be to create a mixed committee which would have executive competences for implementation of the peace agreement. The committee should include all relevant international and domestic stakeholders (e.g. government representatives and representatives from different minority ethnic parties). The point would be to have the institutions for inclusion and integration of minorities to work for the whole ethnic group, rather than for small elite within the group.

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS

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1. Representatives of Samostalna Demokratska Srpska Stranka (SDSS) [Independent Democratic Serb Party]

- 1) Vojislav Stanimirović, President of SDSS (1997-present), Mayor of Vukovar and Minister in government of “Republic of Srpska Krajina”, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar
- 2) Dragan Crnogorac, Vice President of SDSS, MP from SDSS (2011 to present), President of Joint Council of Municipalities, (2005 to present), 21.10.2013 in Vukovar
- 3) Danko Nikolić, Secretary General of SDSS, 15.10.2013 in Vukovar
- 4) Đorđe Čurčić, Vice President of General Assembly of SDSS, Deputy Župan Vukovarsko-Srijemske županije (2009-2013, 2013-present), mayor of Trpenja (2001-2005, 2005-2009), 16.10.2013 in Osijek
- 5) Srđan Mlaković, President of SDSS branch in Vukovar, Deputy Mayor of Vukovar, (2013-present), 14.10.2013 in Osijek
- 6) Jovan Jelić, Member of SDSS Main Board, Deputy Župan Osječko-Baranjske županije (2009-2013, 2013-present), founding member of SDSS, Mayor of Erdut (2005-2009), President of municipal council in Erdut (1997-2001), 09.10.2013 in Osijek
- 7) Mirko Rašković, President of SDSS regional organization in Šibensko-Kninske županije, Deputy Župan Šibensko-Kninske županije (2009-2013, 2013 to present), President of Council of Serb national minority of Šibensko-Kninske županije and member of Council of Serb national minority in the City of Knin, 01.10.2013 in Knin
- 8) Željko Đepina, President of SDSS branch in Knin, deputy Mayor of Knin (2011-2013, 2013 – to present), 01.10.2013 in Knin
- 9) Predrag Burza, Mayor of Ervenik municipality (2013 to present), 01.10.2013 in Knin
- 10) Stanislav Vukosavljević, President of Council of Serb national minority of Osječko-Baranjske županije, 09.10.2013 in Osijek
- 11) Boško Gvero, Member of SDSS Main Board, President of SDSS' party branch in Osijek, 14.10.2013 in Osijek
- 12) Miodrag Nedeljković, President of Council of Serb national minority of Vukovarsko-Srijemske županije, 16.10.2013 in Vukovar

- 13) Aleksandar Milošević, Member of SDSS Main Board, Vice President of Serb National Council and President of Council of Serb National Minority in Zagreb, 18.02.2013 in Zagreb
- 14) Anonymous, Member of SDSS, 18.02.2013 in Zagreb
- 15) Anonymous, Member of SDSS, 18.02.2013 in Zagreb

2. Serb representatives from other political parties, independents and NGO

- 2) Jovan Ajduković, President of Naša Stranka/Наша Странка (NS), former President of Joint Council of Municipalities (2001-2005) and Vice president of SDSS, 17.10.2013 in Vukovar
- 3) Milan Rodić, President of Srpska Nacionalna Stranka (SNS), 01.03.2011 in Zagreb
- 4) Veselin Pejnović, former vice president of SNS (1991-1996) and MP (1992-2000), 23.12.2013 in Skopje
- 5) Mitar Kojadinovac, President of Demokratska Partija Srba (DPS), 02.03.2011 in Zagreb
- 6) Veljko Đakula, President of Serb Democratic Forum (SDF), 01.03.2011 in Zagreb
- 7) Branislav Vorkapić, former head of SNS in Osijek, member of Croatian Army (1991-1995), 07.10.2013 in Osijek
- 8) Milorad Mišković, President of Council of Serb national minority in the city of Osijek, 09.10.2013 in Osijek
- 9) Miroslav Grozdanić, Deputy Župan Požeško-Slavonske županije (2009-2013, 2013-present), mayor of Pakrac during RSK, 22.10.2013 in Požega
- 10) Gojko Nenadović, Member of Council of Serb national minority of Požeško-Slavonske županije and Member of Council of Serb national minority in the city of Požega, 22.10.2013 in Požega
- 11) Tihomir Aleksić, Secretary of Council of Serb national minority of Požeško-Slavonske županije, 22.10.2013 in Požega
- 12) Stevan Grbatinić, Member of council in Vukovarsko-Srijemska županija (2009-2013), 21.10.2013 in Vukovar
- 13) Duško Plečaš, Founding member of Social Democratic Party (SDP), Head of the Senior's Forum in SDP, 16.02.2011 in Zagreb
- 14) Dragoljub Čupković, President of SKD "Prosvjeta" in Knin, founding member of SDSS branch in Knin, Member of Knin city council (2001-2005), 30.09.2013 in Knin
- 15) Čedomir Višnjić, President of SKD "Prosvjeta", 23.02.2011 in Zagreb

3. Other political representatives

1. Ivan Vrkić, Mayor of Osijek (2013 -), lead the process of peaceful reintegration on behalf of Croatian government in cooperation with Serbs from “Srpska Krajina” under auspices of Rt. Gen. Jacques Klein, Head of UNTAES mission (1995-1998), 24.10.2013 in Osijek
2. Anto Đapić, President of city council in Osijek (2013 -), Member of Croatian Parliament (1992–2011), leader of HSP, radical right party (1993-2009), one of the founders and Commander in Chief of HOS (Croatian paramilitary units) (1991-1993), 23.10.2013 in Osijek
3. Zlatko Kramarić, Mayor of Osijek (1990-2005), Ambassador of Republic of Croatia to Republic of Macedonia, 09.07.2013 in Skopje
4. Antun Vujić, founder of Socialdemocratic Party of Croatia (SDH), Minister of Culture (2000-2003), MP (2003-2007, 2007-2011, 2011-present) 17.02.2011 in Zagreb
5. Davorko Vidović, Minister of Labor and Social Policy (2000-2003), Mayor of Sisak (2005-2006), MP (2003-2005, 2007-2011), lead the Croatian Army defense of Sisak (1991-1993) 24.02.2011 in Zagreb
6. Ivica Pančić, Minister of Veteran's Affairs (2000-2003), MP (2003-2008), 28.02.2011 in Zagreb
7. Josip Leko, President of Croatian Parliament (2012-present), MP (2003-2007, 2007-2011, 2011-present) 21.02.2011 in Zagreb
8. Margareta Mađerić, Member of City Council in Zagreb (2005-2009, 2009-2013), Candidate for Mayor of Zagreb (2013), 03.03.2011 in Zagreb
9. Darko Buljan, Member of Vukovar's city council (2009-2013, 2013 to present), 17.10.2013 in Vukovar
10. Biljana Gaća, Member of Vukovar city council (2011-2013, 2013 to present), 17.10.2013 in Vukovar

4. Experts and journalists

1. Miljenko Turšinski, Agency for Local Democracy (NGO working on post-conflict reconstruction and peace building in Eastern Slavonia), 15.10.2013 in Osijek
2. Jaroslav Pecnik, head of Croatian Helsinki Council in Osijek and reporter for human rights in Eastern Slavonia, 12.10.2013

3. Sandra Cvikić, Researcher, Institute of Social Sciences “Ivo Pilar”, Regional Centre Vukovar, 21.10.2013 in Vukovar
4. Predrag Jureković, Senior Researcher, Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management, National Defence Academy, Austrian Armed Forces, 28.09.2013 in Zagreb
5. Saša Leković, Journalist, Center for Investigative Journalism, 27.09.2013 in Zagreb
6. Mihajlo Kragulj, Association for promotion of humanity and urban culture, 30.09.2013 in Knin
7. Ivica Šimić, Doctoral Candidate and Editor in Chief HUKnet, Knin's news portal, 07.10.2013 (phone interview)
8. Anđeljko Milardović, Researcher, Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies, University of Zagreb, and Director, Centre for Political Research, 18.02.2011 in Zagreb
9. Goran Čular, Associate Professor, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, 22.02.2011 in Zagreb
10. Gordán Malić, Journalist, IndexHR, Croatian leading news portal, 21.02.2011 in Zagreb
11. Ivo Goldstein, Professor of Croatian history, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb, 07.03.2011 in Zagreb
12. Jasna Babić, Journalist, IndexHR, Croatian leading news portal, 26.02.2011 in Zagreb
13. Tomislav Klauški, Political commentator and analyst, regular columnist for 24 Sata, 23.02.2011 in Zagreb
14. Mirko Mlakar, Freelance Journalist and Doctoral Candidate in Political Science, University of Zagreb, 07.03.2011 in Zagreb

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1. Ali Ahmeti, political leader of NLA (2001), leader of DUI (2002-), 22.07.2013 in Mala Rechica
2. Musa Xhaferi, NLA foreign affairs liaison (2001), deputy Prime Minister (2002-2006), minister for local self-government (2008-2011), deputy prime minister in charge of Secretariat for Implementation of Ohrid Framework Agreement (2011-), 22.07.2013 in Skopje
3. G'zim Ostreni, NLA General Chief of Staff (2001), general secretary of DUI (2002-2005) vice president of DUI (2005-), MP (2002-2011) and deputy speaker (2004-2006), 14.07.2013 in Debar
4. Rafiz Aliti, aka Commander M'susi in NLA, vice president of DUI (2002-2012), MP (2002-

2011) and deputy speaker of Parliament (2008-2011), 20.12.2012.

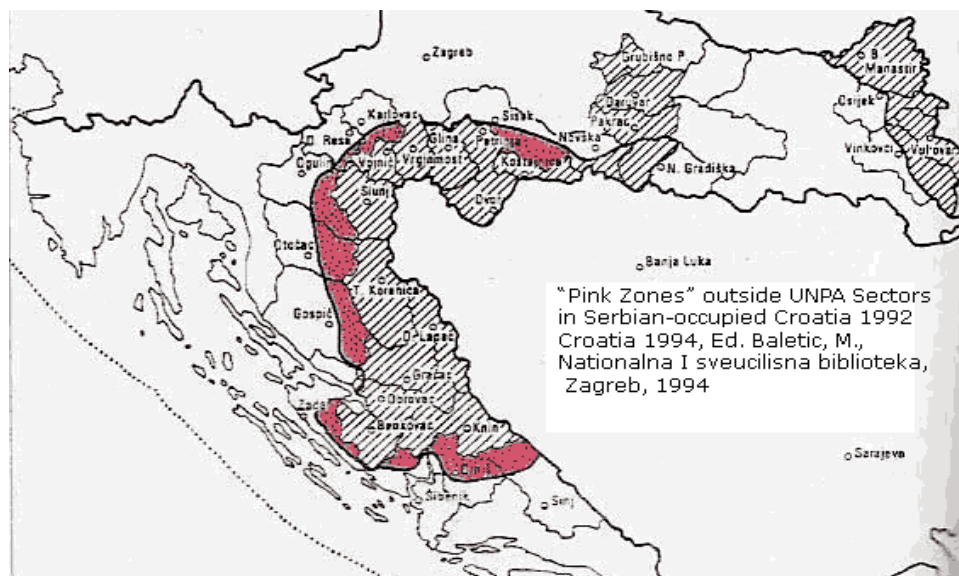
5. Raim Limani, NLA combatant and DUI council person in the city of Skopje (2009-2013), 18.12.2012 in Skopje.
6. Hajrula Misini, spokesperson of NLA, member of DUI and MP (2008-2014), 16.07.2013 in Skopje
7. Besim Hoda, former NLA Commander, 26.05.2013 in Tetovo.
8. Bujar Osmani, spokesperson of DUI and former Minister for Health (2008-2011), 16.05.2013 in Skopje.
9. Aziz Pollozhani, DUI member, former Minister for Education (2002-2006), 17.06.2013 in Skopje.
10. Rizvan Sulejmani, DUI member, former Minister for Local Self-government (2004-2006) and deputy Minister for Defense (2002-2004), 08.07.2013 in Skopje
11. Merselj Biljali, member of PDP, former MP (1998-2002) and national security adviser to Prime Minister (2004-2006), e-mail responses received on 17.07.2013
12. Bashkim Bakiu, Director of Institute for Policy Research and Good Governance, 20.12.2010 in Skopje
13. Bekim Rexhepi, member of the Central Board of DUI, 15.12.2010 in Skopje
14. Harald Schenker, OSCE expert for inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia (2001-2013), 19.12.2010
15. Stevo Pendarovski, Ministry of Interior spokesperson (200-2001), National Security Adviser to the President (2001-2009), 07.09.2011
16. Gjorgji Spasov, general secretary of SDSM (1998-2002), former Minister for Justice (1996-1998), 11.07.2013 in Skopje
17. Ljubomir Frchkovski, professor, former Minister of Interior (1992-1995) and Minister of Foreign Affairs (1995-1998), 24.01.2013 in Skopje
18. Branko Crvenkovski, former Prime Minister (1992-1998 and 2002-2004) and President of Macedonia (2004-2009), 05.09.2011 in Skopje
19. Denis Blease, Head of NATO in Skopje (2003-2005), 16.09.2011 in Skopje
20. Naxhi Xhelili, MP from RDK (2011-2014), 24.02.2014 in Skopje
21. Flamure Demiri – Kreci, MP from RDK (2011-2014), 24.02.2014 in Skopje

22. Anonymous – UNDP project leader for post-conflict reconstruction, 25.07.2013 in Skopje

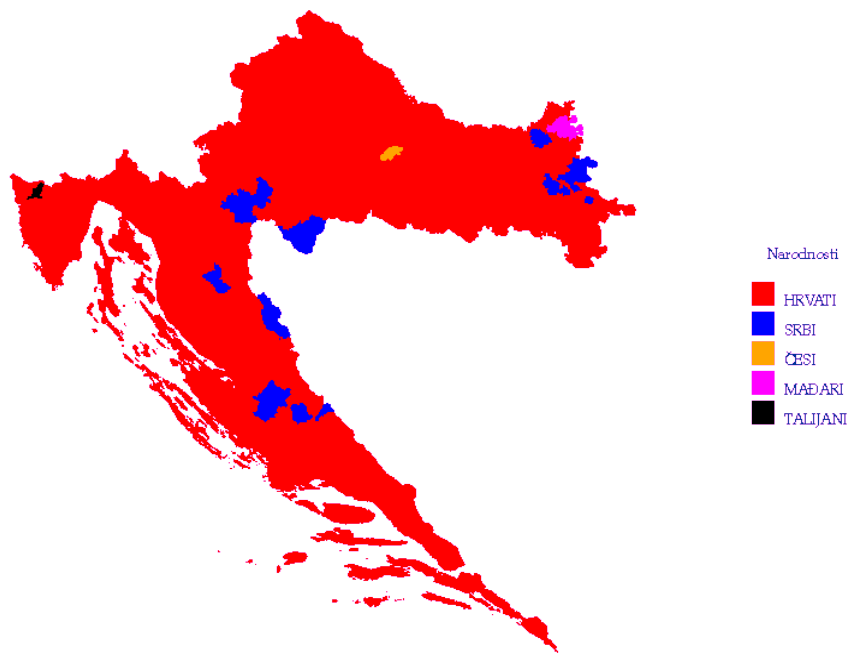
23. Slobodan Kovachevski, Mayor of Kumanovo (2000-2009), 01.03.2014 in Kumanovo

APPENDIX.

Map I.1. Conflict zones in Croatia



Map I.2. Ethnic group concentration in Croatia, according to 2001 census

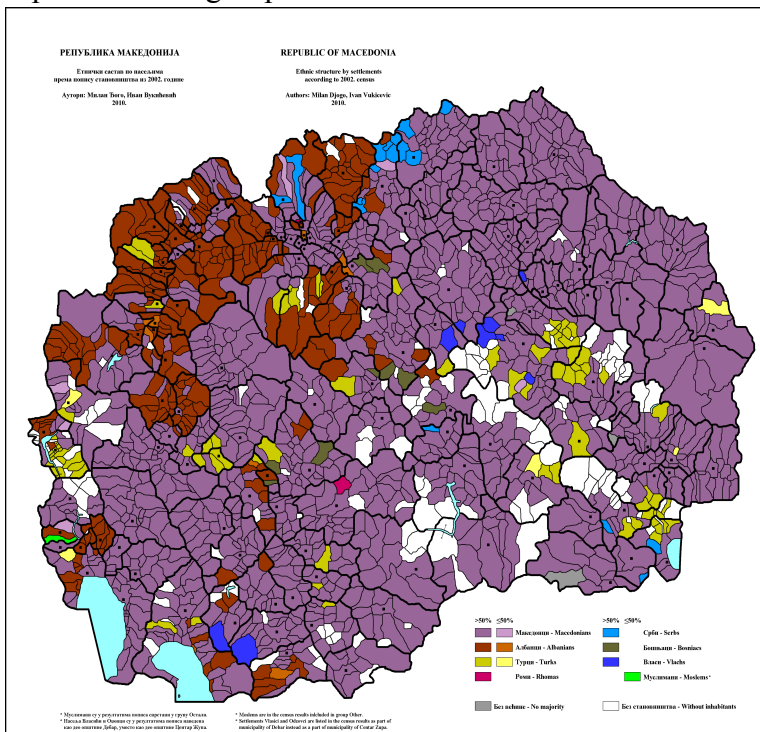


Red: Croats, blue: Serbs, brown: Czechs, purple: Hungarians, black: Italian.

Map I. 3. Conflict zones in Macedonia



Map I. 4. Ethnic groups' concentration in Macedonia according to 2002 census



Purple: ethnic Macedonians, dark red: Albanians, blue: Serbs, yellow: Turks.

Table III.12. Serb voters in parliamentary elections in relation to control of territory during conflict (1991-1995), percents in parenthesis

	SAO East	SAO West	SAO Krajina	Croatia Proper	Total
2003 municipalities	27 (11.44)	6 (2.5)	36 (15.25)	167 (70.76)	236
Number of Serbs (2001 census)	43, 586 (24.48)	3, 225 (1.81)	36, 126 (20.29)	95, 088 (53.4)	178, 055
Turnout	16, 370 (36.75)	635 (1.43)	13, 459 (30.22)	14, 071 (31.59)	44, 540
Turnout % of census	37.56	19.69	37.26	14.8	25.01
2007 municipalities	28 (12.61)	6 (2.7)	34 (15.32)	154 (69.37)	222
Number of Serbs (2001 census)	43, 679 (24.74)	3, 225 (1.83)	35, 969 (20.38)	93, 631 (53.04)	176, 534
Turnout	10, 659 (42.82)	449 (1.8)	5, 408 (21.72)	8, 379 (33.66)	24, 895
Turnout % of census	24.4	13.92	15.04	8.95	14.1
2011 municipalities	28 (12.22)	6 (2.62)	35 (15.28)	160 (69.87)	229
Number of Serbs (2011 census)	38, 570 (23.62)	2, 825 (1.73)	40, 307 (24.69)	81, 489 (49.91)	163, 262
Turnout	10, 703 (46.62)	490 (2.13)	3, 937 (17.15)	7, 830 (34.1)	22, 960
Turnout % of census	27.75	17.35	9.77	9.61	14.06

Table III.13. Serb voters in parliamentary elections in relation to conflict-affected municipalities and municipalities under the competences of ZVO, percents in parenthesis

	conflict-affected	Not affected	ZVO control	Non ZVO control
2003	143 (60.3)	93 (39.2)	49 (20.7)	188 (79.3)
Number of Serbs (2001 census)	140, 120 (78.7)	37, 935 (21.3)	60, 041 (33.7)	118, 014 (66.3)
Turnout	38, 822 (87.2)	5, 713 (12.8)	19, 460 (43.7)	25, 080 (56.3)
Turnout % of census	27.7	15.1	32.4	21.3
2007	138 (62.2)	84 (37.8)	48 (21.6)	174 (78.4)
Number of Serbs (2001 census)	139, 734 (79.2)	36, 800 (20.8)	59, 915 (33.9)	116, 622 (66.1)
Turnout	21, 271 (85.4)	3, 624 (14.6)	12, 498 (50.2)	12, 397 (49.8)
Turnout % of census	15.2	9.8	20.9	10.6
2011	143 (62.4)	86 (37.6)	48 (21)	181 (79)
Number of Serbs (2011 census)	139, 772 (78.9)	37, 353 (21.1)	59, 799 (33.8)	117, 125 (66.2)
Turnout	19, 440 (84.7)	3, 520 (15.3)	12, 338 (53.7)	10, 622 (46.3)2
Turnout % of census	13.9	9.4	20.6	9.1

Table III.14. 2003 elections. One way ANOVA: municipality's location during conflict and voter support for candidates of Serb parties.

	N	SDSS			SNS			PPS			ZSR		
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
SAO E	27	377.89 (577.36)	487.74 (748.06)	260.56 (403.88)	105.3 (145.93)	15.96 (21.39)	44.59 (81.5)	52.37 (87.75)	27 (53.3)	26.37 (37.87)	7.48 (10.96)	5.37 (7.64)	9.52 (14.22)
SAO W	6	41 (42.83)	32.83 (38.84)	11.5 (12.37)	45.5 (48.12)	13.5 (11.55)	9.17 (9.91)	10.33 (8.69)	6 (9.83)	11.83 (14.41)	4.33 (5.13)	5.83 (5.78)	3.83 (3.6)
SAO K	36	183.86 (233.27)	166.81 (227.78)	154.75 (245.73)	130.36 (150.46)	59.19 (97.1)	47.83 (74.54)	21.78 (23.65)	36 (21.56)	20.19 (19.36)	10.33 (9.9)	8.86 (12.25)	6.44 (6.04)
Croatia proper	167	36.51 (87.97)	28.21 (86.61)	14.89 (36.11)	38.36 (79.64)	10.13 (19.6)	7.91 (17.41)	8.92 (20.416)	6.83 (15.34)	6.96 (13.44)	4.28 (10.07)	3.6 (8.1)	3.05 (6.56)
Levene		.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	0.066	0.055	0.000'
F		19.76***	22.42***	20.7***	10.04***	13.59***	12.69***	12.15***	14.17***	11.51***	3.95**	3.67*	6.55***

***. Significant at 0.001. **. Significant at 0.01. * Significant at 0.05. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

Table III.15. 2007 elections. One way ANOVA: municipality's location during conflict and voter support for candidates of Serb parties

	N	SDSS			SNS			PPS			ZSH		
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
SAO E	28	243.86 (372.23)	256.57 (392.14)	192.64 (309.25)	4.93 (6.9)	4.75 (6.42)	5.57 (8.45)	124 (247.15)	27.71 (73.21)	23.86 (63.03)	10.43 (18.52)	13.29 (23.99)	3.57 (5.26)
SAO W	6	44.67 (45.02)	32.5 (32.43)	19.33 (20.84)	2 (2.61)	4.67 (3.62)	3 (2.83)	11.5 (14.03)	1.67 (2.25)	1.83 (1.6)	9.67 (15.48)	22 (31.59)	4.33 (6.53)
SAO K	34	90.68 (121.87)	66.76 (107.45)	54.76 (94.74)	18.53 (22.43)	12.59 (14.43)	7.12 (7.29)	31.47 (27.61)	4.88 (5.47)	3.71 (4.11)	18.71 (19.77)	21.06 (23.94)	6.12 (5.96)
Croatia proper	154	30.29 (71.58)	19.58 (55.53)	13.3 (36.18)	4.25 (9.78)	3.55 (6.94)	3.09 (6.82)	12.45 (28.75)	1.85 (4.11)	1.42 (3.59)	8.23 (21.29)	7.07 (15.225)	1.75 (4.11)
Levene		.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.075'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.825'	.002'	.000'
F		15.98***	19.4***	18.17***	13.15***	10.77***	3.57*	11.97***	7.82***	7.95***	2.39	6.41***	8.84***

***. Significant at 0.001. **. Significant at 0.01. * Significant at 0.05. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

Table III.16. 2011 elections. One way ANOVA: municipality's location during conflict and voter support for candidates of Serb parties

	N	SDSS			Srpska sloga			SP		
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
SAO E	28	256.14 (385.02)	280.86 (427.75)	268.21 (421.13)	73.96 (137.93)	34.04 (66.08)	22.82 (47.39)	5.43 (7.31)	5.25 (6.84)	2.57 (3.58)
SAO W	6	41 (49.72)	32 (41.29)	23.67 (26.69)	18.83 (27.57)	32.67 (51.78)	10.33 (17.07)	5.33 (5.2)	4.17 (4.54)	2.5 (2.81)
SAO K	35	61.06 (104.51)	57.23 (103.91)	42.43 (89.44)	24.97 (31.87)	27.51 (34.48)	16.26 (25.99)	7.43 (11.65)	3.23 (5.16)	2.2 (3.34)
Croatia proper	160	30.17 (69.73)	25.24 (62.8)	19.14 (54.94)	10.42 (22.66)	8.56 (18.31)	4.98 (10.77)	2.68 (5.12)	1.99 (3.6)	1.05 (2.17)
Levene		.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.000'	.008'	.002'	.002'
F		17.74***	19.73***	20.15***	11.48***	8.04***	7.09***	5.42**	4.91**	4.31*

***. Significant at 0.001. **. Significant at 0.01. * Significant at 0.05. Standard deviation in parenthesis.

Table III.17. Cross-tabs: Votes for Serb parties by counties in 2003 parliamentary elections

	SDSS	SNS	PPS	ZSR
Zagrebacka	64	52	19	11
Koprivicko-krizevacka	62	65	28	11
Bjelovarsko-bilogorska	292	290	123	48
Varazdinska	14	13	5	2
Medjimurska	3	5	3	0
Viroviticko-podravska	185	199	71	29
Osjecko-baranjska	4628	1009	555	163
Pozesko-slavonska	236	205	87	42
Brodsko-posavska	173	148	63	26
Vukovarsko-srijemska	6822	1096	918	134
Sisacko-maslovska	1790	712	312	181
Karlovacka	1138	556	236	102
Primorsko-goranska	353	311	111	104
Istarska	150	147	48	34
Licko-senjska	578	1042	181	52
Zadarska	465	376	105	34
Sibensko-kninska	3020	875	211	71
Splitsko-dalmatinska	83	86	25	13
Dubrovačko-neretvanska	40	35	12	10
Grad Zagreb	704	482	167	79
TOTAL	20, 804	7, 704	3, 280	1, 146

Table III.18. Cross-tabs: Votes for Serb parties by counties in 2007 parliamentary elections

	SDSS	SNS	PPS	ZSH
Zagrebacka	53	11	17	15
Koprivicko-krizevacka	50	13	13	13
Bjelovarsko-bilogorska	178	37	69	54
Varazdinska	17	1	2	1
Medjimurska	2	1	1	1
Viroviticko-podravska	181	28	55	50
Osjecko-baranjska	3270	112	160	416
Pozesko-slavonska	226	21	88	48
Brodsko-posavska	163	21	46	33
Vukovarsko-srijemska	4135	101	187	1394
Sisacko-maslovska	1327	214	342	253
Karlovacka	1040	115	151	146
Primorsko-goranska	246	65	84	84
Istarska	106	24	32	31
Licko-senjska	204	91	83	82
Zadarska	203	91	66	62

Sibensko-kninska	250	66	69	68
Splitsko-dalmatinska	66	21	19	24
Dubrovačko-neretvanska	30	7	7	9
Grad Zagreb	562	114	230	146
TOTAL	12, 310	1, 154	1, 722	2, 930

Tables III.19. Cross-tabs: Votes for Serb parties by counties in 2011 parliamentary elections

	SDSS	Srpska Sloga	SP
Zagrebacka	33	19	4
Koprivicko-krizevacka	59	25	4
Bjelovarsko-bilogorska	262	98	22
Varazdinska	21	7	1
Medjimurska	4	1	0
Viroviticko-podravska	355	75	24
Osječko-baranjska	3541	392	74
Požeško-slavonska	257	172	30
Brodsko-posavska	150	69	23
Vukovarsko-srijemska	4983	998	90
Sisacko-maslovačka	1194	414	103
Karlovačka	1067	371	53
Primorsko-goranska	386	160	27
Istarska	235	74	20
Licko-senjska	81	74	21
Zadarska	110	88	17
Sibensko-kninska	97	103	20
Splitsko-dalmatinska	68	30	9
Dubrovačko-neretvanska	40	15	4
Grad Zagreb	616	239	56
TOTAL	13, 560	3, 424	603

Table IV.15. Municipalities and voters in 2002 parliamentary elections in relation to affected in the conflict and control of DPA, percents in parenthesis

	conflict-affected	Not affected	DPA control	Non DPA control	Total
2002 municipalities	18 (27.7)	47 (72.3)	12 (18.5)	53 (81.5)	65
Population	572, 623 (33.92)	1, 115, 358 (66.08)	388, 281 (23)	1, 299, 700 (77)	1, 687, 981
Number of Albanians	373, 159 (73.38)	135, 400 (26.62)	289, 174 (56.86)	219, 385 (43.14)	508, 559
Voters	361, 352 (29.16)	878, 045 (70.84)	239, 586 (19.33)	999, 811 (80.67)	1, 239, 397
Turnout	301, 736 (32.3)	632, 558 (67.7)	204, 044 (21.84)	730, 250 (78.16)	934, 294
Turnout in %	83.5	72.04	85.17	73.04	

Table IV.16. Municipalities and voters in parliamentary elections 2006, 2008 and 2011 in relation to affected in the conflict and control of DUI, percents in parenthesis

	conflict-affected	Not affected	DUI control	Non DUI control	Total
2006 municipalities	18 (22)	64 (78)	14 (17.1)	68 (82.9)	82
Population	572, 623 (28.56)	1, 432, 333 (71.44)	485, 944 (24.24)	1, 519, 012 (75.76)	2, 004, 956
Number of Albanians	373, 159 (73.35)	135, 570 (26.65)	346, 889 (68.19)	161, 840 (31.81)	508, 729
Voters	472, 498 (27.61)	1, 239, 017 (72.39)	408, 339 (23.86)	1, 303, 176 (76.14)	1, 711, 515
Turnout	239, 698 (24.92)	722, 133 (75.08)	192, 878 (20.05)	768, 953 (79.95)	961, 831
Turnout in %	50.73	58.28	47.23	59.01	
2008 municipalities	18 (27.3)	48 (72.7)	14 (21.2)	52 (78.8)	66
Population	572, 623 (33.84)	1, 119, 502 (66.16)	485, 944 (28.72)	1, 206, 181 (71.28)	1, 692, 125
Number of Albanians	373, 159 (73.38)	135, 400 (26.62)	346, 889 (68.21)	161, 670 (31.79)	508, 559
Voters	490, 293 (32.98)	996, 428 (67.02)	423, 421 (28.48)	1, 063, 300 (71.52)	1, 486, 721
Turnout	251, 058 (30.18)	580, 723 (69.82)	209, 289 (25.16)	622, 492 (74.84)	831, 781
Turnout in %	51.21	58.28	49.43	58.54	
2011 municipalities	18 (27.3)	48 (72.7)	14 (21.2)	52 (78.8)	66
Population	572, 623 (33.84)	1, 119, 502 (66.16)	371, 068 (21.93)	1, 321, 057 (78.07)	1, 692, 125
Number of Albanians	373, 159 (73.38)	135, 400 (26.62)	277, 709 (54.61)	230, 850 (45.39)	508, 559
Voters	512, 810 (33.6)	1, 013, 233 (66.4)	332, 602 (21.8)	1, 193, 441 (78.2)	1, 526, 043
Turnout	269, 649 (28.61)	672, 994 (71.39)	167, 308 (17.75)	775, 335 (82.25)	942, 643
Turnout in %	52.58	66.42	50.3	64.97	

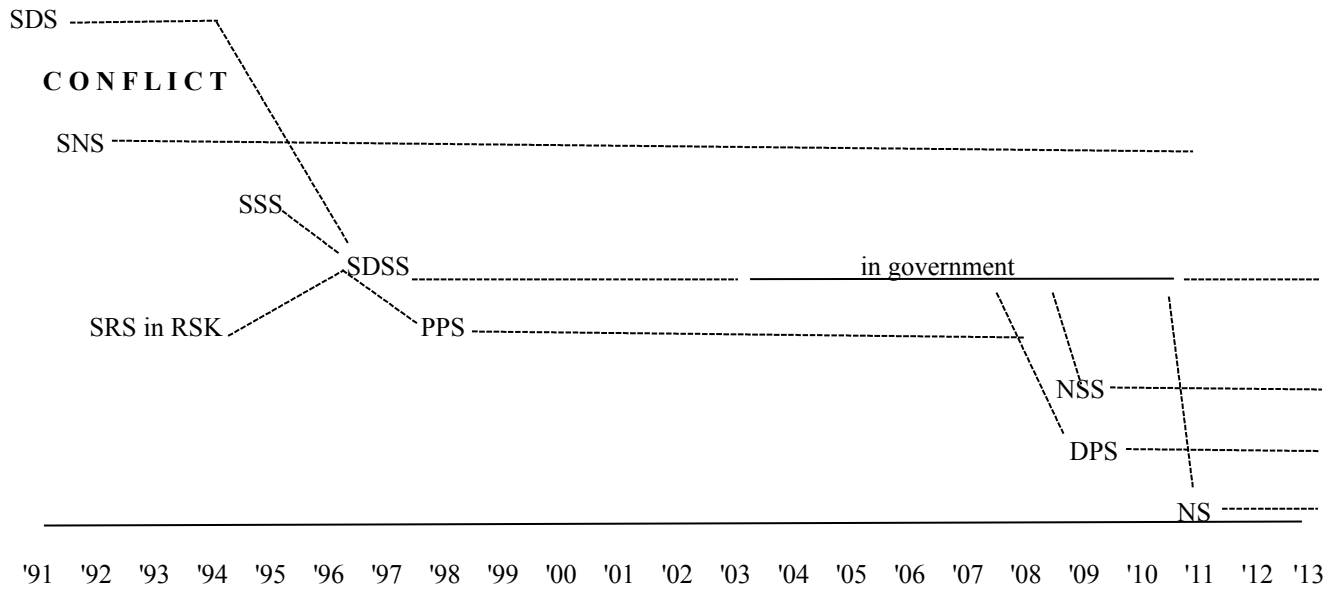
Table IV.17. Municipalities and voters in local elections 2005 in relation to affected in the conflict and control of DPA, percents in parenthesis

	conflict-affected	Not affected	DPA control	Non DPA control	Total
2005 municipalities	18 (45)	22 (55)	12 (30)	28 (70)	40
Population	572, 623 (46.19)	667, 203 (53.81)	388, 281 (31.32)	851, 545 (68.68)	1, 239, 826
Number of Albanians	373, 159 (74.12)	130, 272 (25.88)	289, 174 (57.44)	214, 257 (42.56)	503, 431
Voters	461, 609 (44.22)	582, 310 (55.78)	309, 307 (29.63)	734, 612 (70.37)	1, 043, 919
Turnout	244, 001 (44.31)	306, 662 (55.69)	171, 777 (31.19)	378, 886 (68.81)	550, 663
Turnout in %	52.86	52.66	55.54	51.58	

Table IV.18. Municipalities and voters in local elections 2009 and 2013 in relation to affected in the conflict and control of DUI, percents in parenthesis

	conflict-affected	Not affected	DUI control	Non DUI control	Total
2009 municipalities	18 (45)	22 (55)	14 (35)	26 (65)	40
Population	572, 623 (42.62)	770, 794 (57.38)	485, 944 (36.17)	857, 473 (63.83)	1, 343, 417
Number of Albanians	373, 159 (73.77)	132, 710 (26.23)	346, 889 (68.6)	158, 980 (31.44)	505, 689
Voters	498, 369 (41.65)	698, 190 (58.35)	428, 495 (35.81)	768, 064 (64.19)	1, 196, 559
Turnout	232, 667 (37.68)	384, 814 (62.32)	198, 122 (32.09)	419, 359 (67.91)	617, 481
Turnout in %	46.69	55.12	46.24	54.6	
2013 municipalities	16 (43.24)	21 (56.76)	12 (32.4)	25 (67.6)	37
Population	550, 598 (43.69)	709, 529 (56.31)	349, 043 (27.7)	911, 084 (72.3)	1, 260, 127
Number of Albanians	351, 599 (72.69)	132, 106 (27.31)	256, 149 (52.96)	227, 556 (47.04)	483, 705
Voters	503, 129 (44.77)	620, 720 (55.23)	302, 695 (26.93)	821, 154 (73.07)	1, 123, 849
Turnout	290, 055 (41.4)	410, 446 (58.59)	166, 913 (23.83)	533, 588 (76.17)	700, 501
Turnout in %	57.65	66.12	55.14	64.98	

Graph V.1. Time line in Croatia: Conflict and Serb political parties



Graph V.2. Time line in Macedonia: Conflict and Albanian political parties

