

Neostates: Old Problems

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Abstract

Newstate or neostate is proposed as the designation of a class of new political-geographic entities which, while having some of the attributes of states, have not yet (and may never) solidified into fully functioning states. This class is distinct from 'failed states', which had been fully functioning. All neostates, whether built up from an amalgamation of existing states, like the European Union, or as successors to a vanished old state, like the Republic of Macedonia, face similar issues which must be resolved if the neostate is to survive. This paper will examine three primary issues, all of which are identity issues - Consolidating Stable Borders, Crafting a National Economy, and Creating a National Identity - which are both critical and difficult. The paper will define these issues; examine how and why they arise; argue why it is critical for the neostate to resolve them; and then examine these issues in the specific cases of the European Union and the Republic of Macedonia, with examples from other neostates for contrast. The paper will argue that neither the EU nor Macedonia has, as yet, satisfactorily resolved any of those issues, and that this failure threatens their futures as states.

Keywords: European Union, Macedonia, state, neostate, borders, national identity, national economy, survival issues, international relations, political science

This paper is an essay which proposes a new model of issues which affect the survival of certain new states. It is neither a research study nor a review of the literature nor an historical analysis. The paper will outline and attempt to define this new model, and do a preliminary test of its validity by examining primarily the author's personal observations about two states which appear to fit the definition of neostates: The European Union and the

Republic of Macedonia. If the model appears to be valid, this paper could be the beginning point of a number of much deeper and more thorough studies, but the purpose of this essay is to ask the readers to examine and test, in their own minds, whether this model is both valid and useful in the study of the survival of neostates.

In this paper, I propose that, as a category separate from mature, established states, there are "*neostates*"ⁱ, which are uncertain of long-term survival. These *neostates*, whether built up from an amalgamation of existing states (such as the European Union) or as successors to a vanished old state (such as the Republic of Macedonia) whether large or small, face essentially identical issues of perception which must be resolved if the new state is to survive. I must make clear that these issues exist in the minds and perceptions of the inhabitants of the territory, and are neither political nor legal issues. For example, there are recognized lines on a map which meet all political and legal definitions of the borders of both Macedonia and the EU. It is the contention of this paper that, regardless of the legal status of the border, if the people who live inside and the near neighborhood of those borders do not consider them valid, the state has problems which must be satisfied to ensure its survival.

These perception issues are:

- Securing their borders (defining the state geographically in the minds of the people);
- Restructuring a national economy (defining the state economically in the minds of the people); *and, perhaps most important,*
- Creating a national identity (defining the state in the minds and hearts of its people.)

These problems exist for all neostates because of the nature of modern statehood and current demographics. In ancient times, a wandering tribe or fragment of a tribe could move to a new (empty) valley and continue its traditional life without difficulty. City-states or countries could fragment, establishing new colonies in (empty) locations or expand frontiers without difficulty. Today, however, we live in a world which is to a large extent fully populated and interdependent. Essentially all land, people and most natural economic resources, are owned (or at least claimed). Therefore, all neostates, large and small are emerging into an existing structure, and must compete to survive.

What is a State?

But first, we must establish some definitions. What is a 'state'? There is no agreed legal definition, which follows naturally from the fact that all laws are national and end at state borders. Everything else – everything that we call 'international law' – is a series of bilateral and multilateral agreements between specific states. The political science definition of a state consists of three parts: It must have "defined" boundaries; it must have "effective" governance (the legitimate use of force) within those boundaries; and it must be recognized as a state by a "sufficient" number of other states (Weber, 1918). Each element is deliberately fuzzy: boundaries can change, or can endure for generations with undefined patches; governance is 'effective' if an observer agrees it is, but no state has complete and perfect governance; and as for recognition - what number is 'sufficient'? Currently, we have a useful shorthand for the last element – if a political entity is accepted for membership in the United Nations, it is clearly sufficiently recognized. But then, what is Taiwan which was, for a long period, recognized as *the* state of China, but was de-recognized in favor of Beijing? What is South Sudan, which was apparently pre-emptively recognized by the U.N., but seems to be having difficulty getting organized as a state?

Let us accept, then, that 'state' is a fuzzy concept, organized around the idea of a political entity with some form of government deemed legitimate by its population, generally definable political boundaries and generally governed population, which deals independently with other states. Under that definition, it is clear that both the European Union and Macedonia are states, as are such other quasi-states as Taiwan, Palestine, and South Sudan as well as mature states such as France, Germany, the U.K., China, and the U.S. Within that broad category, I propose we consider a sub-category of 'neostates' which fit the broad definition, but have not matured sufficiently to allow us confidence in their endurance – in which sub-category I include both Macedonia and the European Union. My thesis then is that such 'neostates' must master these three national definition issues if they are to have a good chance of survival and growth into mature statesⁱⁱ.

And survival is a real issue. States are fragile entities. According to EurAtlas (2011), there were 79 independent states in Europe in 1800, only 28 in 1900, and 58 in 2000. According to Rosenberg (2011) there are currently 195 countries in the world (196 if you include South Sudan) but the maximum

number recorded was 294. According to official U.S. State Department lists(2011) (other lists may vary slightly for political reasons), there were 194 independent states in the world in 2009. We all know that ancient states and empires (such as Rome and Alexander's Empire) vanished, but in modern times, the independent states of the Germanies, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, for example, while appearing solid and permanent to their inhabitants at the time, have vanished. New states have appeared, but some did not survive (Rosenberg, 2011). States, in general, are fragile and may be short-lived. Nations – collections of peoples with a shared language, history and culture and identity – are long-lasting, but are not always associated with states (for example, the Kurds and the Roma are nations without states). Napoleon Bonaparte, while not the originator, was critical in building the concept of the 'nation-state.'

"Napoleon Bonaparte was a key figure in the development of the nation-state. Amid the chaos of the French Revolution in the late eighteenth century, most remaining medieval and feudal laws were overturned and a truly national law code was established. Similarly, a national military was created. Although not the only reason, France's status as a nation-state was a key factor in its ability to dominate feudal neighbors in Italy and Germany. Napoleon's military victories also paved the way for the emergence of nation-states in the rest of Europe: In many places, the people rallied together as a nation in order to defeat Napoleon." (Anonymous, 2011)

Napoleon attempted to marry the two concepts to give his *state* the endurance of a *nation*, and to give every citizen the identity of a Frenchman, while making the government the embodiment of the people of France. This has become the (at least, stated) goal of every government of a modern state, but it is, in most instances, a goal rather than a current reality.

A true nation-state gets its identity from its people, and its people take their identity from the state. I know of no entity today which is a true nation-state, except perhaps a few South Pacific island-states with homogeneous populations, but striving for that goal may be the best means of survival for a state. And building a nation-state requires adequate fulfillment of these three basic requirements. Let us now examine these three issues more closely.

THE THREE ISSUES

Defining the State Geographically in the Minds of its People

Securing borders has physical, psychological, political, legal and social meanings, and must be considered in each of those meanings in two ways: in relation to neighboring states and in relation to distant states.

Every new state, by definition, has a new set of boundaries— larger or smaller than the predecessor state. Boundaries – borders – serve multiple functions. The primary function, of course, is to differentiate between ‘us’ and ‘not-us’, with the important corollaries of setting the limits for the legitimate use of force by the government, and the allowable limits for any necessary defense of territory. One element of this issue is resolved by the formal recognition by other states. But unless those recognizing states include bordering states, the border is not and cannot be secure. As we see with the status of Palestine, Israel, Afghanistan and Kosovo, no distant formal recognition or legal ruling affects the relationship between the neighbors, and the acceptance of the border by the state on the other side of the border is essential for a secure border.

Even more important is the acceptance of the ‘us/not-us’ definition in the minds of the people who live on each side of the border. As the Berlin Wall taught us, no extreme of state border control can constrain the perception, or even the movement of people if they do not see that line as a legitimate border between ‘us’ and ‘not-us’. East Berliners were visiting (or moving to join) relatives (i.e., ‘us’). The greater the effort the East German government put into stopping physical movement across what was seen as an illegitimate border, the more that government itself was seen, in the minds of its people and in the world, as an illegitimate government. A different problem is seen in South Sudan.

After difficult and lengthy negotiations, the governments of Sudan and South Sudan agreed on a border between the two states – based primarily on the location of economic resources and definable and defensible landmarks. Unfortunately, the population of some of the border areas allocated to Sudan, largely comprised of people who had been part of the decades-long insurgency against Sudan, do not see themselves as part of Sudan, and so do not recognize the border. The continued conflict since the declaration of independence results from this difference in perception from the legal border definition, and threatens the survival of South Sudan.

Defining the State Economically in the Minds of the People

The creation of a new state, by whatever means, draws a line – a border – across existing economic patterns. People are used to dealing with certain suppliers and customers as either foreigners or neighbors, and they deal with each class differently. This is true for the village lady selling her onions and garlcs and equally true for the CEO of a multi-national firm headquartered in the state. When a new state is created, the new borders mean that some old foreigners become neighbors, and some old neighbors become foreigners. Everyone engaged in economic activity must now re-draw their mental map and plan their activities according to the new rules, if the new state is ever to have an integrated economic system.

This is difficult and disruptive. The alternative is to have people follow their old habits – ignoring the old borders. For any individual, old habits are both easier and more comfortable. For the new state government, old habits are defined as smuggling and disloyalty. These are both perceptions, but relating to concrete economic actions. Unless the two perceptions become integrated, the neostate will have problems. Just as we saw with the geographic border above, however, new rules on ‘domestic’ vs. ‘foreign’ economic relations must be established, not by force, but in the minds of the residents. When a housewife ‘knows’ that the best ingredients for her famous *ajvar* sauce comes from that village down the road (now across a border) or an industrialist finds that new ‘domestic’ sources for his raw materials provide a different quality than his traditional suppliers, both will be tempted to follow old habits.

The government is then faced with a choice of enforcing economic regulations against the will of its people – thus being considered illegitimate – or of making no effort to enforce its laws and borders – thus raising questions of its effective control, or of acting capriciously, enforcing them sometimes and not others, thus raising questions of its competence. All three choices challenge the basic definition of a state. The only real resolution is to change the perceptions of the population, so that they actively differentiate – economically as well as politically – between themselves as a national population and foreigners. Some few will always cheat; some may grumble that ‘things were easier under Tito’ⁱⁱⁱ, but will cooperate; some will enthusiastically adopt the ‘new order’. It is the task of the government to increase the number in the last two pools until the first pool is small enough that it can be subject to sanctions which most citizens will see as legitimate.

Defining the State in the Hearts and Minds of its People

When a new state comes into being, it never represents the will of all of its population. Sometimes there are many groups advocating the new state, but each group has a different idea of what the new state will look like. The majority of the population will tend to be largely ignorant and often indifferent. Some percentage of the population will be actively opposed. In the goal of a nation-state, a new state must obtain its identity from its population, and the population must take its group identity from the state. This means that the government is seen as representing and taking care of the needs of the entire population, while the entire population comes to see themselves as a unity (different from 'those foreigners') who are represented by the government. This does *not* mean that everyone agrees with each other or that everyone likes the government: it means that fights become 'family' fights, with everyone seen as having a legitimate role in the internal fight. Until this begins to happen, people residing in the new state will retain identities and ties with a former state or a now-foreign state or an alternative idea of a new state, and therefore they will not have loyalty to or even recognition of the validity of the new state.

A new government tends to win power through its own core-group— a political party, an ethnic group, or residents of a core locality — and will therefore initially tend to assert its identity with that core-group. The result may be that it is seen as defining anyone outside the core-group as outsiders in the new state. Thus the Israeli government tends to assert its identity with Jews, leaving the large population of Israelis of Palestinian origin and of Christians in an anomalous position. Can they really consider themselves Israelis? Do Jewish Israelis consider them Israelis? In any country, this can only result in instability, and can lead to violence, civil war and the eventual break-up of the new state.

Afghanistan represents another response. Most people in Afghanistan identify primarily with their tribe, region or as followers of a specific leader. Thus, while Afghanistan is recognized as a state and is a member of the U.N., it does not function as a state, but rather as a loose coalition of confederated tribes. This includes the assumption of integration with all 'Afghan' tribes, many of whom live in the Affiliate Territories legally recognized as part of Pakistan, but not effectively controlled by Pakistan. One effect of this is the anomalous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The

efforts of NATO and the government in Kabul to establish borders, create a central government with effective control, and craft an "Afghan" identity appear futile. (Note: Even the word 'Afghan' is in fact the name of a tribe which has furnished almost all the kings/presidents/rulers, including the current President. Members of other tribes will rigorously object to being identified as 'Afghans'.) Unless and until Afghanistan can solve this problem, it cannot become a nation-state – though it has survived for centuries and may well continue to survive as a loose confederation.

I believe that this issue is the most critical one for any new state to resolve. Unless and until the government sees itself as serving essentially every citizen of the state, regardless of ethnic, religious, historical or other ties, and unless and until essentially every citizen of the new state identifies primarily as a member of that new state, in addition to many other sub-identities, there is a high risk of non-survival of the new state. No state ever has or perhaps ever will achieve 100% mutual identification, but the need and effort must persist until the 'outsider' fraction is minimal if the new state expects to survive -- and this is the area where both the European Union and Macedonia have made the least progress.

The National Myth

One among many methods governments of neostates use to create a national identity is to create a National Myth – a set of stories, images, sayings, songs, expressions which, ideally, begin to give their population the essential elements of a nation: a shared history, culture, language, values and finally- identity. The fact that an individual citizen was not, in fact, connected to the elements of the myth is irrelevant. Americans whose parents immigrated in the 1900s speak proudly of the conquering of the great Western frontier, of the battle at the Alamo (even if they don't remember that it was a defeat), and of shivering in Valley Forge in the Revolutionary War. Their own ancestors might even have been on the other side in one of those battles, but they are all proud of 'what we Americans have accomplished.' Thus France inundates its population with the image of bare-breasted Victory at the barricades, with 'La Marseillaise', with "Liberté, Fraternité, Égalité," with the public faith in and expression of French Secularism. Recently, France has begun to insist that all its citizens, of whatever origin, eschew public expressions of faith (e.g. by banning crosses, yarmulkes, and headscarves from public schools) because

that clashes with French Secularism. When successful, such political myths can unite a disparate population into a feeling of unity, with each other and with the state. If done improperly, as in Nazi Germany's myth of the Aryan Nation which excluded large portions of its own population, it serves to divide the people, and decreases the chances of the new state's survival. We will now examine the efforts and accomplishments of Macedonia and the European Union in terms of these three issues.

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE ISSUES

First, let us ask the question "Is the European Union a State?"

Politically and legally, the European Union does not call itself a state. Like Afghanistan, or like the original form of the United States, it appears to function as a collective of separate 'sovereign' states. However, it clearly meets the political science definition: it has clearly defined and acknowledged borders, it is recognized (at least as a political entity) by essentially the entire world (governments meet with, negotiate with, and deal with its representatives), and (within limits) it has effective governance within its territories (European Union Laws and Treaties have priority over local and national laws; European Union Government, court and commission rulings are binding within member countries.) The men generally considered the 'Fathers of the European Union' – such as Churchill, Monet, Schuman, Spaak, and Spinelli – all spoke of a united and unified Europe (a 'United States of Europe') as their goal. Therefore, for all practical purposes, we may consider it a state, and its current inability to claim 'state' political/legal status makes it clear that it falls in the sub-category of 'neostate' for the purposes of this paper.

A. The Border Issue

The European Union originated as a loose collective with primarily economic objectives which found its expression in such institutions as the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) in the 1950s. It quickly grew beyond its original six members and in its objectives. These came to include both expanded economic unification as well as a growing demand for political and

geo-political objectives, in an attempt to make Europe a major player vis-a-vis the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. It has expanded in numbers, goals, and attributes, becoming the EEC, the EC, the Euro-Zone, the Schengen area. It has created a European Parliament, European courts, a European bureaucracy and senior political offices. Within Schengen, it has abolished internal borders; within the Euro-zone, it has replaced national currencies with a European currency. It currently (since 2007) has 27 full members, three candidate Members (Turkey, Croatia and Macedonia), and the majority of the Western Balkans are seeking formal candidate status (EU, 2010). It associates with numerous other states in Central Europe, former U.S.S.R. and the Mediterranean basin on an 'association' or 'neighbor' basis. It states that its final shape will include and be limited to "Europe", but is generally reticent about defining that term.

Thus, at any one time, its official borders are fixed, well-defined, and generally secure. However, the relatively rapid expansion – from 6 to 27 member states in less than 60 years, with on-going discussions to include more, means that these borders are somewhat nebulous in the minds of both its own people and in the perception of the world. The core is certain, but the periphery is unclear. Moreover, since each element of expansion has been by separate treaty, and some member countries have failed to accede to several of these treaties, some elements of unity are unclear even in the core. The U.K., for example, has rejected both the Euro as a currency and the Schengen treaty abolishing borders. Does that mean it is fully a part of the European Union or not? A recent attempt to adopt a Constitution, a critical step in making the European Union a state, was rejected (largely by the Irish) and has been replaced by the "Lisbon Treaty", which has only some of the attributes of a state detailed in it. Current efforts to deal with the Euro-crisis by increasing EU-wide monetary controls have gotten entangled in sovereignty issues. Also important and costly in terms of defining a European identity, the European Union member countries have been adamant about promoting their separate nationalisms and national identities within their borders, and it is only among the younger generation that the concept of a European Identity (with sub-identities as Greek-, French-, Portuguese- "hyphenated" identities) has strongly taken hold.

This becomes a problem - especially among neighboring states. Whether these states are currently official candidate states or not, the people of neighboring states, as well as the current population of the European

Union, must think about the possibility of eventual accession. Thus, the perception of 'us' and 'not-us' must be blurred, on both sides. They deal with each other like guests at a party bringing together the families of prospective brides and grooms – currently strangers, but probably future family members. How do you treat them? The uncertainty about expansion, with more than a decade of 'will he, won't he' on the accession of Turkey leaves the European Union with insecure borders. Until the European Union as a whole firmly decides at minimum on a clear statement of the limits of its expansion, and wins a unified expression of cohesion among all its members on issues such as the Euro-zone and Schengen, the uncertainty of its borders will remain, and will decrease its chances of long-term survival and full expression as a mature state.

B. The National Economy Issue

Because the European Union began with economic integration in the ECSC, and has maintained its focus on economic integration, it has been most successful in achieving this goal. The substitution of the Euro for most national currencies, plus the Schengen elimination of internal borders (and customs, and duties, and tariffs) has served to largely equalize prices for European products throughout the European Union, has greatly expanded intra-European Trade, and has allowed the development of coordinated trade policies with non-European trade partners. The European Union can speak (usually) with one voice at WTO meetings, and the European Union examines foreign competitors (e.g. Microsoft on questions of restraint of trade) through a single organization. Perhaps most important, the European Union has formed a labor market which largely functions as a single market for all its member states. An individual from any member state can (and does) seek and find employment anywhere in the European Union without hindrance. (Important in this regard was a European Court decision that any citizen of the European Union, resident in and working in any state of the European Union, has the right to vote in local elections. This largely eliminated the perception that, for, example a Portuguese working in Frankfurt was a 'foreigner'.) While far from perfect integration, this comes closest to it, and this economic integration remains the strongest force in favor of the European Union's survival.

C. The National Identity Issue

My personal observations at universities in Portugal, France, the U.K., and Italy show a strong and growing sense of European Identity among current university students, but a much weaker sense of European identity among their parents – bankers, professionals, politicians and the like. A generational change (30 years?) may be necessary before a new identity becomes established, and if so, the European Union may be on the right track. The students clearly see themselves as ‘also’ Portuguese or British or whatever, but increasingly, they identify themselves as European. When they talk of their career hopes, they talk of cities, not countries, and do not limit themselves in choosing among European cities. Similarly, a number of industries – especially food, retail clothing, and automobile – have adopted European-wide sales pitches, and are opening stores or branches regardless of traditional borders. There are a growing number of city centers – Barcelona and Milano chief among them – which are developing integrated economic structures which cross national borders, such that many towns in France, for example, see themselves as dependencies, suburbs, of these ‘Spanish’ or ‘Italian’ cities. Even governments have gotten into it. In at least two instances, separate European states have opened joint Embassies (e.g. FRG and France in Guyana) sharing buildings, staff and responsibilities. In numerous instances, separate European Embassies engage in joint efforts (e.g. 10 European Embassies sponsored a campaign to attract Korean students to European universities.) The European Union has created a National Anthem (which nobody seems to know), a national flag/logo which has been widely adopted and is popular (e.g. on automobile license plates) and other national symbols of varying degrees of significance (EU, 2011).

On the other hand, in almost every country politicians and parties have gained influence by being ‘Euro-skeptics’; the financial crisis in Greece, Ireland and Portugal has raised doubts about the value of the Euro-zone, the defeat of the Constitution has raised deep doubts about the future direction of the European Union, and criticism of Eurocrats is becoming widespread. (This last is a mixed message. People in every country complain about their government, so the pervasive spread of complaints about Eurocrats could mean that people are beginning to think of them as ‘their government.’)

Finally, the right of veto by each member country on essential issues seems likely to contribute to increasing deadlock as the European Union

moves toward becoming a state. On the issue of European identity, the European Union seems to be teetering on a tipping point. Perhaps like the U.S. Articles of Confederation, or the original League of Nations, the European Union will fail only to become the basis of a later more successful union. On the other hand, if they can hang on until today's students move into positions of influence, the next generation can move them forward into true union and they will become what Churchill called for – "The United States of Europe."

THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA AND THE ISSUES

A. The Border Issue

The Republic of Macedonia has done an excellent job of physically delineating its borders – primarily because it adopted pre-existing foreign and internal borders – and has achieved broad recognition, admission to the United Nations, and candidate status with both NATO and the European Union. These accomplishments, however, are undermined by Macedonia's failure, so far, to reach real acceptance and accommodation with its neighbors, especially Greece, and further undermined by cross-border ethnic affiliations among its population, to some extent encouraged by the government itself. Moreover, while officials at police stations and official border crossing points seem to apply regulations rigorously, the borders in reality seem fairly porous. It may not show significant weakness in terms of identity, but I have found in personal conversations with citizens of Macedonia who live in border regions that the local inhabitants routinely cross the borders – for shopping, visiting relatives, attending weddings or other festivities, for trade or other purposes, generally without bothering to pass through the official border stations or registering their passage with the government.

In a fish restaurant on Lake Ohrid, I was offered a trip 'to the other side' to see a shrine, and only later learned that the shrine was in Albania. Similarly, at Sveti Naum Monastery, I was offered a guide to a walk to an island castle which turned out to be in Greece. In a restaurant on Lake Dojran, which is bisected by the border with Greece, the proprietor informed me that his sons caught the fish "on the other (Greek) side" while buying some items for the restaurant. In Kumanovo, restaurants and shops had numerous items from Serbia lacking the Macedonian sticker, and similarly in

Kriva Palanka the items were Bulgarian, also lacking the MK sticker. I cannot, of course, know that these items were all transported unofficially across an essentially unguarded border, but it seems the likeliest explanation.

In contrast, however, I (white-bearded and an obvious foreigner) was stopped and questioned for some time by border patrollers while driving near the Megalithic Observatory Kokino above Kriva Palanka. Finally, in the Ministry of the Interior, the department which deals with applications for asylum spoke to me of a sudden upsurge of applicants from Afghanistan, who had appeared at the office in Skopje (in the center of the country) without passports and lacking any evidence of official admission into Macedonia. It is clear that these individuals, at least, found it both easy and expedient to bypass border controls. This is not a problem unless and until it impacts either the national economic system (through rampant smuggling) or reinforces divided loyalties by emphasizing family/ethnic ties in competing states.

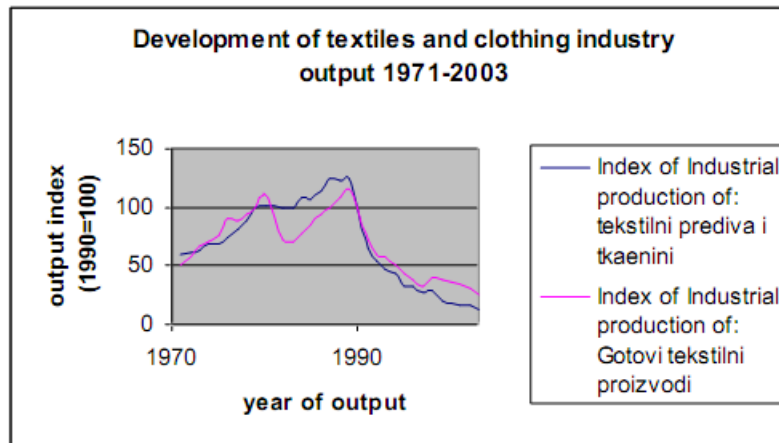
As an aside, another question is why Macedonia insists on (formally) stringent border controls while in reality giving evidence of porous borders? Porous borders are not necessarily a bad thing. The U.S. and Canada have had a porous borders almost since the two states came into existence, but these were matched (at least until the 9-11 attack on the World Trade Towers and subsequent U.S. paranoia) by almost equally porous controls at the official border crossing points. When I was growing up near the border, people in farms in the border region routinely shopped in the nearest towns, regardless of what country the town was in, and the border officials at the bridge between Detroit, Michigan, and Windsor, Ontario, just asked, "Are you American or Canadian?" and then waved you through. The existing relatively stringent border controls in Macedonia may merely be a remnant hanging over as a habit from the former Yugoslavia – which had very stringent controls – but it might be worth the government asking itself what useful function they serve. Note that, if Macedonia successfully joins the European Union, it will have to adapt to European Union rules – including (assuming adherence to Schengen) the abolition of borders between Macedonia and Greece and eventually any other Western Balkan state which successfully becomes a member.

B. The National Economy Issue

This issue may be the Republic of Macedonia's weakest area. While a part of Yugoslavia, Macedonia was a part of a fully-integrated Yugoslavian National Economy. Perhaps the best example is the textile and garment industry, which was a major part of Macedonia's economy under Yugoslavia, and remains a major (but sharply diminished) part of the Republic of Macedonia's economy. Cotton and silk were grown in Macedonia; sheep raised in Macedonia produced wool. The raw fibers were often processed elsewhere in Yugoslavia, shipped back to Macedonia as finished fiber, and transformed into yarn and fabric in Macedonia. The fabric, in turn, was processed into clothing in numerous small facilities, often in Macedonia (especially around Shtip) but also elsewhere in Yugoslavia, before being finished and sold, domestically and internationally.

Following independence, Macedonia found it had lost its integration and connections. The numerous individual sheep-herders, spinners and weavers and cutters and garment manufacturers were not directly affected, but were no longer part of an integrated whole. Sheep-herding and the textile industry sharply declined. Macedonia was left with a significant infrastructure investment in fabric manufacture, without the necessary integrated system to take advantage of it. In 1985, Macedonia accounted for 15% of the total Yugoslavian production of cloth- bigger than either Bosnia or Herzegovina. The contribution to Macedonia's GDP dropped sharply from 1990 to 2000 – apparel went from 10.5% to 6%, while textiles fell from 6.3% to 2.3%. While overall GDP also dropped, the fall of this sector was disproportionate.

"With the year 1990, the sharp decline of this industry began. The decrease was small in the production of apparel... but more significant in the textile sector... The decline in the sector apparel production lasted until 1996, stabilizing [at a lower level] in the following years, until 2000. In the same time, the decline in the production of textiles and fabrics was continuous." (Macedonian Ministry of Economy, 2005)



(Macedonian Ministry of Economy, 2005)

Similar integrated processes fed the steel production, power supply and other economic sectors, including, especially the consumer sector, which had been supplied largely either by Yugoslavian producers or by import through Yugoslavian importers and distributors. The transport sector similarly went into sharp decline, as the owners of the usual trucks suddenly became 'foreigners', or the links between producers and consumers were snapped.

As you can see, the Republic of Macedonia can serve as a prime case study of the economic disruptions associated with an abrupt change to a new state, with new borders, new alliances, and the sudden need for new links to be established. Interestingly, in 2010, Andrew Jobling of WGSN - a textiles trade research service, outlined a textile industry strategy, suggesting that the Macedonian Industry expand from 'cut, make and trim (CMT)' to 'full package production,' in order to capitalize on its relatively inexpensive production, quick turn-around times and short shipping distances to appeal to the European market. Jobling was careful to note concerns from a number of Macedonian Industry figures, who stated that it would be necessary to move slowly and cautiously in this direction. This reflects an attempt to develop a National Economy model for this sector, and appears appropriate – but was written in 2010, twenty years after independence (Jobling, 2011)! This long delay may help explain why there was such a steep decline in this sector in Macedonia and reinforces the need for and importance of an early and priority focus on developing a National Economy Strategy for any new state.

I would also like to point out that the Republic of Macedonia's public planning for economic development as well as the general expectation of Macedonians about things getting better both center around the Republic's hope of joining the European Union. Whenever that might occur, the planners for the Republic of Macedonia should realize that this event, like independence, will abruptly change Macedonia's economic borders, cutting off established linkages and opening the economy to new ones. While it appears likely to improve Macedonia's economy in the long run, it is almost certain to be at least as disruptive in the short term as independence was. How will new Macedonian enterprises, created by the absence of traditional Yugoslavian suppliers, survive the onslaught of competition from every supplier in the European Union? How long will it take Macedonian enterprises to learn how to compete in the new economic environment of the European Union? The Government of Macedonia should assume accession will involve severe, if short-term, economic disruption, and plan for it.

C. The National Identity Issue

This is another area where the Republic of Macedonia shows significant weakness, and illustrates a typical pitfall for neostates which are formed from sub-regions of larger states. Very similar problems exist currently, for example, in the Newly Independent States formed from the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Historically, we see the same issue repeatedly in the countries formed with the dissolution of the British Empire. I will call this "affiliate politics."^{ivv}

When a new state is formed from a sub-region, it typically has few or no people who are familiar with and experienced in national politics, much less international relations. The leaders of the independence movement are, in almost all cases, local leaders and local politicians. They have had no need to develop expertise in national or international affairs, because all such issues were handled in the old capital. They do, however, have both experience and expertise in local politics.

Local (affiliate) politics consists primarily of gathering a tightly-knit interest group and using the group's collective weight to campaign for allocation of resources from the central government. It is highly competitive, and in most countries, tends to be a zero-sum game. That is to say, the politics begins after the central authorities have completed a budget, and

assigned a fixed sum to each region, sector, or area. Local politics consists of getting as much of that sum for your group as possible, thereby denying it to other, and competing, groups. In local politics, especially in diverse societies, groups tend to be formed around tight identifications - ethnic groups, religious groups, age groups, and job-related groups – in which all the members are very similar, and define anyone not a member as a competitor. This system works as a way of giving each interest group a voice, because the resource allocator, the central government, is outside of all the groups, and can allocate resources according to non-group criteria.

When the sub-region suddenly becomes a state, however, these local politicians - trained to operate under local conditions - are the likeliest to be seen as the natural leaders of the new state, and need to suddenly shift to becoming national politicians, trying to do their best for every citizen of the new state. Unfortunately, it is difficult to break out of all prior experience and training, and it seldom happens. Instead, these politicians carry on as they have always done in the past, fighting to get the maximum for their own group – their affiliates - and there is no outside balance to ensure equity for people who are not members of their affiliation group.

Macedonia's Name Problem

An example of this is the Republic of Macedonia's 'name problem', which has little to do with Greece. According to the CIA's World Fact Book, the population of Macedonia (as of 2002) was 64.2% 'Macedonian', 25.2% 'Albanian', 3.9% 'Turkish', 2.7% Roma, 1.8% Serbian and 2.2% Other. According to that same publication, the name for the nationality of all citizens of the country is 'Macedonian' (CIA, 2011). Those two facts constitute the name problem. If the citizens of the country are Macedonians, and Macedonians account for only 64.2% of the population, who are or what is the rest of the population?

As outlined above, at independence Macedonia fell into affiliate politics. The largest, most powerful, and best organized ethnic group – a clear majority – naturally assumed control of the government and the country. Operating under the rules of local politics, they tried to get as big a piece of the pie for their affiliates as possible. They named the country after their affiliates; they tried to create a National Myth based on the myths of their affiliates; they made their affiliate religion (Macedonian Orthodox Christianity)

the national religion; and they tried to make anyone outside of their affiliates losers. For example, they tried to ban higher education in any language except Macedonian, and erected (Macedonian Orthodox) Christian crosses above most towns (including most 'Albanian' Muslim villages).

The authorities forgot that they were supposed to be national politicians, working for the good of every citizen of the nation, working for national equity. As a result, they faced ten years of growing discontent and finally an outbreak of real violence. With the help of and at the insistence of NATO members, who were determined that there would be no spread of post-Yugoslavian violence, the Government and major political parties representing the various players signed the Ohrid Framework Agreement which ended the most egregious elements of discrimination against minorities, but at the cost of firming up ethnic divisions and calling for future issues to be settled on the basis of ethnic proportionality. That seems to be working, despite continuing resentment on all sides, but the basic name problem persists.

Their concept of the National Myth was to make Macedonia the inheritor of the mantle of Alexander of Macedon – Alexander the Great. The main airport is named after him, massive public statues of Alexander have been and are still being erected. Some politicians even spoke of reaching out to Macedonians in neighboring countries (Greece, Bulgaria) and forging a 'Greater Macedonia.' This had two problems: it ignored the feeling of those neighboring countries (one of which, Greece, had already adopted Alexander as its own mythic hero) and it ignored the feelings of those citizens who did not (were not permitted to) call themselves Macedonians and who felt no identification with Alexander.

In fact, since Slavic Macedonians reserved that name for themselves, the authorities effectively denied 1/3 of the country's citizens any participation in the proposed National Myth. 'Macedonians' and the 'Macedonian' language are Slavic, but the authorities tended to minimize their Slavic heritage. The Ottoman Empire may have originated this myth, naming its Balkan province (and the population there) "Macedonia" because it contained the presumptive birthplace of Alexander. From whatever origination, it is of long enough standing that it is ingrained in the 'Macedonian' consciousness. This is part of what makes Greece so nervous about the Republic of Macedonia, since the same affiliate myth exists in the 'Macedonian' population of Greece (as well as, presumably, the same population in Bulgaria) because the territory, with its affiliate population, was taken from the Ottomans and split between the three

countries when the Ottoman Empire lost WW1. Unfortunately, it has no place in the affiliate myths of the remaining 35% of the population of the Republic of Macedonia. When the 'Macedonians', in power in the independent Republic of Macedonia, tried to adopt this affiliate myth as their National Myth, they only succeeded in reinforcing the sense of exclusion on the part of one-third of their population (as well as making Greece nervous).

The non-'Macedonian' population has contributed equally to this problem. The largest minority calls itself 'Albanian', uses the Albanian national flag as the symbol for its largest political party, and acts as if it was a foreign presence in the Republic, despite the fact that the large majority of Republic of Macedonia 'Albanians' have no connection with the neighboring country of Albania. Their links relate not to political or national identity, but to language – 'Albanians' in Macedonia and Albania speak largely the same language, to ethnicity – the 'Albanian' affiliate myth derives them from the semi-historic Illyrians; religion – 'Albanians' in Macedonia tend to be either Muslim or Roman Catholic, rather than Orthodox, similar to religion in Albania; or even home town – certain towns and regions are seen as 'Albanian.' (Curiously enough, when I travelled in Albania, people there tended to identify themselves by regional or affiliate affiliations. I seldom heard people call themselves "Albanians" inside Albania.) So we have the curious fact that 1/3 of the population of Macedonia do not (cannot?) call themselves Macedonians, despite what the CIA World Fact book says.

This kind of problem is not unique to Macedonia. Afghanistan (Land of the Afghans) uses the name of its largest tribe, for example. It should be noted, however, that Afghanistan has never successfully coalesced into a modern state, and its internal history has been characterized by violence. Through migration, many countries named after a particular ethnic group (e.g. Germany) now have significant populations who are citizens but not of the named ethnicity. It appears to me, however, that in-migration to an established country with an established name is of a different order of problem than the establishment and survival of a new state whose name excludes a large percentage of its founding population. Political parties inside Macedonia are essentially all affiliate (ethnic-based) at this time; all are engaged in a struggle for a bigger piece of the pie for their affiliates, and there appears to be few who are concerned about the welfare of the entire population of Macedonia. Politics continues to be local rather than national.

Because of this name problem, there appears to be little or no concern with national problems. I suggest that, to resolve this name problem, the Republic of Macedonia has at least two options: either it finds a way that essentially all its population becomes comfortable identifying themselves nationally as Macedonians with no sense of ethnic separations; or it keeps Macedonians as an affiliate/ethnic identifier for its Slavic population and finds a new name for the state which all its citizens can identify with. The former might be possible through, for example, the widespread use of hyphenation (Slavic-Macedonians, Illyrian-Macedonians, Roma-Macedonians, etc.)

The latter might be faster, might also resolve certain problems with neighbors, but appears much more difficult politically. There is certainly little or nothing being done to create a sense of national identity which encompasses the entire population of Macedonia. This lack of national identity, in turn, creates real risks for the success and even the long term survival of the Republic of Macedonia.

Conclusion

While this essay about the nature of neostates and the common problems they face in their struggle for survival is not definitive, it appears from examining the European Union and the Republic of Macedonia, that the model contains at least some validity. Further research needs to be undertaken to determine whether the three identified issues are the most important of the issues facing neostates, or merely among the most important. Further research in neostates would determine how much resolution of those three issues contributes to long term survival. Obviously, each new state faces problems that are unique – due to geographic, historical, resource, population and other issues – but as this paper makes clear, these three issues are ones that must be dealt with in all neostates. This paper has not attempted to perform that research, nor has it proposed worked-out policy options for those two neostates to adopt to resolve these issues. If this paper has succeeded in stimulating thought among students of international relations, and perhaps policy discussion among those interested in the survival of those two exemplar neostates – the European Union and Macedonia – it has succeeded in its purpose.

Notes

ⁱNote well that this term – neostates – is used only in international relations terms. It has nothing to do with geo-political legal status (i.e. the two examples cited have different legal status: the EU is legally not a state; Macedonia is legally a state, but I cite both as neostates), nor does it relate to recognition by others. The term *neostates*, as defined in this paper, refers to the *perception* of the “state” on the part of the inhabitants of the territory of the state and of its near neighbors. The term is taken, deliberately, from the medical term ‘neonatal.’ Technically, neonatal means nothing more than ‘newborn’, but most newborn babies are sent to the nursery, while any newborn infant sent to the neonatal ward can be assumed to have issues which threaten its survival. Similarly, some newborn states (e.g. Canada or the Philippines, emerging from colonial status, are lusty new states, while others may be considered neostates and considered with some concern.)

ⁱⁱ Note that this issue is sharply distinct from the issue of “failed states.” The literature on failed states is voluminous, but in every instance assumes a mature state which, because of changed circumstances, can *no longer* function as a state. Scholars in each case search for the cause of failure, and it tends to be unique to each case. These include cases of foreign conquest, civil war, and – at least historically – cases of disease, drought, or other disasters which undercut the state. If the model of *neostates* becomes accepted, some of those case histories may need to be re-written, because some so-called *failed states* may in fact be *neostates* which never matured.

ⁱⁱⁱMcGaffey, David. This is perhaps the most common grumble this author has heard in the Republic of Macedonia among citizens old enough to have been adults under Tito. They typically hasten to explain that Yugoslavia after Tito was the worst possible alternative and that Macedonia is better off independent, but still “(certain) things were easier under Tito.”

^{iv} This is, in the international relations literature, generally termed “tribal politics”, but I prefer the term ‘affiliate’ because of certain specific negative connotations in Macedonia. The following footnote provides further definition. The phenomenon is found in every country and in every political system. It appears to function well and thrive in centralized, authoritarian systems, but is arguably always disruptive (though common) in democratic representative systems. An ‘affiliate’ politician believes his occupational purpose is to *solely* benefit his affiliate group (whether ethnic, regional, occupational, religious or other) regardless of the effect on the state as a whole. Unless there is at minimum a substantial percentage of politicians working to ensure the benefit of the whole state, affiliate politicians will tend to tear the state apart.

^vThe phenomenon of tribal politics in the United States, while often considered as a term that relates only to Native Americans, is actually a concept that applies to a number of political groups within the country. Here are some basic facts about tribal politics and how this idea is found in many different parts of United States culture. At its roots, tribal politics is about the identity of a given group that is based on common ethnic or cultural factors that are thought to coalesce the group into a functioning political unit. While there may be some disagreement within the group, ultimately all those concerned rally behind a common purpose, even if there is some difference of opinion on how to express that common purpose. The concept is based on the model of Indian tribes, and the way that an Indian tribe would be governed by tribal leaders, even in the setting of a contained society, such as on Indian reservations today. The model goes on to make use of the decision making process that is developed among those on the reservation, what powers are given to central tribal councils, and how order is maintained within the group. It has been noted that many groups within our wider culture employ a similar model in order to

function as a subset of our society. As an example, people of the same religion may form a group in which tribal politics will be employed to give direction and a common sense of purpose to like-minded persons. Individuals will emerge within the group who are empowered to make statements that are considered to represent the entire body. In turn, the group will establish mechanisms that allow for the confirmation of orthodoxy among all group members, as a way to ensure that order is maintained. This will of course require the employment of skills to gain the support of the majority, as well as talents to keep the support once it is given. Thus, tribal politics come into play within this religion-based subgroup. Factors other than religion can also be the basis for tribal unity and thus employ tribal politics in order to maintain the status quo. Political party affiliations may be used as a means of identifying with a given group, and may demand strong adherence to basic rules and codes of conduct, just as in the religion model. Ethnic background can also be a powerful foundation for the formation of a tribe, with tribal politics providing the motivation to function as a unified front. While the formation of groups or tribes has many advantages, such as clear communication and the establishment of traditions that are expected to be observed, tribal politics can also have a negative side as well. At times, tribal politics may work well for the subgroup, but act as a barrier between the various subgroups. Without the ability to communicate and learn from one another, a subgroup will continue to grow inward and eventually stagnate. The ideal balance is when tribal politics can allow persons of like mind or background to have a unified voice, but not one that is heard to the exclusion of the voices of other tribes. When the concerns of all can be heard, the opportunity for equality exists, even if it remains a goal rather than a reality.

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