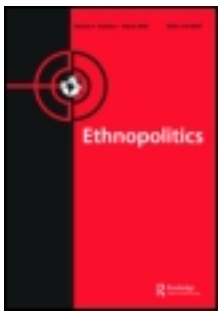

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Globalization and ethnic conflict: Beyond the liberal - nationalist distinction

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Globalization and Ethnic Conflict: Beyond the Liberal – Nationalist Distinction *

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Introduction

This article starts with one fundamental question about the changing reality of today: what is the relationship between globalization and conflict? It is beyond doubt that we live in a new and challenging era, and that we are trying to figure out the basic features of our world without enjoying the privilege of temporal distance that would allow us a better perspective. We look around and we see that something different is going on, but this 'something' is as hard to pinpoint as a chameleon in the forest – yes, something is happening but we do not know what it is. So far, globalization has remained elusive in many ways, and its definitions are almost as varied as the number of schools of thought. Also varied are the supposed relationships between this ill-defined globalization and 'old-world' concepts such as nation-state, democracy and ethnic conflict.

In the past decade a considerable number of scholars proposed a pessimistic view of the future; globalization would bring about more and more conflicts, which will tend to be ethnic or religious in nature. These conflicts will not simply be more numerous, but also more violent and destructive, because they would be based on primordial affiliations and identities. Negotiation and compromise would be more difficult to achieve in these conditions, since national or group identities would tend to be stronger than economic or ideological loyalties. The present essay takes a critical look at these 'global chaos' theories, to use Sadowski's term, and asks: Are theories of global chaos correct in predicting an increase in scope and intensity of conflicts around the world? Should we expect a large wave of antidemocratic anti-liberal movements that would oppose the universalistic call of globalization with a call for the survival of particularisms of all kinds?

These broad questions are made more manageable if asked in the regional context of Europe. No matter which way globalization is defined, there are some core elements that appear in all definitions: the idea of trans-border relations, especially in the economic realm, coupled with the increased mobility of goods, capital, people and ideas. There are reactions both for actors and at the structural level to this change in the type of relationship. From this perspective, then, Europe can be seen as the concentration of these processes in a nutshell, the 'possible microcosm of globalization' (Weber 2001: 4). There are some obvious connections to be made between the processes observed at the global level and what happens on European ground: market integration, free trade, and even some level of supranational governance. If these phenomena are active at the European level, then this becomes a very good testing ground for globalization, for making prognoses about the effects of this or that policy or attitude. Therefore, it is legitimate to ask how the European Union (EU), a regional project similar to the phenomena described as globalization at the world scale, affects ethnic conflicts in Europe? Can the European Union be seen as a factor for or against nationalism and conflict?

The presence of nationalism makes the use of Europe even more compelling. Not only do we have processes similar to what happens at the global level in terms of liberalization and deregulation of markets, technological advancements, increased cross-border personal contacts and so on, but we also witness a large number of cases where strong local affiliations, ethnic and religious identities are very salient and can serve as the tipping point for changing regional balance and stability. In this case, Europe is defined more in geographic than political terms, in other words, Europe goes beyond the Austrian border to include the countries from the former Communist bloc and even several former

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Soviet republics, Russia itself counting. However, this large geographical span of the definition should not deceive the reader. The present study limits itself to only two countries, Macedonia and Hungary, with future research aiming for a larger comparison.

The theoretical framework is given by the examination of the two archetypes of regional orders proposed by Solingen (1998), one 'internationalist', and the other 'statist-nationalist'. Solingen's argument that the two are mutually exclusive, and that the first is conducive to peace and the second is likely to lead to conflict will be tested in the case of Europe. I argue that a policy of economic liberalization and even democratization may not be incompatible with a strong nationalist discourse and in fact that the liberal project can be regarded as a solution or accomplishment of the nationalist quest. This having been said, the specific puzzle to be solved becomes: does the European Union as a regional order affect nationalism and ethnic conflict and if so in which way?

Why are these issues worth investigating? First, the otherwise rich literature on globalization do not connect Europe and nationalism with the major themes of 'global chaos'. The relationship between globalization and the European project, on one hand, and the relationship between the EU and ethnic conflict resolution, on the other, have not been investigated in depth. These issues should be interesting from a theoretical point of view, helping to clarify the definition of globalization and the potential effects that globalization may have on the architecture of the international system. From a policy point of view, determining the impact of the EU on nationalism and ethnic conflict can be useful because it could propose some practical suggestions for solving the tensions that seem omnipresent in today's world.

In terms of structure, the article starts by introducing the main concepts and the debates around them: globalization, regionalization and regional orders, and nationalism and ethnic conflict. After presenting the state of knowledge in regard to these concepts, I will use the case studies of Macedonia and Hungary to illustrate my argument. I will conclude by suggesting some other related paths of research.

Setting the Terms of the Discussion: Globalization, Regionalization, Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict

There are multiple ways in which globalization has been defined, none of them sufficient to account for all the phenomena grouped under this large umbrella. There are several theories of globalization divided along economic, political and cultural lines. In following Simon Reich, we can look at globalization under four different guises: historical, economic, sociological and technological (Reich 1998). The historical definition of globalization places the events currently observed in the *longue durée*; in other words, what we experience today is not new, it has been going on for decades or centuries and it is bound to end, like any other historical period. The debates in this category of definitions are raised particularly in respect with the problems of dating the beginning of globalization. Most scholars associate the end of the Cold War with the period of high impetus of globalization, although some more convincing accounts place it around the early 1980s (see Hirst and Thompson 1996).

The most commonly accepted definition of globalization prioritizes the economic aspects, because they are most easily discernable. For example, Prakash and Hart define globalization as 'a set of processes leading to the integration of economic activity in factor, intermediate and final goods and services markets across geographical boundaries, and the increased salience of cross-border value chains in international economic flows' (Prakash and Hart 1999: 3). The authors restrict their field of analysis too much though when omitting some other important economic and political factors

such the deregulation of capital markets and the propagation of a consumer society all over the world.

Third, globalization is defined in terms of technological advancements. In fact, revolution and not mere advancements is what proponents of this vision prefer to describe the rapid improvements in communications and technology that made possible the 'compression of time and space'. This change is not superficial; it is a radical alteration of the perceived manner of doing business, and of interacting with other people in general. Geography, space and time, and territoriality are all altered in profound ways (Scholte 2000). Some enthusiasts foresee that technological change will bring about a new type of global civilization, based on an open and interconnected society, a rerun of the theme of convergence, but motivated this time by technology (Schwartz and Leyden 1997).

Finally, Reich (1998) characterizes the fourth definition of globalization as sociological but part of it could be considered also under the cultural category, since most of it has to do with the transfer or values, either under the impact of markets (convergence) or under the power of capitalism (Marxist theory). This cultural definition is most relevant to our present efforts to establish the connections between globalization and ethnic conflict. The sociological and cultural debate around the new global phenomena is probably the most complex; gathered under this general umbrella one can find the questions on convergence and divergence at the level of institutions, central in International Political Economy, the Marxist view on the logic of the expansion of market capitalism as well as what has been labeled 'global chaos' theory.

The convergence theory argues that under the increased integration of goods and capital, which is accompanied by the spread of ideas and values, previously distinct systems will tend to become more alike (Ohmae 1990; Reich 1991). To counter this argument, more skeptical scholars observe that in reality there is little change in the way systems worked before globalization and under its influence, and maybe even one distinguishes a tendency for states and local institutions to evolve in separate directions rather than in the same sense (Hirst and Thompson 1996; Berger and Dore 1996).

From the Marxist point of view, there is the same tendency towards similar systems across the world because this coincides with the expansion of global capitalism, helped by international financial institutions, which are the tools of the dominant powers, and in particular of the US. Gill describes the tensions caused by social reproduction of capitalism via 'new constitutionalism' and the 'intensification of alienation, exploitation and commodification of human life and nature' (Gill 2000).

Global chaos theorists generally argue that globalization tends to promote a convergence of values, even an imposition of Western values, and that this process is not welcome by the 'rest' of the world, which will oppose it in the name of deeply embedded differences. Huntington sees values as important, as the fundaments upon which civilizations are built; common past, shared religion, shared culture are the signifiers that unite these grand natural units of affiliation (Huntington 1996). For Kaplan, it is history that becomes inescapable, history that draws the lines of conflict. Especially in certain regions of the world like the Balkans, the people are fighting not today's wars, but the wars of centuries ago, based on ancient hatreds that pull them in a maelstrom of hate out of which they cannot get out. Primordial identities are stronger than reason, and this is why the Western observer is at first surprised by the violence and apparent lack of motivation of the battles on the ground. In some parts of the world, these identities, these histories of conflict are deciding the turn of inter-group relations (Kaplan 1993).

We can try to concentrate the essence of each of these strands of thought on globalization in pointing out their common elements. There is a definite sense of increase in mobility, to a speed, size and scope unprecedented in history, facilitated by technological development, mobility that is reflected in the economic trans-border exchanges in goods and capital; these exchanges may be seen as reducing the policy making capacity of national entities and bringing new legitimate actors in the international system: businesses, and representatives of civil society in particular. However, the benefic part of globalization is dubbed by a 'dark side' in which forces of the global and of the local confront each other in relentless fashion.

Regionalization, seen in the European context, will be the next object of discussion after having examined the various guises of globalization. The questions that dominate this debate are what is regionalization? What is the relationship between regionalization and globalization? And where does the European Union stand relative to both globalization and regionalization?

The current wave of regional cooperation stimulated a large debate on the (re)definition of both region and regionalization/ regionalism. With better arguments than in the case of globalization, scholars argued in favor of the existence of four large waves of regionalism, with the first wave starting at the second half of 19th century and the most recent one coming into being at the end of the Cold War, when security and power relations were significantly altered (for a larger discussion on the history of regionalism and political conditions that gave birth to various waves, see Mansfield and Milner 1999). Historical identification did not help though in clarifying what exactly should be understood by 'region'. Most commonly, regions are delimitated geographically, in terms of group of countries in close proximity to one another. But this definition seems to miss the subtler but important community of norms and values, tightened via interactions, which in turn create the perceived shared regional identity (Deutsch et al 1957 as quoted in Mansfield and Milner 1999: 591). Kacowicz summarizes the typical features of a region in terms of some degree of shared social and cultural values and norms, common or similar political attitudes versus third parties, a certain degree of political interdependence via common institutions and of economic interdependence via markets, and lastly common problem-solving behavior (Kacowicz 1999).

Regionalization is the spread of regions, defined as the 'appearance and consolidation of various economic arrangements among groups of geographically proximate countries' (Rosamond 2000: 179). This follows the majority of scholars in the field, which tends to refer to regionalization especially as an economic process involving a group of countries, where flows of goods, services and capital enjoy a preferential agreement (trade in particular) as opposed to the treatment of third parties. The political – economical divide is represented for example by Fishlow and Haggard (1992), who argue that regionalization is essentially economic in nature, whereas regionalism involves a political side developed through policy coordination.

I have shown that Europe can be defined in terms of regionalism. But it is a special type of regionalism, and the initial definition employed above must be updated to reflect the particular conditions of Europe. Regionalization is the 'consolidation and *formalization* of economic integration among a group of geographically proximate economies' (Rosamond 2000: 180, my emphasis). Regionalization may be informal, with the presence of strong economic exchanges among neighbors, or formal, where the cooperation has been institutionalized; the second aspect is what is specific to the European project, since no other regional arrangement included political factors of such amplitude.

Europe is one type of regional order, if we are to use Solingen's (1998) terminology. It can be argued that the impulse for the advancement of what today is called European Union stems from the pressures of liberalization from the global markets. Economic integration was the first step, followed, starting in the mid-1980s, by a growing sense of necessity for political and institutional coordination that would support the requirement of increased regulation at the regional level. As Solingen argues, domestic political factors and regional balance of power create coalitions that commonly 'manage their regional affairs in political, economic and strategic terms' (Solingen 1998: 3).

A problem that regional orders often face is the rise of nationalism. Ernest Gellner discussed nationalism as 'a theory of political legitimacy' that follows from the nationalist principle, 'which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones and that ethnic boundaries within a given state [...] should not separate the power holders from the rest' (Gellner 1983:1). In other words, nationalism is the desire of all nations to be contained within the borders of a single state. This raises the question of the nation – what is it? How can it be identified? A nation is an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983), a community based on a shared identity, which can be either political (civic nationalism) or based on shared descent (ethnic nationalism)[20]. In this article, the definition of nation or ethnic group is based on the constructivist assumption that national or ethnic identities are not primordial, but that they are just one of the many possible labels that one can adhere to depending on circumstances. As Gurr explains, 'to the extent that ethnicity is a major determinant of people's security, status, material well-being, or access to political power, it is likely to be a highly salient part of their identity' (Gurr 2000:6).

Ethnic conflict is generally understood as designating a violent confrontation between groups of people that share the same state but not the same ethnic identity (Horowitz 1985). Nationalism can lead to ethnic conflict when the purpose of the confrontation is to create a distinct political entity for each of the groups opposing each other.

Bringing all these concepts together, it can be argued that globalization has been accused of fomenting ethnic conflict and nationalism because it makes the primordial affiliations with one's ethnic or religious or tribal group resurge under the pressure of cultural homogenization. Regions are confronted with the same type of problem at a lower scale; some scholars argue that regions are reflections of the global order in that state institutions, practices, and even values and beliefs are under pressure to converge and eventually integrate in the world while some other counteracted this proposition with the idea that regions are islands in the stream of globalization, that they are in fact efforts to contain the negative effects of uniformization and that they try to preserve if not the national autonomy at least a sense of regional differentiation (Telo 2001: 6-7).

Several arguments have been made in response to scholars who explain the increase in the number of ethnic conflicts as caused by globalization. John R. Bowen (1996) describes the primordial and inevitable nature of the ethnic conflict as a 'myth' and proves that the three basic assumptions upon which the global chaos theorists build their argument are false. Ethnic identities are not ancient, the entire concept of ethnicity appears only with modernity; people do not engage in violent acts because of these identities but because a 'push from the top', from the elites motivated to increase their power or other resources; and the mere presence of a diversity of ethnic groups is not necessary or sufficient to produce violence – it is the relationship these groups have to power that is the main cause of conflicts (Bowen 1996).

[20] For more on this distinction see Ignatieff (1994), Tamir (1993) and Greenfeld (1992)

Similarly, Sadowski (1998a, 1998b), using a large-n analysis demonstrated:

a. Ethnic conflicts have been the norm around the world after 1945, so there is nothing recent, globalization-related, about them.
b. Ethnic conflicts are not rooted in tribalism or other primordial identities, but are products of colonial policies or other contemporary events.
c. Ethnic conflicts are no more lethal than conventional warfare, whether we measure number of civilian casualties or the frequency of genocides.
d. Globalization makes ethnic conflict less likely because it promotes the values of democracy.

Building on Sadowski's last point, I argue that democratic values embedded in the public practices and in the legal systems of state and suprastate structures are a considerable factor in reducing ethnic conflict. This is why it is possible to say that the European Union, a regional project, functions effectively as a pro-globalization agent and as a promoter of peaceful inter-ethnic coexistence. In doing so I will overpass the dichotomy of internationalist and statist-nationalist regional orders proposed by Solingen and demonstrate that the European Union is liberal and integrationist without annulling the national allegiance or affiliations of individuals.

The European Union can be considered a good reflection of globalization processes. Technological development especially in the area of telecommunication, high mobility of goods, services, labor, and capital (known as the four freedoms in the EU), economic liberalization of markets, deregulation of capital and trade, appearance of supranational governance (more advanced in the case of the EU than for the world as a whole) all are common elements of globalization and Europeanization - a process that 'refers to processes of (a) construction, (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things', and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies' (Radaelli 2000: 3-4).

European Union, Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict

The framework of this analysis is Solingen's (1998) of regional coalitions. Her thesis, briefly summarized, is that in the post-Cold War or globalization era, domestic interests, be they political or economic, are articulated in complex agendas (called 'grand strategies') to manage regional affairs either via mechanisms of cooperation or via mechanisms of conflict. While being motivated to a large extent by domestic factors, the strategies of these coalitions are also guided or influenced by outside pressures, especially those coming from 'internationalization' (her short-hand for globalization), which 'poses threats not merely to material interests but also to cultures, identities and values, and to the interests of political entrepreneurs endangered by both types of threats' (Solingen 1998: 22). The responses to these challenges are grouped in two ideal types: internationalist and statist-nationalist coalitions. The internationalists are seeing the advantages of liberalizing their economies and expanding the market, without losing sight of the need for macroeconomic control and regulation at home. They try to balance and disperse the liberalization process in order to obtain the maximum available resources to promote internal reform, which in turn would put them in a favorable position when they have access to foreign markets and capital. In a way, we can define the internationalist coalitions as extroverted, identifying the benefits of openness and cooperation.

The statist-nationalists prefer protectionism to the uncertainty produced by open markets and usually employ a military-industrial complex to push forward their economies. In

terms of cultures and values, they feel threatened by globalization and fear loss of sovereignty and local identity; consequently they turn to nationalist discourses to mobilize the people and gain legitimacy. These coalitional actors do not see any advantages in regional cooperation, peace or disarmament agreements because they perceive themselves as losing their power – since power in their terms is military might, domination of public discourse, redistribution of state resources in their favor. As opposed to the internationalists, the statist-nationalists are introverted, self-isolating, perceiving the outside world as a threat to their interests and therefore being more prone to avoid cooperative engagements.

Solingen explains that in reality there is a continuum of weak and strong versions of these two ideal-types, but nevertheless describes them in mutually opposing terms. I challenge her view that the desire to maintain strong identities promotes nationalism and that internationalism is achieved at the cost of local specificity.

Because of the above features I also qualify the European Union as an example of regional order, where strong coalitions are formed among proximate countries, resulting in coordinated and cooperative efforts to solve common problems. In arguing for a regional order that is neither internationalist nor statist-nationalist, I attempt to go beyond Solingen's framework, while at the same time disproving the propositions put forward by global chaos theorists.

What is the influence that the EU exerts over the spread and intensity of nationalism and ethnic conflict? How does the EU fit into the binary categories described by Solingen? There are two hypotheses to be tested:

a. The European Union promotes a value system based on democracy and tolerance, which are conducive to ethnic coexistence. The EU enforces these ideas through conditionality of accession to full membership and through workshops and programs that promote the diffusion of these ideas. This can be called the 'difference-effacing' potential of Europeanization.
b. The EU wants to 'take the lead in transcending them [nationhood and nationalism]' (Brubaker 1996: 1). The EU wants a continent without borders, which makes nationalist claims obsolete: 'New regionalism also limits the fragmenting and disintegrating impact of subnational regionalism, ethnic fundamentalism and the proliferation of movements of national self determination by creating a new supranational framework' (Telo 2001: 7). This type of claim can be called 'difference management', using the terminology proposed by McGarry and O'Leary (1993) and McGarry (2001).

In responding to these questions I will use a comparison of two East European cases, Macedonia and Hungary. Macedonia was selected because it presented ethnic conflict and was beginning to be part of the larger regional and global interactions. Hungary was more integrated into global trans-border relations than Macedonia and presented signs of potential nationalist/ethnic tensions. They are both located in the same geographic area, and they share numerous historical episodes (age of the empires, nationalism, communism). Their main difference today is found along the independent variable, globalization approximated here with European integration: Macedonia has a lower, Hungary a higher degree of integration. We can also phrase this difference in terms of distance, not in space but in time: Hungary is closer than Macedonia to become part of the European structures, to integrate into the EU. Indicators of this distance include membership in regional bodies, external involvement in local affairs, aid, trade, diplomacy, and communications. The contextual contrasts between the two cases are less differences in kind and more differences of degree: size and concentration of

minorities (larger minority presence in Macedonia than in Hungary), level of conflict experienced (Macedonia being more exposed to political violence than Hungary), security of national identity (i.e., Greek and Bulgarian claims to Macedonian territory and identity).

The presentation of the two case studies will be based on a historic analysis and a textual analysis of some official declarations from both the EU and the two countries included. The EU's program and mission would be followed in the two countries (purposefully ending ethnic conflict in Macedonia, exert pressure on Hungary to abandon nationalist claims) and will be complemented by the local leaders' declarations and actions regarding ethnic conflict and about the impact of EU policies and conditions in this area.

So what is the EU policy in general towards nationalist claims? The expectation would be that EU provides a regional solution to the security threat posed by nationalism and by globalization, as well as an economic arrangement that promotes the interests of all the states which belong to the Union. Under the pressure of globalization in its many guises, states loose some of their traditional control over macro policies especially in relation to other states situated outside geographical proximity. Europeanization can be an attempt to salvage this territoriality of power and to transfer it from the state to the regional level, assuming that neighbors have more common features and interests than non-neighbors. Supra-national regionalism can be a solution even when neighbors do not have positive mutual relations, because it can offer a framework that overcomes the issues of traditional border conflicts, where subnational regionalism or separatism would lose its meaning.

The European Union is a good example of how regionalization can indeed provide solutions to the types of problems mentioned above. The first attempt at bringing the former adversaries of WWII together was the European Steel and Coal Community launched by the Schuman Declaration in 1950 with an explicit security purpose: to make 'any war between France and Germany not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible' (quoted in Pinder 2001: 1). Later on, in the integration wave that started in the 1980s, the European states reacted to the increasing pressures of global markets by establishing common economic policies which led to the current multi-level governance structure; this complex system of interconnected loci of power includes substate, national and suprastate institutions that guarantee the preservation, even if altered, of a form of territorial sovereignty. As to the capability of regionalization to appease ethnic conflict, it may be the case that Europe, by making borders irrelevant, made nationalist or separatist claims void.[21] Coupled with the idea of democratic participation, the eradication of borders that previously divided ethnic groups is a powerful motivation for the East Central European states to want to join the European Union, doubly attractive as it comes in the company of promised economic prosperity. The EU may be seen as solving the problems of the transition to markets and those related to the 'stateness issue' to use Linz and Stepan's (1996) term. In an atmosphere of cultural tolerance and individual mobility, the 'European integration may be the only post-nation-state solution to the fundamental problem of contemporary nationalism, which seeks to maintain a unique national identity and at the same time consolidate democracy in a multi-ethnic society' (Csergo and Goldgeier 2001).

The practical way the EU can go about this stated objective to renounce nationalism and conflicts based on antithetic definitions of groups is twofold: as mentioned before, the EU

[21] The cases of nationalist movements in Corsica, the Basque Country or Northern Ireland may or may not be seen as evolving towards a more peaceful resolution. One example against the progress on this issue may be the outlawing of the Batasuna party in Spain; on the other hand, Corsicans recently had the opportunity to increase their local autonomy powers via a referendum.

can promote a redefinition of identities so that ethnic or religious affiliations will become more pluralistic (the difference-effacing quality) and/or can redraw a world where borders and separations will be almost irrelevant, where the general context would be more conducive to cooperation among previously conflicting groups (the difference-management quality).

The difference effacing potential is something that apparently did not happen yet in Europe, not even among the countries that have been the founding members of the common European project. There are two solid pieces of evidence to support this statement. First, through the Eurobarometer surveys, the evolution of a 'European identity' has been followed since 1970. The results of the surveys show that there is insufficient evidence of the 'growing sense of European identity and community among its citizens' (Norris 2000: 157). The results of the Eurobarometer in 2000 demonstrate that in great majority the citizens of the EU self-identified mostly with their nation-state, rather than with Europe as a whole. It is perhaps significant though that the original six members of the European Community had the strongest affiliation with Europe, supporting the hypothesis that a slower, subtler change in identity may happen over time (Goldman 2001: 99).

The second strong evidence against the identity transformation capacity of the EU is the case of the Northern Ireland conflict. It has been expected that once both the UK and the Republic of Ireland will be sharing the same regional roof, the salience of the religious affiliation in Northern Ireland will decrease. Religious differences, a proxy for competing conceptions of national belonging, without constituting in and of themselves 'causes' of the conflict, are taken for a measurement of group affiliation. On the contrary, it seems that the EU framework has been translated into the terms of the unionist – nationalist debate and that religion did not loose power during the integration process (Wilson 2000).

The difference-effacing capacity of EU towards aspiring non-members from Eastern Europe must therefore be seen more cautiously since the reach of the EU instruments is even shorter in their case than for current member states.

The difference-management capacities of the EU in solving nationalist claims should have higher chances of success. McGarry argues that, in the Northern Irish case, European integration did contribute substantially to the conclusion of agreements between the belligerent factions and that the context of the EU encouraged tolerance and diplomacy (McGarry 2001: 300-320).

After looking at these two strategies of ethnic conflict resolution in the context of the EU member states, we can turn to examine the situation of two potential future members, Hungary and Macedonia. Both of these countries experience nationalist tendencies at the level of their government, and both want to join the EU and are engaged to different degrees in collaborative actions with the Union.

Macedonia

Macedonia had all the ingredients for an ethnic disaster and the mere fact that a war did not take place on Macedonian soil is regarded by some as a surprise. Indeed, a quarter of its two-million strong population belongs to a different ethnic group (ethnic Albanian minority, ethnic Macedonian majority). Ethnic Albanians are concentrated in the Northwestern part of the country, in a region where they reverse the original proportions and form the majority of the population; this region, centered around the city of Tetovo, borders Albania and Kosovo, two territories inhabited by the same ethnic group, a great temptation for secessionist movements to emerge (Poulton 2000).

Macedonia is also among the newest nation-states in Europe, gaining its independence only in 1991. Before then, Macedonia was one of the constituent republics of Yugoslavia, and prior to the creation of the South Slavic socialist state ethnic Macedonians did not have a state (or state structures) of their own. Historical accounts of nineteenth and early twentieth century travelers describe a population totally undifferentiated along ethnic lines (Mazower 2000). In order to legitimize its presence on the political map of Europe, Macedonia had to construct a national identity during the communist years, with the introduction of a national language, a national grammar, a national history and literature, all socialized via the education system. The issue of differentiation between itself and its neighbors had a high relevance; for example to deny the existence of a Macedonian identity was punishable during the dictatorship with confiscation of property and incarceration (Poulton 2000).

The fear of losing its distinctiveness, the fear of the 'four wolves', the four neighbors (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia), dominated the political discourse in the independence years as well (Pettifer 1999), even though all four states recognized the existence of the Macedonian state, after more or less debate. The most famous case is the controversy over the name of the new republic of Macedonia. The refusal to admit the 'Republic of Macedonia' as an acceptable denomination comes from two reasons. One is related to possible territorial claims that the new state could make in regards to the Greek province of Macedonia. But the leadership in Skopje already denied any expansionist intentions and signed international documents that would support this attitude. The other reason less invoked officially but nevertheless powerful in Greek political circles has to do with the presence of a Slavic-speaking minority in Aegean region. This ethnic group has been denied any particular rights, since there is no such thing as a 'Macedonian nationality' or national identity. The foundation of a state that claims to represent exactly this nationality weakened the Greek argument against the recognition of the Macedonian ethnic minority. After long negotiations and a trade embargo, the dispute has been closed in 1995 when a compromise has been signed between the two countries (Perry 1997: 273). Initially, the Macedonian leadership was open and tolerant; as a sign of this, Albanian political parties participated in every government since 1991. However, in recent years, the tensions seemed to accrue - until the most recent elections in 2002, a nationalist Macedonian party, VMRO-DPMNE, has dominated the government. Still, even in the nationalist cabinet of Ljupco Georgievski several Albanian parties were able to send their representatives. After the 2002 elections a former Albanian guerilla leader turned politician successfully cohabits with the social-democrats.

Several protests of the Albanian population occurred in the past ten years. Most of their grievances were related to the respect of cultural rights of minorities (especially the right to education at all levels in their mother tongue) and the demand for higher inclusion and representation in the state apparatus. The government ignored these requests, made minor concessions, or repressed the protests. In early 2001, a rebel guerilla group started an armed fight against the government, apparently with support from Kosovo, the former cultural center of the Albanians living in Yugoslavia.

The role of the European Union and NATO in solving this conflict has been instrumental. NATO troops, in the operation Essential Harvest, disarmed the rebels from the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army, and stabilized the region. The EU engaged actively in negotiations that brought together the leaders of the Albanian political parties, the leaders of the Albanian rebels and the representatives of the Macedonian parties. Eventually, the negotiations were fruitful: most of the demands for official recognition of their equal status in the constitution, inclusion in the police and armed forces and non-discrimination in economic status were granted to the Albanians. In exchange, they

promised to respect the authority of the government and to give up violent confrontations with the Macedonian army. The EU dedicated funds for the training of future Albanian police force members that would join their Macedonian colleagues throughout 2002.

The EU is involved in supporting the Macedonian economy. In a special program designed to help the Balkan states, the EU proposed a Stability Pact, signed in April 2001. There are several areas in which the EU sees itself as the most significant, including the strengthening of democratic institutions, of civil society, inter-ethnic dialogue and support for the transition to market economy. In June 2001, the total cumulative amount of allocations from the EU to the FYR of Macedonia was of 452.33 million Euros (European Commission 2001a).

Macedonia is the area in which the European Union decided to inaugurate the Rapid Reaction Force in 2001, using the Albanian rebel crisis as a test for its capacity to maintain security independent of NATO. After long delays and many difficulties, on March 31st 2003 the NATO operation 'Allied Harmony' ended successfully, with the EU taking over responsibilities in terms of providing 'a secure environment as well as operational, advisory and other supportive activities to assist the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia's leaders and authorities with the processes of modernization and democratization' (SHAPE News 2003). The EU mission is supposed to last until the 15th of December 2003, and is conduced in strict coordination with the NATO command (Council of the European Union 2003).

The EU and Eastern Europe in general and Macedonia and the Balkans in particular have a sometimes ambiguous relationship. The EU sees the region as a challenge to assume a pan-European role, to prove the power of its values and norms. There are many unsolved issues in the former Soviet bloc, social and economic transition, nation-building or nation-strengthening, ethnic tensions and so on. If the EU does not assume responsibility, and is not ready and willing to 'manage, control, and finally solve the democracy and peace problem', then the credibility in front of its own citizens, the support and loyalty that it requires in order to legitimate itself, could be damaged. This in turn would undermine the prospects of the future integration process (Seidelmann 2001:191).

On the other hand, the Eastern candidates, and Macedonia in particular, feel that the only way out of their problematic situation is to follow the path suggested by the EU. The EU is the preferred point of reference in terms of economic and political arrangements, a guarantor of prosperity, security, and freedom, 'the only model for nation-building, -rebuilding, and-redefining' (Seidelmann 2001: 194). This is reflected in the results of various surveys commissioned periodically by the European Commission showing that the European idea and the prospect of integration have a high value for the Eastern European countries. There is less data available for Macedonia and the opinions of its citizens on the integration into the EU, but extrapolation from data available on other Southeast European countries shows that accession is crucial, in the eyes of the population, for the future of the country.[22]

In Macedonia, a conflict-prone state, the promise of EU integration, even as remote as it appears to be, acts as a strong incentive to solve peacefully the internal disputes. There is unanimous support for the EU, with both the Macedonians and the Albanians declaring that cooperation with and future integration in the EU would solve their problems. For the Macedonian leaders, integration in the Union or the prospect thereof is seen as beneficial

[22] For general opinions on Europe see Debomy (2001).

because it is perceived to improve the current political and economical situation. The EU sponsors already (and plans to continue to do so) a large number of programs meant to support the failing Macedonian economy. Without EU money and training, Macedonia would be in great impasse. With the EU working towards political stability and development of institutions, the leaders of Macedonian parties feel they can improve their political organization and even gain more legitimacy from the electorate. Even if nationalist attitudes are still present, they are moderated by the perspective of EU help, conditioned by the respect of certain democratic rights. The results of the parliamentary elections of 2002 confirmed the trend towards interethnic cooperation; the new government in Skopje is a coalition that brings together the Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia, the winner of the ballot, and the Democratic Union for Integration, a new party that claims to represent the interests of the Albanian minority.

The Albanians relate to the EU in a positive sense as well. In the past, the EU supported their claims for better treatment by the Macedonian authorities and exerted pressure on the government to be more inclusive. When the four-month rebellion exploded last year, the objective of the Albanian leaders was to attract international attention to their issues; they perceived the EU and the international community in general as sympathetic to their position. The main person in the Albanian Liberation Army, Ali Ahmeti, declared that in order to obtain an improvement of the situation of Albanians in Macedonia, the West had to be drawn in (Garton Ash 2001).

The EU acted as an incentive for moderation in the case of the Albanian guerilla. The goals of the rebellion looked 'as if they were drafted by Amnesty International' (Garton Ash 2001) and were regarded as reasonable in the eyes of the West. These goals, a tolerant, multi-ethnic Macedonia, were designed to appeal to the European authorities and to attract their support. Not only the regular politicians representing the Albanian population, but Ahmeti himself, a person considered a terrorist by the United States, declared that separation or even federalism do not make sense in the perspective of integration: 'Either we're in the twenty-first century and thinking of integration into Europe, or we do it as they did one hundred years ago....' (Garton Ash 2001). Ahmeti transformed his image from fighter to politician, successfully leading a new Albanian party into a partnership with the center-left moderate cabinet of Branko Crvenkovski.

The European Union provided the incentives for inter-ethnic cooperation and dialogue; since the early 1990s, the EU encouraged Macedonia to stick to the path of political tolerance – combined with domestic factors related to the size and demographics of the country, the state of the economy and the history of coexistence between the two main ethnic groups, the European 'carrot' made Macedonia into a showcase for peaceful and tolerant ethnic relations. Even when violent activity erupted, the EU intervened as a negotiator and proposed measures that would benefit both parties. It created the context where dialogue was possible and provided the incentives for cooperation. If the leaders were enticed by the potential political gains, the population was won over by the vision of well-being and security offered by the EU.

The presence of the EU as an actor imposed a moderation of the discourse, strategies and actions of both Macedonians and Albanians and created the conditions for solving the ethnic conflicts lurking in the background. The integration in the European Union is seen as a solution to the major problems of each of the two groups: Macedonians fear most violent conflict and economic crises; Albanians want to eliminate discrimination and also have a better living standard. Economic liberalization and democratic governance are coupled with the possibility of national continuity. In the eyes of its leaders, the only way Macedonia can exist is only as a part of the larger structures of the region. The sense of safety can be achieved via integration in regional security communities: international

guarantees and further dialogue with neighbors traditionally perceived as threats hold the hope that Macedonia will not be attacked by the 'four wolves'. This is reflected for example in the answer to the question 'What will happen if the Macedonian Government and International Community fail to act?' asked in a recent survey in Macedonia. Twenty-one percent of all those interviewed responded that it will be very probable to have Macedonia broken into pieces by its neighbors (Irwin 2002 : 66).

Hungary

The current borders of the Hungarian state have been drawn at the Treaty of Trianon (1920) at the end of the First World War, when the Habsburg Empire disintegrated and most of the current East European countries gained their independence. For hundreds of years, Hungary was a major actor in Central and Eastern Europe; especially since the 'dualist' pact divided the authority in the Empire between Vienna and Budapest in 1866 Hungary enjoyed an almost sovereign power. The Hungarian semi-state was highly centralized and led a strong nationalist policy of assimilation, referred to as Magyarization, which included the political exclusion of non-Hungarians from the state apparatus and the cultural imposition of Hungarian elements (language, names) on the various peoples inhabiting the Eastern part of the Austro-Hungarian empire (Brubaker 1996). The history of lost dominance over the region left a strong imprint in the public consciousness of the Hungarian population.

As a result of the partition of the Habsburg Empire, a great many Hungarians found themselves separated from their 'fatherland'; over 3 million Hungarians lived now outside the borders of the Hungarian state. At Trianon, Hungary lost two-thirds of its territory and three-fifths of its population, creating large ethnic Hungarian minorities in Romania (1.7 million), Czechoslovakia (1 million) and Yugoslavia (less than half a million) (Brubaker 1996: 157).

In the Second World War, Hungary was an ally of Germany, hoping for support in the recovery of the lost territories of 1920. Hungary invaded some of its neighbors but had to give up the temporary land gain at the end of the war. Communism was installed by means of the Red Army, although there was a strong left movement in Hungary, and a temporary Leninist regime was briefly in power during the interwar period (Tismaneanu 1993: 13).

The Revolution of 1956 against the Soviet occupation was drowned in blood and the leader of the rebels, Imre Nagy, executed; troops marched on the streets of Budapest in a statement that the Kremlin would not accept any opposition to its authority in Eastern Europe. As a consequence, a new leadership was installed with the blessing of the Soviets under Janos Kadar. Kadar's tried to compensate the total lack of political and civic freedom with a more liberal economic policy that gained Hungary the title of 'the most joyful barrack of the socialist camp' (quoted in Tismaneanu 1993: 77). In 1989, Hungary found itself better off economically than most of the other countries in the region, and with a more lenient Communist leadership that allowed a negotiated transition to democracy. Hungary was the first country of the Soviet bloc to allow the existence of opposition parties, who were invited to a round table discussion with the Communists, who agreed to concede some of the power. In the first free elections in almost fifty years, the Hungarian Democratic Forum (HDF) defeated the Communists and formed a coalition government.

Part of the success of the HDF came from the combination of a pro-European discourse with a populist and nationalist one. The new government saw the nation as a community based on ethnicity and thus aimed to represent all the ethnic Hungarians, including those living outside the borders of the Hungarian state. This type of appeal has its origin in an

ethnic rather than civic definition of Hungarianness. Csepeli notes that Hungarian governments 'tried to orient popular attention towards issues of national symbols, the Hungarian national minorities abroad, and generally they tended to perceive themselves in terms of tradition and national continuity which they believed had been interrupted by the international ideology of state-socialist system' (Csepeli 1997: 243).

The same applies to other governments of democratic Hungary. In 1998 the Socialists (former Communists) lost the parliamentary majority they had gained in 1994 to the Alliance of Young Democrats (FIDESZ), led by Viktor Orban who became the country's prime minister. FIDESZ had initially started as a left-oriented party, but switched to a more nationalist rhetoric as soon as it realized the political capital it could exploit (Kenez 2000). Orban was a very impressive and dynamic leader, who combined a very strong liberal and pro-European message with a very nationalist attitude. He is popular among the younger crowd and the middle-class, and modulates its discourse to please the audience: when talking to EU representatives, he was all liberal, transparent and open market proponent, playing down his statist tendencies; when addressing a domestic audience, however, he is far more protectionist, fears multinational companies' invasion and cares for the Hungarian minorities in the neighboring countries (*The Economist* 2002a). The main message of the unsuccessful 2002 FIDESZ election campaign remained strongly nationalist and populist, with flag-waving mass demonstrations that gathered as many as several hundred thousand people (*The Economist* 2002b)

Hungary is an example of what Brubaker calls homeland nationalism, directed 'across the boundaries of territory and citizenship, toward members of "their own" ethnic nationality, that is toward persons who "belong" (or can be claimed to belong) to the external national homeland by ethnonational affinity, although they reside in and are (ordinarily) citizens of other states' (Brubaker 1996: 111). A clear measure of this type of nationalism is the new status law passed by the Hungarian government in 2001 which gives perks to ethnic Hungarians living outside Hungary, including a three-month period of working rights and free education in Hungary. Obviously, the law stirred up the reactions of Romania and Slovakia, who initially protested against it as a breach of their sovereignty. Romania agreed finally to recognize the law, after some negotiations, whereas Slovakia still refuses to accept it.[23]

The case of Hungary is characterized by the presence of a strong ethnic identity, combined with a manifest homeland nationalism active not only rhetorically but also at the policy level. In terms of economic policy though, there is little sign of protectionism or military expenditure. Quite to the contrary, the Hungarian economic growth is largely due to international trade. In the four years of FIDESZ government, inflation and unemployment significantly decreased and real wages had a 17% increase; overall, the economic growth averaged 5% a year (*The Economist* 2002a). The liberalization of the economy enabled Hungary and the EU to have strong trade relationships: Hungary's export and import figures with the EU have quadrupled since 1989, and Hungary's share in the EU's trade with the rest of the world has increased to 2.5% of EU exports and 2.3% of EU imports. There is a huge inflow of foreign direct investment (the highest per capita of all Central and Eastern European countries). In 2000, foreign direct investment amounted to € 1.46 billion and to € 911 million for the period January-August 2001 alone (European Commission 2001b).

[23] The Status Law has been criticized by the EU because it was against the equality of opportunity principle; the law has been amended in the summer of 2003, and reactions to the new text are still to be expected. For an interesting interpretation of the role of ethnic identity in the making and implementation of the Hungarian status law, see Michael Stewart (2002).

Hungary was the first country to apply for EU membership (in early 1991), and the first to sign the Europe Agreement that instituted the foundations of the bilateral relations between the EU and each of the candidate countries. Economically, Hungary is faring among the best of the states considered for the 2004 integration wave (Williams Bessenyey 2001). Hungary received substantial economic assistance under the PHARE program as well as under other support schemes initiated by the EU.

Hungary is, along with Poland and the Czech Republic, a new member of NATO, since 1998. Countries in Eastern Europe perceive accession to membership status in NATO as a first step towards inclusion in the EU. In many ways, NATO and EU place comparable demands on future members, including the existence of a democratic political system and solving all potential border conflict. In this sense it is notable that Hungary and Romania concluded a bilateral treaty in 1996, before the discussions regarding NATO expansions took place in Madrid. Hungary and Romania had territorial disputes in the past, but resolved to recognize the present borders through this treaty.

The example above shows how the system of conditionality works in favor of an atmosphere of openness and tolerance. The European Union requires all candidates to have stable democratic institutions, guaranteeing 'the rule of law, human rights and respect and protection of minorities', as well as regional cooperation and an effective, rule-governed bureaucracy (European Commission 1997). It encourages countries to address their problems and provides support in solving these problems in due time.

For Hungary, entering into the European Union is the primary foreign policy objective. Fulfilling all the criteria for membership has been for the past decade the reference point of all political, economic and security agendas. In order to pursue this pro-European agenda, the successive governments in Budapest moderated their protectionist or nationalist claims, especially in those moments when the eyes of the European and NATO leadership were set on Hungary's actions.

However, as we have seen above, the policies of liberalization and reform in the economic realm were not synchronized with the devaluation of the nationalist discourse; on the contrary, the same leader that stimulated economic openness, foreign investments and regional cooperation also dedicated special funds to the protection of cultural identity of Hungarians minorities in the region. Why would a nationalist want to join EU? Csergo and Goldgeier explain: 'The Hungarian national strategy reflects a coherent set of expectations: If Hungary and all its neighbors join the EU, then the EU will eliminate existing limitations of citizenship. The EU charters, for example, encourage minority language use in government and education, something Hungarian minorities have pursued with limited success. Thus, within a decentralized EU that allows for strong regional cooperation, Hungarian institutions will be able to function across state boundaries in ways currently blocked by the national policies of neighboring states' (Csergo and Goldgeier 2001: 2).

For Hungary, entering into the European Union does not equate with losing its identity or diluting its national aspirations. Hungary sees membership in the EU as the fulfillment of this 'homeland nationalism', via the elimination of the borders that so unjustly separated their national community in 1920. In this new configuration, ethnic minorities would be respected and their individual and collective rights enforced all throughout the region; Hungarians will be able to communicate with each other across 'virtualized' borders, and will feel less threatened by persecution or discrimination. Economic prosperity, democracy and human rights are the elements of the European project most desired by the Hungarian state.

Hungary is among the few East European countries that does not have large minority populations on its territory. There are about 4% Roma and around 2% of both Germans and Serbs, with other ethnic groups representing under 1% of the total number of inhabitants (CIA World Factbook 2003). With the exception of the Roma, the rights of the minority groups are largely respected.[24] In contrast with Macedonia, none of non-Hungarian ethnic groups living on Hungarian territory make strong political claims for territorial autonomy or secession. The European accession process includes strict monitoring of the respect of minorities and Hungary has been considered in compliance with EU standards and recommendations.

From the Hungarian perspective, Europe is acting in a difference-management capacity providing the most appropriate context to address their most ardent issues: economic prosperity and national fulfillment.

Conclusion

This article examined the relationship between globalization and ethnic conflict by looking at the European continent. I took the European Union to be a proxy for the global processes and proceeded by asking: what is the influence of the EU on the ethnic conflicts happening in Europe? I hypothesized that Europe will have a positive influence in the area of conflict resolution because it promotes institutions, values and behavior that are more tolerant and respectful of differences. The creation of multiple levels of governance, substate, national and superstate that interact with each other in complex ways would tend to weaken state nationalism; the elimination of borders would make communication between previously divided groups easier and eventually would make claims regarding the unfairness of current border arrangements obsolete.

While trying to provide answers to these questions, the article was placed in the framework of the internationalist – statist-nationalist typology of regional coalitions proposed by Solingen. She argued for an 'either/or' arrangement of strategies: the coalitions could be more or less internationalist or more or less statist-nationalist but not both.

I looked at the cases of two Eastern European countries that both aspire to integration into EU and manifest signs of nationalism. One case was Macedonia, a country where a minority group, the Albanians, contested the authority of the government and demanded more inclusion in the political and administrative system during a four-month rebellion. Macedonia is farther in terms of interactions with and integration in the EU in comparison to other countries from Eastern Europe. The other case was Hungary, one of the most liberalized countries in the former Soviet bloc, scheduled to be admitted in the EU as a full member in 2004, but who promotes a 'homeland nationalism' aimed at the Hungarian minorities living in the surrounding countries.

For both cases I found that the EU, through its policy of conditionality and the consistent financial and political support, created the appropriate context for addressing the issues of minority rights and their potential for conflict. The EU acted as a difference-manager also because it suggested a model that, if attained, would make all nationalist claims null. The capacity of difference-effacing was not as pronounced, but it is possible that the process of identity change takes longer and has subtler forms. Not even among the EU members the shift to a European identity could be proved. However, some qualitative analyses expressed the hope that some weak form of cultural convergence is at work in the EU (Kurzer 2001).

[24] For more on the situation of the Roma in Hungary and in Eastern Europe see Barany (2002).

The EU acted as a conflict manager to a certain extent, by proposing a regional framework for addressing minority issues and national claims. However, the attractiveness of the EU model for the cases examined did not come exclusively from the economic advantages; the EU offered a vision where nation states could coexist with other institutions, at multiple levels. In the EU specificity is not lost, it is maintained; nationalist aspirations are not annulled, but fulfilled in the sense that borders no longer separate members of the same ethnic group; thus nationalism loses its malign power and becomes a question of culture and identity and right of difference. Placing the traditional nationalist demands in such a context takes away the call for contention while leaving intact the spirit of differentiation. The elimination of borders makes nationalist claims superfluous but does not take away the national particularisms. From this perspective, the EU is both liberal and national-oriented, going beyond Solingen's distinction.

This is clear in the case of Hungary, where both pro-European and pro-Hungarian diaspora sentiments are strong. The 2004 deadline for accession has been welcomed as a sign of fulfillment of both liberal and nationalist aspirations; the EU is seen as bringing Hungary back into the European club of prosperous democratic states while at the same time satisfying the desire to have closer ties with the Hungarians living in neighboring states. This is one of the reasons for which Hungary strongly supports the further expansion of the EU to include countries where a strong Hungarian minority resides.

In Macedonia, where perspectives for European integration are less optimistic than in the case of other East European countries, the policy of conditionality and the actual involvement of the EU in maintaining the internal stability of the country create a climate propitious for pursuing in parallel liberal and nationalist goals. The Albanian minority representatives and the Macedonian political elite have a convergent message in support of EU accession. Both sides see the European membership as a solution to the two crucial problems of their country: the economic crisis and the stateness issue. In a united, borderless and democratic Europe, the problems of ethnic minorities would have better chances to be solved without threatening the security perceptions of the majority group.

By proving that the EU plays a role in solving and not in promoting ethnic conflict, the global chaos theories which argued that greater integration and openness would create a backlash of local resistance are directly challenged, at least in the cases where the institutional framework of integration goes beyond the simple economic dimension of commercial exchanges.

The present article is a two case comparison; it can obviously be pursued much further, including the other countries of Eastern Europe who want to become part of the EU. Also, the focus of the analysis was entirely European; further research could relate the potential of integration as a strategy to solve ethnic conflicts to other parts of the world. If the European Union is considered as a *sui generis* case that does not lend itself easily to cross-regional comparisons, the generalizability of the present argument is under challenge. However, the question on the uniqueness of the EU project should not be solved a priori but should remain in the domain of the empirical.

In larger terms, the importance of these conclusions for the debates going on in the field of globalization lays in the argument that closeness and transparency, when practiced in democratic manner, are conducive to a more tolerant vision of group relations. Globalization does not produce havoc, a world where nations and subnational groups see their distinctiveness threatened and want to protect it at all costs. Moreover, globalization does not produce a monolithic civilization, where individuals are replicas of each other. Perhaps this essay is a case for what Mario Vargas Llosa calls a 'culture of

liberty', a culture where national is not the opposite of liberal, but is just one of the multiple identities which each of us can choose from (Vargas Llosa 2001).

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