From bullets to ballots:
guerrilla-to-party transformation in Macedonia

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Introduction

On 12 December 2010 the political party led by Mr Hashim Thachi won the early parliamentary elections in Kosovo. Three days later a draft report from the Council of Europe pointed to him, among others, as responsible for organized crime actions including organ trafficking during and after the armed conflict in Kosovo (BBC 2010). Mr Thachi is the former political leader of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), the current leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and he served as prime minister of Kosovo from January 2008 to December 2010. This intriguing case opens the questions under which conditions do guerrilla groups transform into political parties and what implications does it have for political competition in a post-conflict country?

Notable research so far addressed mainly the questions why conflict starts (Woodward 1995, Fearon and Laitin 2003, Roeder 2003, Buhaug et al 2008) and how it can be resolved (Lake and Rothchild 1998, Gurr 2000, Schneckener and Wolff 2004, Sandole et al 2008). Sustaining peace and building democracy after intrastate conflicts has also been tackled. Researchers have addressed the role of international actors (Newman et all 2009, Chandler 2006, 2008, Kostovicova and Bojicic 2006), the importance of the institutional design (Lijphart 1977, Horowitz 1985, 1990, 2008; McGarry and O'Leary 1993, 2004) and building governance capacities (Ottaway 2002, Birkenhof 2007, Jarstad and Sisk 2008, Paris and Sisk 2009). The guerrilla-to-party transformation has received less attention, with only few authors pointing to the challenges and conditions of such transformations (Weinberg 1990, 2001; Weinberg and Pedahzur 2003, Manning 2007, 2008; Kovacs 2008, Zeeuw 2008). However none investigates the implications that the transformation has for party competition in the post-conflict country.

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 (Watchekon 2004, Watchekon and Neeman 2002). However the democratization process itself can create tensions in the war-to-democracy transition (Jarstad and Sisk 2008). There is a lack of fit between power-sharing institutions in the short term, as incentives to reach agreements, with the long term, as source of conflict in the consolidation phase (Rothchild 2005).

Inclusion of warring parties may be necessary for peace agreements, but it also validates former combatants as legitimate parties which may be problematic for political competition. In a post-conflict conflict setting it is the process of "demilitarizing politics through the transformation of militias into political parties [that] promotes both war termination and democratization" (Lyons 2002: 26). "In counties emerging out of civil war, the major parties represent former military adversaries in conflicts that resulted in stalemate on the battlefield, thus intensifying the importance of parties' representative role and raising the stakes of political competition overall" (Manning 2008: 5). Democratization in post-conflict societies needs competent political parties committed to democracy. International actors play a role in supporting democratization as a means for peacebuilding, but it is the contextual factors and the institutional framework in which parties operate that affect their organization and challenge the parties' adaptation to democracy (Manning 2007). The transformation from guerrilla-to-party needs favorable conditions. I argue that, under the right conditions, the newly transformed party is based on the legacies of the former guerrilla and that these legacies to a large extent influence the future political competition in the post-conflict country.

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In the first part of the paper I clear concerns about democratization after an inter-ethnic conflict. In the second part I draw attention to elections and parties in post-conflict countries, making the case for political parties. In the third part I present the conditions for guerrilla-to-party transformations, present existing models for analyzing such transformations and give my own model. The expectations and the research design are set in the fourth part. The fifth part shows the conditions and tests the models in the case of Macedonia, while the sixth part shows the implications of the transformation for party politics. In doing that I combine process tracing with analysis of electoral and survey data. The conclusion summarizes the findings.

1. Post-conflict democratization: a paradox after an inter-ethnic conflict?

Timothy Sisk (2010) argues that there are two overarching approaches to peacebuilding: democratization and state-building. Democratization is understood as a process of introducing liberal institutions that enables non-violent political competition, inclusion, participation and accountability. However there are claims that the introduction of liberal institutions contributes to instability in the post-conflict phase (Snyder 2000, Mansfield and Snyder 2005). Some even claim that after inter-ethnic conflict individuals tend to act in support of organizations claiming to represent their ethnic identity – so much that individuals and organizations can be conflated into a single actor, the "ethnic group" (Biddle 2006, Kaufmann 1996). But, it is problematic to treat ethnic groups as unitary actors whose leaders and members act homogeneously. Authors argue that organizations, not groups, are the appropriate unit of analysis and "their relation to underlying populations must be the object of systematic theoretical and empitical investigation as opposed to mere assumption" (Kalyvas 2008: 1063). Also organizations and preferences are not pre-determined prior, during or after the conflict, they change.

Researches find that for democracy to endure in the post-conflict phase there needs to be low level of lootable natural resources; warring parties should not have support from foreign countries; there needs to be high enough ethnic heterogeneity to guarantee uncertainty of electoral outcomes; and warring parties should have security guarantees from a neutral third party (Sollenberg 2005). Others find that ethnicity's effect as an independent variable does not increase the likelihood of civil wars (Fearon and Laitin 2003), but it may have effect on ethnic wars (Sambanis 2001) or on ethnic strife (Ishiyama 2009). In the same fashion, Scarritt and McMillan (2001) analyze the relationship between ethnopolitical action, rebellion and democratization. They show that democracy and worker-student protests are mutually reinforcing, whereas democracy and rebellion are mutually incompatible, while ethnopolitical protest is neutral in its consequences for democratization.

The assumption that ethnic identities are strong determinants during and after an inter-ethnic conflict has also been challenged. The argument is that "civil wars are dynamic social and political contexts that potentially shape the behavioral expression of ethnic identities" (Kalyvas 2008: 1045). Multidirectional identity transformations, as opposed to just consolidation, is more widespread even during civil war, which is consistent with constructivist approaches to ethnic identity (Chandra 2004). States facing ethnic rebellion depending on their resources will recruit ethnic defectors (Kalyvas 2008). At a micro level ethnic defection is more likely if the incumbent actors has strong territorial control and if the there is high level of prior insurgent violence. On the macro level ethnic defection could be a function of the resources available to incumbent actors.

On the other hand communal identities have many forms. Regime transition provides incentives for new definitions of in-group and out-group. Posner (2007) shows how shifts from one-party to multiparty rule alters the ethnic cleavages that structure political competition and conflict. The different strategic logics of political competition in one-party and multiparty settings create incentives for political actors to emphasize different kind of ethnic identities. In one party elections it is usually local level identities (e.g. tribe or clan identities), and in multiparty elections these are broader scale identities (e.g. region, language, religion). Kalyvas and Kocher (2007) find that the sectarian conflict between Shia and Sunni in Iraq is not the outcome of sectarian cleavages, but a legacy of the U.S. Occupation; and that the war in Vietnam was not outcome of differences in ethnic identity. They argue that there is no necessary overlap between ethnic conflict and ethnic war, the former may also develop in ideological civil war.

It is clear that change of regime and democratization brings anticipation whether conflicts will increase or will they be peacefully managed. However, "what has been less than effectively explained in the structuralist and intentionalist heavy accounts is how individual actors maintain the capacity to transform or shape their identities to coincide with general processes..." (Edwards 2007: 140). There is not enough attention that "(re-)introduction of competitive multiparty elections might have an effect on the *kinds* of groups in whose name the conflict was being carried out" (Posner 2007: 1321).

Steenkamp (2008) shows that in the case of Northern Ireland loyalist paramilitaries have used violence, between or within groups. She offers a typology based on the goals to be achieved with violence. The between group violence can be sectarian or political violence. The intra-group violence serves social, economic or territorial goals. In the same time the case of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) in Northern Ireland shows that intra-group ethnic outbidding and political party modernization can be successfully combined during peace making in civil wars (Gormley-Henan and Macginty 2008). The traditional appeals are mixed with modern discourse and campaign tools. The end result is that the party maintains a hard-line position on identity and constitutional issues, but moderates when it comes to shape the agenda in the post-conflict policy making.

Therefore post-conflict democratization is not per se a paradox after an inter-ethnic conflict. The problem is that in post-conflict democratization cases there are local actors whose goals are in odds with Western liberal models promoted by international actors. Post-conflict socioeconomic conditions (i.e. underdevelopment, poverty and unemployment) catalyze support for these actors (Manning 2006, Turner 2006). These actors stand in free and fair elections and more often and not get elected to exercise power. Then the efforts of international actors to block the access to power of these groups undermined the credibility of democracy promotion (Manning 2006, Turner 2006). The next section draws more attention to elections and parties in post-conflict cases.

2. Elections and parties in post-conflict countries

Protracted civil wars with many casualties spread on a wider territory have a greater impact on the post-conflict development of political parties. The dimensions of such a conflict have a long lasting effect on the cleavage structure and the electoral politics of the main parties contending for elections. In instance the political competition of Mozambique is described as "polarized for historical reasons rooted in the legacy of war" (Manning 2007: 268). Similarly in post-conflict Ghana "the parties' rival

interpretations of Ghana's history and culture were more polarized than ever" as effect of the civil wars in the 1960-1970s (Pinkney 1988: 45-46). In fact where armed conflict coincides with ethnic identities, the latter usually become instrumental for political identities (Simonsen 2005). The research in these cases tends to focus more on the electoral system and its outcomes, than on the political parties. Beyond that electoral politics is one of the main instruments of international actors in promoting political changes in post-conflict societies.

Reilly (2006) suggest four electoral engineering strategies to tame the rogue political actors and to create broad-based, aggregative, and multi-ethnic parties. They are: 1) regulations that govern the formation, registration and behavior of ethnic parties; 2) incentives in electoral system, (i.e. dictate ethnic composition of party lists, electoral threshold, encouraging vote pooling, requiring parties to have support in different regions of a country) 3) top-down approach, centralizing power to increase party discipline and cohesion in parliament; and 4) external intervention by channeling technical and financial assistance to parties in post-conflict countries.

However elections in post-conflict countries do not necessarily "result in cessation of hostilities or the establishment of an environment conducive to economic, social, or even political reconstruction" (Gaber 1998: 1). It is rather the case that the elections translate the past intrastate conflict in the new democratic regime. In post-conflict countries "there is little doubt that in many instances elections left a bitter legacy, aggravating existing tensions and cleavages" (Kumar and Ottaway 1998: 231), while "political parties appealed to parochial loyalties to gain votes" (Kumar and Ottaway 1998: 230). The remedies cannot be found in mending the electoral system.

The electoral design has low potency to shape the party competition in post-conflict elections because too often it is "subject to possible changes by the political elite of the country" (Adeenze-Kangah 2009: 1). In that respect the election observers describe the competition between parties "as a 'do and die' attitude which obviously is a potential for violence" (Adeenze-Kangah 2009: 2). In example, elections in Bangladesh from1991 to 2008 were often marred by boycotts, violence and irregularities (Hashemee 2009). The changes made to the electoral system for the 2008 parliamentary elections to some extent succeeded in overcoming the problems. However the "political parties are still at loggerheads with each other, often resorting to confrontational ways" (Hashemee 2009).

In post-conflict Ghana there are even formal requirements for registering a party that are supposed to shield from ethnic politics. Parties are required to have nationwide coverage and to have members from different communities, but despite the formal requirements the main parties are ethnically founded (Meissner 2009). The political mobilization in the 2008 parliamentary election was identity based, memories of the violence and atrocities were invoked during the campaign and one party even prepared a "hit list" for assassination of some of its counterparts (Meissner 2009). In the Ivory Coast for the 2007 parliamentary elections some parties entered the political arena with "mind and behavior of gladiators.... [And] have their lips dripping only with one word: war, because they gain much profit from war to the great detriment of the whole nation" (Acka 2009: 6).

In Bosnia and Herzegovina international actors have tried to reconfigure political cleavages, but nationalist parties have endured. The Dayton Agreement, which provides the post-conflict institutional design, solidifies ethnic divisions. "The outcomes of the Bosnian case suggest that the structural conditions are likely to shape electoral competition and its outcomes must be considered, and addressed, before the onset of electoral politics" (Manning 2004: 83).

Another examples is Lebanon that had a protracted civil war from 1975 to 1991, and then another cycle of violence erupted between 2005 and 2008. The institutional design, including the electoral regime, has been spelled out in the peace agreements. The peace agreement in 2008 introduced changes which were supposed to heighten the "rivalry within sectarian groups, rather than between sects" (Maalouf 2009: 4). The design encouraged cross sectarian alliances and move away from blocs shaped by sectarian or clan allegiances. However the electoral design did not stop parties to detain"strong leverage over their constituents to mitigate violence" (Maalouf 2009: 8), while they supply their constituencies with various public services (i.e. social, cultural, health services) (Arian 2005).

Similarly the 2006 peace agreement in Nepal, ending a decade long civil war, entailed a new institutional design for the country, prescribed a new electoral regime and allowed the rebel Maoist to integrate in the new institutions (Raj Dahal 2009). The electoral design allowed for wider representation and higher inclusion, but as an outcome it "also ethnicized, communalized and territorialized the politics of Nepal" (Raj Dahal 2009: 8). At present Nepal has 103 ethnic groups and 109 paramilitary groups of which many have secessionist claims. Some groups are organized in political parties, or support parties, which have mutually exclusive views for the future to the extent that the "widening rifts between major political parties have eroded common grounds for compromise for speedy constitution making, structural reforms and peace process" (Raj Dahal 2009: 13).

It would seem that a better approach for post-conflict democratization would be to focus on political parties. They "as the mediators or filters of democratic transition, 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). The policy advices for post-conflict democratization identify the transformation of warring groups to political parties as one of the contributing factors for successful peace building (USIP 2009). "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). In a war to democracy transition the inclusion of formerly armed groups into peaceful politics provides agents for the emergence of multi-party democracy (Kovacs 2008). This was the case with the ANC in South Africa, the PLO in Palestine, Renamo in Mozambique, FMLN in El Salvador, FUNCIPEC in Cambodia, HDZ and SDS in Bosnia and Herzegovina, DUI in Macedonia, LDK in Kosovo. But where is the line between combatants and politicians in such cases?

Political parties are usually associated with the use of legitimate strategies to achieved their goals. Terrorist or guerrilla organizations are associated with using violence. However, in conflict and post-conflict cases there is seldom a clear dichotomy between parties and terrorist/guerrilla groups. In example, Fatah movement in Palestine acts both as a party and a terrorist organization (Weinber and Pedahzur 2003) and the UNITA movement in Angola has moved back and forth between a political party and a guerrilla organization (Ottoway 1998).

Weinber 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 (Weinber 1990). Parties may choose 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 1990: 429-30).

When parties transform into or create terrorist groups "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). However what happens when things go in the other direction, when terrorist or guerrilla groups transform into political parties? The next section outlines the conditions of such a transformation.

3. Conditions and models for guerrilla-to-party transformation

Mimi Kovacs (2008) warns that 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. On the other hand, failure to demobilize the warring parties and to integrate them in society could again lead to violence. Kovacs holds that when belligerents enter politics they tend to carry same or similar issues over which the war was fought. Usually they are granted amnesty, which can pose as an obstacle for post-conflict justice and sustainable peace. Such parties draw heavily on indigenous values, traditions and symbolism in the electoral campaign and strongly capitalize on the history of the resistance fight. Transformed rebels also rely on international legitimation and support for financial and technical assistance.

Jerron de Zeeuw (2008) outlines three conditions that influence rebel-to-party transformation: conflict settlement, domestic and regional context and the role of the international community. Inclusive conflict settlement that invites all warring parties to establish institutions through free and fair elections provide strong incentives for rebel-to-party transformation. If there is a battlefield victory then the first post-conflict elections only legitimize the victor.

Further on the domestic and regional context must provide security and political stability "for convincing rebel movements that it is safe to disarm and start a political dialogue with their former adversaries" (Zeeuw 2008: 20). Second factor in that respect is the level of popular support for the rebels. Greater support means higher chances for transformation. Third factor in the domestic context is the institutional design, the electoral rules and the political system. Under PR it is more likely that representation will be secured which gives incentives for transformation. On the other hand presidential democracy allows for concentration of power, which is expected to have adverse effects for transformation. The transformation also requires that neighboring countries are politically stable.

The international actors try to contribute to sustainable peace by building a competitive and pluralistic system. Their role includes support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs; providing political training courses; logistical support in establishing or relocating local offices; providing direct financial assistance in some exceptional cases (e.g. RENAMO in Mozambique) and giving political support or politically pressuring the former rebel leadership. Notwithstanding the leverage of international actors, it must be acknowledge that their power "tends to diminish the further one moves from the end of the war" (Manning 2008: 16).

International actor sought to place 'right' elites in power as an essential step to democracy building in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Iraq (Manning 2006). This was done by designing and refining constitutional, institutional and electoral arrangements. But voters opted for organizations within or

outside the formal political arrangements that addressed popular economic and security concerns, rather than narrow political agendas set by external actors. In Bosnia and Herzegovina the intervention of international actors has brought changes in the top level leadership of political parties, it has influenced the process of candidate selection and it has soften parties' positions on crucial issues (i.e. implementation of Dayton, return of refugees and internally displaced people). However "it is a strategy of creating democratic parties by undemocratic means" (Manning 2004: 83).

One framework for analyzing the conditions under which guerrilla/terrorist transform points to the environment and goals of political parties (Weinberg and Pedahzur 2003, Martin et al 2008). Regime transition provides new definition what is legitimate and not; and offers incentives for guerrilla/terrorist groups to transform into political parties. However regime stability is a necessary condition for transformation of the groups. The transformed groups need to accept the legitimacy of government. If the government is not accepted then violence against it is justified

An institutionalized party system, where parties are seen important actors in domestic politics, is another condition for guerrilla-to-party transformation. A polarized party system has an adverse effect, and is associated with conflict prone environment. The goals of the parties have to be realistic and they need to have success in their performance. If the goals are unrealistic, then there will be less transformation and more violence. If there are shortcomings in the performance, then it leads to frustrations and increase of violence.

This model is underspecified. It fails to operationalize what is an institutionalized party system when there is no democracy or there is transition to democracy? In such conditions there are frequent changes to the rules and institutions, that do not allow for the party system to institutionalize. The model may hold in cases where are terrorist groups in older democracies (e.g. IRA in Ireland or ETA in Spain) but not in cases of post-conflict democratization. In such cases the eakness of institutions may be a incentive to engage into institution building and undergo guerrilla-to-party transformation. However it raises the importance of the goals for the transformers which is a valuable contribution.

Carrie Manning's (2008) provides another framework for analyzing guerrilla-to-party transformation. Her central claim is that repeated "holding of elections, however imperfect, tends to create a constituency within parties for more elections. Whether or not that leads to the party leadership to commit to or to invest in the democratic rules of the game depends on the interaction of the demands of interparty competition and internal party dynamics" (Manning 2008: 4). The electorate remains polarized around the "wartime political cleavages" and the power base of the parties' leadership lay partly in control of patronage and access to power. Therefore it is the "intensity of interparty competition as a pivotal independent variable whose effects are then mediated by internal party factors" (Manning 2008: 8). The transformation is an outcome of the nested games in which party leaders are engaged. The interparty competition shapes identities, priorities and strategies that influence the process of democratization. (Manning 2007).

The model offered by Manning for guerrilla-to-party transformation is elegant and stimulative, but very narrow. She neglects the importance of historical legacies and socioeconomic conditions, to which she refers in her earlier work as necessary conditions for post-conflict democratization (Manning 2004). However she rightly points out the dynamic interaction with other parties in the process of guerrilla-to-party transformation.

Jerron de Zeeuw defines rebel-to-party-transformation as a "process of structural-organizational and attitudinal changes intended to convert an armed rebel group into an unarmed political party" (Zeeuw 2008: 12). He distinguishes between successful, partial, facade and failed transformation. His model focuses on structural and attitudinal conditions for the transformation.

The structural conditions include: demilitarization of organizational structures and development of party organization. The demilitarization means "formally disbanding or reducing military formations and partially or fully confiscating the weaponry" (Zeeuw 2008: 12). To develop the party organization the former rebels need to be recognized as a party; to formulate a party constitution and political program; to install organizational structure suitable for achieving the new objectives; and to adapt the relationship between the former leaders and elected representatives.

The attitudinal conditions include: democratization of decision making and adaptation of strategies and goals. Decision making should be "open to consultation and participation from a wider group of people, from both within and outside the organization" (Zeeuw 2008: 14). The new strategies include campaigning, relationship with civil society and communicating with competitors in nonviolent way.

The model forward by Zeeuw is comprehensive but very extensive. Also it relies on some heavy assumptions. It assumes that the new parties will have objectives different from the former guerrillas. His model assumes that the former combatants will be deprived of power in the interparty relations, while he admits that rebel leaders provide stability in the war-to-democracy transition and retain power in the party (Zeeuw 2008: 16). In the same time democratization of decision making is a very high standard for any political party, let alone for a party deriving from an armed formation. However he points to the necessity to invest in the structures of the party organization which a very valuable contribution.

To summarize, the conducive conditions for guerrilla-to-party transformation seem to be: 1) there is an inclusive conflict settlement agreement; 2) there are social and institutional incentives to start the transformation; and 3) there are no negative externalities from neighboring countries or international actors.

The models of guerrilla-to-party transformation are right to point to the importance of the goals, the electoral competition and building of the new organization. However for the process of transformation the main point is that the legitimacy of the former combatants lies in the armed conflict. The basis of politics is hardly transformed, and they rely on personalistic and clientelistic mechanisms of internal control and relationship with the electorate. Such parties 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 when the guerrilla ends and the party continues. It is rather the case that the new party relies heavily on the structures and values of the guerrilla group.

This point is not made in the current models of guerrilla-to-party transformation. The three models fail to conceptualize the importance of the legacies of the former guerrilla for the new party. If the importance of the legacies are the central assumption, then one would expect that the goals of the new party would to a large extent derive from the goals of the guerrilla groups. Further on, one would expect that the new party would rely on the structures of the former guerrilla, both in terms of its party structures and links with society. Former combatants would assume high political positions in the structures of the party and the party would rely on the social networks used by the guerrilla during the

war. The new party in the electoral competition would glorify their role as guerrilla, and would not hesitate to return to violence if the electoral competition intensifies.

The legacies of the guerrilla groups have strong implications not only for the transformation to political party, but also for the future electoral competition. The next section gives the research design, operationalization of the conditions and the expectations for guerrilla-to-party transformation.

4. Expectations and research design

One of the conditions for a guerrilla-to-party transformation is to have an inclusive conflict settlement agreement. If the agreement provides incentives and opens possibility for the former combatants to transform into a political party, they will do so.

Another condition is to have social and institutional incentives for the transformation. If there are social and institutional incentives then the guerrilla-to-party transformation will follow. Social incentives can be operationalized with public support for the political party. This would mean that the electoral outcomes are uncertain and that the new party will at least be able to gain electoral representation. Institutional incentives can be operationalized with electoral institutions that provide for wide representation, namely a PR system. Institutional incentives can also be operationalized with more specific power-sharing mechanisms (i.e. special procedures and rules for decision making).

The third condition is that there are no negative externalities. If the neighboring countries are politically stable and the international actors support the inclusion of the former combatants then guerrilla-to-party transformation will follow.

To test the guerrilla-to-party transformation under these conditions I will take the case from Macedonia in 2001 where the National Liberation Army (NLA) transformed into the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI). It is a case that has not been previously analyzed in the studies of the guerrilla-to-party transformation, and not even mentioned in passing. It is an important case because all of the conditions that support guerrilla-to-party transformation were present and allowed for a successful transformation. So it is a most likely case for guerrilla-to-party transformation.

However it is also a case that shows that the transformation had profound effects on the party politics, in specific for electoral competition between the parties representing Albanians in Macedonia. The intra-ethnic electoral competition became intense and violent. DUI won majority of Albanian votes in the first parliamentary post-conflict elections in 2002, in the 2005 local elections and in the 2006 parliamentary elections. While the 2002 post-conflict elections finish peacefully, intra-group tensions rose for the local elections and intra-group violence erupted for the 2006 elections.

Tracing the model of NLA-to-DUI transformation I show that the new party was mainly based on the legacies of the guerrilla group. The legitimacy, the goals, the organization (i.e. party hierarchy and social links) and the electoral competition of the party relied heavily on the former guerrilla. This allowed them to be a successful party in the intra-Albanian competition. However it also induced their main competitor to mimic them. In that respect the competitor to DUI, the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA), tried to attract former combatants in their own organization. Further on they develop paramilitary formations – which served as counterparts to the former guerrilla formations – to be used

as coercive instruments in the electoral competition. Combining process tracing with quantitative analysis of survey and electoral data I show that the formation of DUI in Macedonia is based on the legacies of the NLA, and that this transformation influenced the post-conflict party competition between DUI and DPA.

5. Transformation of NLA to DUI

The Republic of Macedonia gained its independence with the dissolution of Yugoslavia. It is a multi-ethnic country where according to the the census in 2002 ethnic Macedonians make for 65 percent of the population, Albanians account for about 25 percent and the rest are several other ethnic groups (e.g. Roma, Turks, Serbs, Bosniaks, etc). Macedonia managed to avoid the Balkan wars of the 1990s, despite the multi-ethnic nature of its society. However in 2001 there was an inter-ethnic conflict in Macedonia. The conflict in Macedonia followed NATO's intervention in Kosovo, and some claim that there was a 'spill over' effect from Kosovo to Macedonia (Balalovska et al 2002).

The conflict in Macedonia erupted in January and ended by November 2001. It was a protracted inter-ethnic conflict between the National Liberation Army (NLA) and the state security forces, army and police (Balalovska et al 2002). Mainly ethnic Albanians fought for the NLA and mainly ethnic Macedonians fought for the state security forces. Notwithstanding that casualties have not been fully accounted for, they are presumed to rather low on both sides as well as civilian victims (Filips 2009, Ismanovski 2008).

Thanks to a strong and fast intervention from international actors, namely the US, NATO and EU, the conflict in Macedonia did not erupt to a full blown civil war (Balalovska et al 2002, Ilievski and Taleski 2009, Lejti 2009). The pressure from the international actors stopped the armed conflict and pave a way for a peaceful resolution to be found. International actors played a key role in managing the inter-ethnic conflict and also in settling ethnic differences in the post-conflict phase (Ilevski and Taleski 2009). The negotiations took place under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Macedonia. Special envoys on behalf of NATO and the EU served as facilitators during the negotiations. The negotiations were between the main parties representing Macedonians, VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM, and the main parties representing Albanians, PDP and DPA.

It is interesting to note that throughout 2001 all of these political parties were part of a grand coalition government. The grand coalition government was formed, on request of the international actors, as an instrument to stop the inter-ethnic conflict. But the grand coalition government could not stop the conflict because the NLA, that was wagging the war, was not represented in the government. In order to foster a common position between the Albanian parties in Macedonia, PDP and DPA, and the NLA a National Committee was formed in Prizren, Kosovo. The US special envoy had a heavy influence in assembling the Committee. The Committee brought a program which summarized the requests and common positions of the NLA and the Albanian parties in Macedonia. In that respect, the Albanian parties were empowered to fully represent the requests of the NLA during the negotiations with the parties representing the ethnic Macedonians. The main requests of the NLA was to improve the positions of the Albanians in Macedonia, in terms greater protection of minority rights and greater inclusion in the administration and decision making processes.

The conflict ended with the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA). The agreement

prescribed a full DDR program and envisaged that a law grating amnesty to all combatants will be promulgated in parliament. OFA stipulated 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 employment in the public administration. Further own, a process of decentralization started that increased the competences of the local municipalities therefore allowing minorities greater access to resources. Special laws for usage of national symbols of ethnic groups was promulgated, and languages spoken by ethnic groups which make over 20 percent of the population could be officially used in parliament and local municipalities.

The OFA was signed in August 2001, and the process of its implementation started in September 2001. Constitutional changes were made and new laws were enacted. The armed clashes finally ended in November 2001. A NATO overseen process of disarmament followed in the spring of 2002, and NLA was demobilized. However a program of reintegration of the combatants did not start. At the same time the implementation of the OFA slowed down. SDSM and PDP step out the grand coalition government. The ruling VMRO-DPMNE, a hard line nationalist party, opposed the further implementation, while DPA, their junior coalition partner, started to credit for themselves the changes and improvements that the OFA brought for Albanians.

The next parliamentary elections were scheduled for September 2002. In the summer of 2002 NLA announced the new political party, the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI). DUI was formed on 5 June 2002. The leadership of DUI was practically equivalent to the leadership of NLA. Mr 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. In example, Mr Musa Xhaferi a high ranking commander, became the secretary general of the party, while Mr Fazli Veliu, uncle of Mr Ahmeti and high commander of NLA, became a vice president in DUI.

DUI however was not only made of former combatants. Along to having two former high ranking commanders as vice presidents, DUI had two other vice presidents that were prominent Albanian intellectuals. Mrs Teuta Arifir, a university professor, joined the party to became the vice president. Also Mr Agron Bugjaku returned from Belgium where he worked for the administration of the Belgian Senate. Ms Ermira Mehmeti became the spokesperson of DUI, previously working as a translator for the US Embassy when dealing with the NLA.

Ali Ahmeti became a well known, but a controversial public figure. A poll carried out in February 2002 asked respondent 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 are shown in the table 1 below. They are statistically significant and showed a very strong and consistent relationship. Further more the directional measures of the relationship are also very strong and support the claim that Ali Ahmeti, soon after the conflict enjoyed wide and strong support from the ethnic Albanians in Macedonia.

The idea of him leading a party was acceptable for many Albanians, even before the NLA announced the formation of DUI. The results table 2 show the support for Albanian parties in Macedonia in May 2002. This was right before the formation of DUI. The results are statistically significant, they show a consistent relationship and a solid support for a party lead by Ali Ahmeti. Also party sources before the September 2002 elections were aware that about 12 percent of the population supports them, which for

them meant the "majority of the Albanian population" (A1 2002).

Table 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

Table 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

DUI did not shy away from its lineage with the NLA. Quite the contrary. The web site of DUI made a clear link between the armed group and the political in the first sentence, stating: "We know how to wage wars also know how to wage peace" (Friedman 2006: 13). Local experts and officials from DUI agree that the legitimacy of DUI runs from the NLA.[1] When it appeared in 2002 the main goal of DUI was full implementation of the OFA. In a sense DUI's involvement in politics was seen as continuation of NLA's armed struggle. However the bullets were to be replaced with ballots. According Mr Bugjaku the aim of DUI in the 2002 elections was to "integrate the Albanians in Macedonia, for they have been for long marginalized and excluded" (A1 2002).

However the structures of power and the organizational hierarchy within DUI resembled to a great extent the former NLA formations. In example, the heads of DUI's local branches in several different municipalities were the commanders that were within the NLA responsible for those municipalities. This was the case with Mr Hazbi Lika in Tetovo, Mr Talat Xhaferi in Tearce , Mr Sadula Duraku in Lipkovo, Mr Nevzat Bejta in Gostivar among many others. It seems that the intellectuals and other

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1 Author's interviews with Mr. Baskim Bakiu, an analyst with the Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), in Skopje 20.12.2010 and with Mr. Bekim Rexhepi, member of the Central Board of DUI, Skopje 15.12.2010

public persona were the face of DUI for the public, however in the structures of the party and in the local communities the transformation was essentially a re-branding of the NLA.

In the 2002 elections DUI pressed heavily on their achievements as NLA. Ali Ahmeti, the leader of both organizations, was shown as a hero of the Albanian community. Their main goal was full implementation of the OFA and improvement of the positions of Albanians in Macedonia, as these were the main goals of the NLA. The party ballot had more than few former combatants. DUI won the majority of Albanian votes which was a successful victory in the first post-conflict elections. 16 MPs from DUI were elected. Among them 10 were former high rank commanders of the NLA.

The analysis of the NLA-to-DUI transformation shows that all of the conditions for guerrilla-to-party transformation were present in Macedonia. The conflict settlement agreement was inclusive, and it also created institutional incentives for transformation. The electoral system was changed to PR, veto points and greater minority rights were enacted, a process of decentralization was envisaged. Also there was strong social support for Ali Ahmeti, the leader of both NLA and DUI, as well as strong enough support for the new political parties. International actors supported the transformation and Kosovo, the most politically unstable neighbor at that time, aided the formulation of common goals between the Albanian parties and the NLA.

At the same time the legacies of the NLA were the main base for the new party. The legitimacy of the new party was drawn from the armed struggle of the guerrilla group. The aims and goals of the party seemed to be predetermined by the former guerrilla group. The organization and structures of the party to a large extent depended on the guerrilla formations. And in the electoral competition the new party glorified the combatants and achievements of the former guerrilla. In that respect there was no clear cut point when the guerrilla stops and the party continues. Rather the transformation was essentially a re-branding of the combatants, and the crucial point was that bullets were replaced with ballots. The transformation however had a significant implication on the political competition to which I turn in the next part.

6. Implications for party politics in the post-conflict phase

The electoral competition for the Albanian votes in Macedonia after the 2002 elections was between DUI and DPA. The results of the elections, aggregated on national level are shown in table 3. They manifest that there is a steady and increasing support for DPA. DUI had an overwhelming support in the first post-conflict elections in 2002. Even though they received more votes during the 2006 and 2008 parliamentary elections than DPA, the support for them seems to be declining.

Table 3. Number of votes won by the main Albanian parties in parliamentary elections Macedonia, 2002 – 2008

Votes won	2002	2006	2008
DUI	102038	79401	69449
DPA	40951	43292	48188

Source: State Electoral Commission in the Republic of Macedonia
It is worth pointing out that DUI was a junior coalition partner in the government of Macedonia from

2002 to 2006, and again from 2008 onwards. From 2006 to 2008 DPA was part of the government as the junior coalition partner. Even though DUI won majority of votes and had more seats in Parliament than DPA, in 2006 it was out of government. Table 4 shows the distribution of seats in the national parliament among the Albanian parties. They show that most seats were distributed between DUI and DPA, making them the main contenders for the representation of Albanians.

Table 4. Number of seats in Parliament won by the main Albanian parties in Macedonia, 2002 – 2008

MPs	2002	2006	2008
DUI	16	15	18
DPA	7	11	11
Other Albanian parties	3	2	0

Source: Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia

For the 2002 elections DUI relied heavily on the lineage with NLA. And it did not change its style of campaigning in the other elections. When it was in power from 2002 to 2006 it managed to push for implementation of the remaining OFA stipulation. In example, a new law for decentralization was push through in 2005. It was a major part of the OFA and improved the access to resources for minorities on the local level. In the 2006 campaign the main electoral point of DUI was that "We keep our promises". The narrative was that the OFA was NLA's accomplishment, and then DUI took the responsibility to implement most of it during its time in office. Future claims were made that the remaining stipulations in the OFA would be implemented. Another big campaign promise was that former combatants and family of victims would be compensated.

The OFA had 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. Party sources claim that while doing this DUI keeps an eye for formers combatants and for members of their family. Allegedly there is a intra-party agreement that every third employee has to be in relations to the former NLA. There are two rationales behind this. First, DUI sees itself as a successor of NLA and has to 'take care' of its former fighters and their families. Second, it is beneficial for maximizing electoral support. Former fighters become important public figures in their local communities, kind of a community leaders. Their families tend to enjoy social prestige among their fellow citizens. Therefore preserving the social networks that supported NLA, goes to the electoral benefit of DUI. This can be partly deducted from the results in table 5, that show the composition of DUI's MPs in Parliament.

Table 5. Combatants and politicians among DUI's MPs, 2002 – 2008

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

Source: Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia, author's research

After the 2002 elections and after that most of the MPs from DUI have been former combatants. This is

due to the fact that the former NLA leadership still heads DUI. Ali Ahmeti is still the leader of DUI. However it is also part of the electoral strategy of DUI, as their legitimacy derives from the NLA and the social network of the former guerrilla serves as the voting base for the party. The patronage networks provide strong and stable electoral base.

This strategy can be seen in selecting the candidates that serve high positions in the party, but also as a strategy for choosing candidates that stand in elections. The first party congress of DUI was held in September 2004 and the second was held in December 2010. In both events Ali Ahmeti was the only candidate for president of DUI. The party has kept the same system of having two vice presidents that a former high ranking commanders and two that are not. The first general secretary was Mr Musa Xhaferi. He resigned to serve as Deputy Prime Minister during the 2002-2006 government. G'zim Ostreni, the joint chief of staff for the NLA, replaced him as the general secretary of DUI. In the 2004 presidential elections Mr Ostreni ran as the preseidential candidate of DUI. As general secretary of DUI he kept a figurine of a fallen commander on his desk, a present given to him by his soldiers.[2]

In the local level the former NLA commanders in the conflict areas changed to becoming the heads of the local branches for DUI. Many of them stood in the 2005 local elections and won the post of majors. In example, this was the case with Hazbi Lika in Tetovo, Nevzat Bejta in Gostivar and Sadula Duraku in Lipkovo. So there is a clear connection between the former NLA and the process of intra-party candidate selection. The links between the legacies of the guerrilla and the party also translate in the electoral support.

I made a data set of the electoral results for DUI and DPA aggregating the data on municipal level. There are 84 municipalities in Macedonia, and I aggregated the results for the two parties for the parliamentary elections in 2002 and 2006, and for the local elections in 2005. I took the results of the 2005 local elections as a control variable. Aggregating the data on municipal level allowed me to use the census data for the number of Albanians leaving in each municipality. Then I introduced a dummy variable in the municipalities where the conflict took place in 2001. There were total of 18 municipalities where the conflict took place. I wanted to see the relationship between the conflict municipalities and voting for DUI and DPA. I also correlated the electoral results with the number of Albanians in each municipality. The results are shown in tables 6 and 7.

Table 6. Voting for DUI, correlations with number of Albanians and post-conflict municipalities

		conflict	alb	dui2002	dui2005	dui2006
conflict	Pearson Correlation	1	.641**	.645**	.645**	.675**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	84	84	83	84	84
alb	Pearson Correlation	.641**	1	.972**	.972**	.967**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	84	84	83	84	84

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

The results show that there is a strong and positive correlation between number of Albanians and voting for DUI and DPA. This is hardly surprising as both parties represent ethnic Albanians. However the

2 Author's interview with an OSCE policy expert working in Macedonia between 2001 and 2010. Skopje, 19.12.2010

results show that there is a strong positive correlation between voting for DUI in the conflict municipalities, with a tendency of increasing in each electoral cycle. In the same time, there is strong positive correlation in conflict municipalities with voting for DPA, but with a tendency of decreasing in each electoral cycle.

Table 7. Voting for DPA, correlations with number of Albanians and post-conflict municipalities

		conflict	alb	dpa2002	dpa2005	dpa2006
conflict	Pearson Correlation	1	.641**	.614**	.582**	.581**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	84	84	83	84	84
alb	Pearson Correlation	.641**	1	.952**	.935**	.950**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	84	84	83	84	84

The conflict municipalities are a sub-set of the municipalities where the majority are Albanians. In other words in those municipalities the number of Albanians is relatively higher than compared to other. This explains the high positive correlation in voting for both parties. However DUI is gaining ground in those municipalities, while DPA is loosing. DUI as a successor of NLA has stronger social links in those municipalities, and also the party is rewarding former combatants and members of victim's families that tend to come from those municipalities. This explains the increasing tendency of electoral support in the conflict municipalities.

I take this as strong indicator how the legacies of the party shape the post-conflict political competition. However analyzing the competition between DUI and DPA more closely one can find even stronger indications. In example the post-conflict 2002 parliamentary elections were peaceful. However there was some intra-ethnic tensions for the local elections in 2005 (OSCE/ODIHR 2005). The elections of 2006 were particularly violent. "The first half of the election campaign was overshadowed by numerous violent incidents, including attacks on campaign offices, fights among party activists, and non-fatal shooting incidents" and "involved the ethnic Albanian parties DUI and DPA" (OSCE/ODIHR 2006).

Even in the 2002 elections the strategy of DPA was to include former commanders in specific Mr Ruzhdi Matoshi and Mr Daut Rexhepi - Leka at high position in the party. Both were elected as MPs and Mr Matoshi even became the general secretary of DPA. The idea behind this was that DPA could draw legitimacy from the NLA, similar to DUI. DPA recognized the importance of former fighters in local areas, the large family groups and social prestige that they bring as a solid voter base. DUI already had that advantage and DPA tried to copy that. But with little success.

To counter the existing social networks of the guerrilla formations DPA started to build own paramilitary formations. The idea of DPA was simple, 'they have combatants, will have combatants'. The DDR program was not fully implemented, so there were more than few unhappy former combatants, which provided the incentives for DPA. This was done to increase the local support for DPA, but it was also seen as effective strategy for maximizing votes. The was strategy to form own paramilitary formations to have coercive instruments to counter DUI's former guerrilla formations. In that respect electoral violence was used as instrument for social control. Control of coercive instruments became the main electoral strategies for maximizing support among the main Albanian

parties. The shooting and electoral violence during the 2006 parliamentary elections were a consequence of that process. The legacies of the former guerrilla had direct impact on the party competition.

7. Conclusion

Post-conflict democratization is not per se a paradox after an inter-ethnic conflict. The problem is that in post-conflict democratization cases there are local actors whose goals are in odds with Western liberal models promoted by international actors. Changes of the electoral system can't bring remedies to the situation. In most of the cases the war time cleavages dominate in the post-conflict phase. In such circumstances better approach for post-conflict democratization would be to focus on political parties. And in specific on the transformation of former warring parties and their impact for the party competition.

This paper addresses the questions under under which conditions do guerrilla groups transform into political parties and what implications does it have for political competition in a post-conflict country? The conditions that give the highest incentives for transformations are an inclusive conflict settlement agreement, social and institutional support for former combatants and absence of negative externalities from neighboring countries and international actors. However the most appropriate framework for analyzing the transformation is to focus on the legacies of the former guerrilla. The social networks of the former guerrilla turn into patronage networks and they provide a strong electoral base in the post-conflict phase. The former guerrilla formations also provide a coercive instrument which can later be used in the political competition to maximize the electoral gains.

In the case of the guerrilla-to-party transformation in Macedonia, the NLA had the most favorable conditions to transform in DUI as political party DUI. Combining process tracing with analysis of survey that this paper shows how the party used the conditions to fully transform into political party. In doing so DUI relied heavily on links with the NLA for its legitimacy, political goals, organizational development and electoral competition.

Using process tracing the paper shows that the DUI was purposefully selecting and rewarding former combatants in an effort to utilize the network of the guerrilla as its electoral base. Analysis of the electoral data shows that the support for DUI increased in the former conflict municipalities. The main competitor of DUI recognized the successful strategy and tried to mimic that. They included former combatants in their organization and build their own paramilitary formations. In that respect the successful transformation of the former guerrilla shaped the political competition for the votes of the ethnic Albanians in Macedonia. In that respect control of patronage networks, deriving from the conflict, and control of coercive instruments became the main strategies of both parties competing for the Albanian votes. The end result of the process was intra-group electoral violence as an instrument for social control and as an efficient strategy for maximizing electoral support.

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