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**TOWARD COMPREHENSIVE
PEACE IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE
CONFLICT PREVENTION IN THE SOUTH BALKANS**

REPORT OF THE SOUTH BALKANS WORKING GROUP
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latter amounted to the only "precondition" he attached to such talks, but it is a difficult one to surmount in view of Serbian objections.

The positions expressed by Albanian political leaders in Tirana are consistent with those expressed by this Kosovar leader, as well as the more pragmatic unofficial views expressed in Belgrade. They also are consistent with the views of Macedonian government officials and of more pragmatic Macedonian and ethnic Albanian political leaders. All these views converge around the idea of negotiating a short-term *modus vivendi* in Kosovo consisting of some form of autonomy that could be described as "1974 plus." This *modus vivendi* would permit the conduct of longer-term negotiations over a more lasting solution to the Kosovo question. An interim solution within the framework of the FRY would contribute to reducing tensions in Macedonia. Encouragement and support from the political leadership of Albania for negotiations within the frameworks of the FRY and the existing Macedonian state would make a significant contribution to strengthening the position of ethnic Albanian leaders in Kosovo and Macedonia who embark on such a strategy and help protect them against the inevitable attacks of more extreme nationalists within their own communities.

— APPENDIX A —

OBSERVING THE OBSERVERS

LANGUAGE, ETHNICITY, AND POWER IN THE 1994 MACEDONIAN CENSUS AND BEYOND

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In Sarajevo, before the Yugoslav war, there was a museum at one end of the bridge where Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated.¹ Among the displays at this museum was a political cartoon from the period shortly before the outbreak of the Great War. The cartoon shows a disorderly circle of powder kegs, some with long, dangling fuses, others on their sides with gunpowder spilling out. In the center of the circle formed by these powder kegs are a few thin, ill-shaven, dark-mustachioed men in national costumes of the Balkan nations looking around bewildered. Standing outside the circle, eagerly extending lit matches to them, are plump, pale, well-groomed men in the West European formal dress of the Great Powers. Thus was the concept of "Balkan powder keg" understood in former Yugoslavia.² There is a certain irony in the image of the Balkans in the center and the Great Powers at the periphery, since in fact precisely the opposite is and has been the case in virtually every sphere of

relations between southeastern Europe and the rest of that continent. And Macedonia became and remains a potential center of conflict because it is on the periphery of all its neighbors, who are themselves on the periphery of Europe.³ During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, national movements in Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia all crystallized in such a way that Macedonia was (and is) at the edge of their overlapping claims. One way that conflict has been expressed is through rival census claims.

In comparison to the current position of Albania and Kosovo, the Republic of Macedonia is both central and liminal. Unlike Kosovo with its shadow government and parallel education system, Macedonia meets the normal requirements for an independent country, but unlike Albania with its unequivocal international status and membership in the United Nations under its own name, Macedonia does not enjoy the normal recognition of an independent European state insofar as only some countries have recognized it under its own constitutional name, while others use the temporary United Nations term "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)." Kosovo can be viewed as a region where an ethnolinguistic Serbian minority dominates the Albanian majority; Albania is a country ruled by its ethnolinguistic majority.⁴ But in Macedonia, which has foreign troops stationed inside its borders (the U.S. and Nordic battalions of the United Nations Preventive Deployment in Macedonia), the very legitimacy of the identity of the majority ethnolinguistic group, that is, the Macedonians, is still subjected to equivocation, both purposeful and naive.⁵ Moreover, some actors would dispute whether the Macedonians constitute a majority, or even a plurality, in the Republic of Macedonia. Although in many respects the situation of Albanian majorities in both Albania and Kosovo can be viewed as economically or politically worse than the situation of the Albanian minority in Macedonia, it is Macedonia that is arguably the most unstable of the three, the country on which Albanian and Kosovar attention is focused. One expression of the instability in Macedonia is the persistence of conflicting population figures.

CENSUSES: THE POLITICS OF COUNTING

The counting of populations has been potentially fraught with political tension for millennia. The Book of Numbers (I:2-3) describes a census for the purpose of preparing for war, and the census mentioned in the Gospel of Luke (II:1-5) was quite probably connected with Roman efforts

at consolidating hegemony in what was then still the kingdom (but later the province) of Judea.⁶ From June 21 until mid-July 1994, under intense internal and external political pressure, an extraordinary census took place in the Republic of Macedonia—the ordinary census having been conducted in 1991, when the republic was still "socialist" and a part of what is now former Yugoslavia. The 1994 census was not funded by the government of the country, as is ordinarily the case with modern censuses in sovereign states, but by international organizations—the Council of Europe (CE), which at that time still refused to admit the Republic of Macedonia, and the European Union (EU), whose policies toward Macedonia have often been dominated by Greece. The extraordinary census of 1994 thus provides an opportunity to view more broadly both the complexity of the Macedonian scene and the role of European mediation.⁷ The 1994 Macedonian census raises fundamental issues of which the more recent conflicts such as those over education and language use at the republic level are continuations, and it is thus worthy of a more detailed account as a historical moment around which national and international tensions crystallized. Whatever the developments in Macedonia's future, the 1994 census is one of the key links in the chain of events leading to it. In this chapter, I examine the 1994 Macedonian census both as an event in itself, and as a part of the larger context of quests for identity and hegemony in the Balkans. In so doing, I hope to shed light not only on specific and general questions connected with the concepts of ethnic, linguistic, and religious identity, but also on the relationship of the supranational to the national, of the central to the marginal, and of "Europe" to the land mass west of the Urals and north of the Mediterranean. I suggest that the Western Powers, which to a great extent determine (and fund) the policies of the those actors designated as the international community, have continued to marginalize Macedonia by imposing their own constructs. These efforts have not contributed to the stabilization of Macedonia.

I was working in summer 1994 as a senior policy and political analyst covering Macedonia for the analysis and assessment unit organized by Susan Woodward for Yasushi Akashi, the Special Representative of the Secretary General, attached to the United Nations Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) stationed in former Yugoslavia. In connection with these duties, I arranged to be authorized as an outside observer of the extraordinary 1994 census in my capacity as a member of an international organization in accordance with article 33 of the census law. Although I was not officially connected with any of the census's funding organizations, the majority of their representatives

were quite willing to allow me to accompany them on their duties and attend their meetings. As a result, I was able to observe both the process of the census and the European observers who were officially observing it.

Questions of ethnic identity, citizenship, language rights, and the interrelationships of the concepts of language, religion, and "nationality" were hotly contested in Macedonia. The census was therefore a clearly political event rather than the statistical exercise officials claimed it was. And this was not the first time that Macedonian census figures have been the subject of conflict concerning these factors. At the beginning of this century, as at the end, economic and political structures in the Balkans were unstable or in transition, wars were being fought, interethnic tensions were high, and Macedonia was the object of conflicting claims supported in part by conflicting census figures. Table A.1 displays examples of the figures that were used to bolster these claims to Macedonia at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, as Ottoman power waned and the small states of southeastern Europe sought to consolidate and expand their respective hegemonies.

Although Dako in his book significantly entitled *Albania: The Master Key to the Near East* cites similar figures and refers to the obvious discrepancies as "amusing," these discrepancies are not entirely arbitrary.⁸ Rather, at least to some extent, different authors of articles and books making nationalist arguments have selected criteria that would support their points of view.

In the case of Greek and Turkish authors, the choice was based on religion, schooling, or both. Any member of the Greek Orthodox Church, or, after 1870, any Patriarchist, as well as anyone who went to a Greek school (and because schooling was controlled by religion, Macedonian Christians were left with little choice until the mid-nineteenth century) was counted by the Greeks as a Greek. This practice gave rise to expressions such as "slavophone Greek" and "albanophone Greek."⁹ The complete absence of Albanians from the Greek figures is explained by their being counted as Turks, Greeks, or miscellaneous on the basis of religion (Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic).¹⁰

Because the Serbian Orthodox Church and Serbian schools remained relatively weak except in parts of the north and west of Macedonia, Serbian authors selected specific isoglosses, that is, dialect boundaries based on individual linguistic features, to justify ethnic and therefore territorial claims, as illustrated in Table A.2 (see page 86) and Figure A.1 (see page 86).¹¹

TABLE A.1¹
CONFLICTING CENSUS FIGURES FOR MACEDONIA 1889-1905

ETHNIC GROUP	BULGARIAN	%	SERBIAN	%	GREEK	%	TURKISH	%
Bulgarians	1,181,336	52.31	57,600	2.01	332,162	19.26	896,497	30.80
Serbians	700	0.03	2,048,320	71.35	0	0.00	100,000	3.40
Greeks	228,702	10.13	201,140	7.01	652,795	37.85	307,000	10.60
Albanians	128,711	5.70	165,620	5.77	0	0.00	0	0.00
Turks	499,204	22.11	231,400	8.06	634,017	36.76	1,508,507	51.80 ²
Others	219,571	9.72	166,540	13.86	105,844	6.13	99,000	3.40
TOTAL	2,258,224	100.00	2,870,620	100.00	1,724,818	100.00	2,911,004	100.00

¹The Bulgarian figures are from 1900, the Serbian from 1889, and the Greek from 1904. These are cited together in Baron d'Estournelles de Constant et al., *Report of the International Commission to Inquire into the Causes and Conduct of the Balkan Wars*, Division of Intercourse and Education, Publication no. 4, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1914 (reprinted 1993 as *The Other Balkan Wars with an introduction by George Kennan*), pp. 28-30, and represent those of the three states that were independent, had territorial claims to Macedonia, and fought one another over those claims in the Second Balkan War in 1913. I have added a Turkish account of the 1905 Ottoman census figures for comparison (Osman Yavuz Saral, *Kayberîmiz Rumeli* [Istanbul: Bogazici, 1975], p. 152.). The Greek figures omit the sanđak of Skopje (Usküp, vilayet of Kosovo [spuri-ously hellenized as Kossyphopëdon in Cleanthes Nicolaidès, *La Macédoine* (Berlin: Stühr, 1899), p. 25, while the Bulgarian figures include the kaza of Tetovo [Kalkan-delen, sanđak of Prizren, vilayet of Kosovo] and the kazas of Debar [Dibre-i bala] and Reka [Rikkalar/Zir Nanice] in the sanđaks of the vilayets of Salonika and Bitola/Monasitir belonging to geographic Macedonia. For ease of comparison, I have added percentages. The selection from d'Estournelles de Constant was chosen because it is both typical of the discrepancies and because the republication of this report in 1993 has given it greater currency in the present situation. The category "Other" includes "Wallachians" (i.e., Romance-speakers now known as Vlachs and including Arumanians and Megleno-Romanians), Jews, Gypsies (modern Roms or Roma), "Miscellaneous" (Circassians, Armenians, etc.). For a Greek view of the period that refers to other sources, see Christopher J. Christides, *The Macedonian Camouflage in the Light of Facts and Figures* (Athens: Hellenic Publishing Co., 1949), pp. 32-33. See also Stephen Clissold, *A Short History of Yugoslavia: From Early Times to 1966* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 136 for additional viewpoints. For figures relating to the postwar period, see Tošo Popovski, *Makedonskata nacionalna mal-cinstvo vo Bugarija, Građa i Albanija* (Skopje: Makedonska kniga, 1981), pp. 187, 192-93, 247.

²Saral does not distinguish Turks from Albanians but writes: "Muslim (the majority Turkish, the minority Albanian)." The only other ethnic group listed in Saral's figures (included here as "Other" for ease of comparison) is "Wallachian" (p. 152).

TABLE A.2
DIFFERING ISOGLOSSES USED TO SUPPORT CONFLICTING TERRITORIAL CLAIMS
[1] THE REFLEX OF COMMON SLAVIC *tj **[2] THE PRESENCE OF A DEFINITE ARTICLE**

	[1] SHOULDERS	[2] WOMAN/THE WOMAN
Serbian	pléći	žena
Macedonian	pleki	žena/ženata
Bulgarian	plešti	žena/ženata

Note: The forms cited in the table are those used in the modern standard languages. The dialectal situation is considerably more complicated but is irrelevant to the basic point being illustrated.

FIGURE A.1
MAP SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATIONS OF ISOGLOSSES [1] AND [2]



The isogloss illustrated by column one—the reflex of Common Slavic *tj, where Serbian and Macedonian have a single palatal stop or affricate rather than a combination of palatal fricative plus affricate or stop—was used by Belić to justify Serbian claims to virtually all of northern and central Macedonia.¹² Belić, citing Meillet, writes that the Macedonian dialects are neither Serbian nor Bulgarian and that politics will determine the linguistic fate of Macedonia. He then goes on to claim, however, on the basis of this single isogloss, that the north and central Macedonian dialects are basically Serbian while the south is basically Bulgarian. Belić ridicules Bulgarian scholars who were claiming all of Macedonia as well as Southern Serbian as Bulgarian dialects by suggesting that his opinion coincided with that of impartial European scholarship, that is, his interpretation of Meillet.¹³ He declared that, because Serbia had contact with the West while Bulgaria “slept deeply under the Turkish yoke,” the resulting difference in intellectual development could not easily be overcome. The genuinely impartial French scholar Vaillant, however, observes that Belić’s argument is based on one phonetic trait and that most Slavists agree that Macedonian is actually a part of a Macedo-Bulgarian group that has been subjected to the prolonged influence of Serbian.¹⁴ He lists numerous phonological traits that link Macedonian with Bulgarian rather than with Serbian.¹⁵ Vaillant concludes that Macedonian is not a dialect of Bulgarian but deserves a separate place in the Macedo-Bulgarian group.¹⁶ It is important to note that Vaillant wrote six years before the political recognition of Macedonian as an independent language.

At the same time, choosing a feature such as the presence of the postposed definite article—as in the second column of Table A.2—helped justify Bulgarian territorial claims to the Timok-Morava valley in southern Serbia as well as to Macedonia.¹⁷ Bulgarian figures assumed that virtually any Slav in Macedonia was Bulgarian; the numbers were also inflated by assuming higher fertility and incidence of extended families for Slavs than for other groups.¹⁸ Thus, for example, if a given village had fifty Albanian houses and forty Slavic houses, by counting five members per Albanian household and seven members per Slavic household based on the foregoing assumption, we end up with a Slavic majority despite the smaller number of houses: 280 Slavs as opposed to 250 Albanians. This is an early example of how important statistical and demographic assumptions underlying counting procedures can be for the outcome of censuses; such assumptions continue to be characteristic of censuses to this day.

Notably absent from these statistics are any figures representing the views of ethnic Macedonians themselves.¹⁹ In general, there is very little evidence of Macedonian views in the published literature except occasional moments.²⁰ As Rossos makes abundantly clear, the suppression of Macedonian ethnic identity in all its manifestations was in the interests not only of all the small powers that laid claim to the territory, but also of the great powers that supported the various small powers and that ultimately had a stake in maintaining the partition of Macedonia as a viable solution for peace.²¹ Brown discusses heretofore untapped archival sources outside the Balkans that attest both to the existence of a separate sense of Macedonian nationality at the beginning of this century and to attempts to dismiss it.²² In certain respects that situation is being replicated today, and population figures are again being used to bolster conflicting claims ranging from minority rights to irredentism. In particular, the technique of privileging religion over language as the basis of identity, which was used by both Turks and Greeks (and later Bulgarians and Serbs) to hegemonize and assimilate various populations in Macedonia, is again being brought into play, as will be seen below.

THE 1991 YUGOSLAV CENSUS IN MACEDONIA

During April 1–15, 1991, under conditions of impending political disintegration, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia conducted its last census. Before the end of that year, while the census data were still being processed, war broke out in former Yugoslavia, and the Republic of Macedonia subsequently declared independence. The census itself was carried out in an atmosphere of distrust and animosity. Led by the two largest Albanian-identified political parties in Macedonia, the Party for Democratic Prosperity (PPD) and the smaller but more vocal and radical People's Democratic Party (PDP), the majority of Albanians in Macedonia (and elsewhere in Yugoslavia) boycotted the 1991 census, claiming that they would be purposefully undercounted.

The Party for Democratic Prosperity was founded on April 15, 1990, in Tetovo, now a predominantly Albanian town with close historical and communication links to Kosovo, which is just on the other side of Mount Šar.²³ Branches of the PPD continued to be founded in various towns throughout western Macedonia during that year. The PPD proclaimed protection of minority rights as its major goal, and indeed in the 1990 local elections, seven Turks and seven Muslims

(presumably Slavic-speaking) were elected to local councils on its ticket.²⁴ Nonetheless, both the PPD and the PDP are basically Albanian rights parties that advocate treating Albanians not as a minority but as a "constitutive nation" in Macedonia.²⁵ The boycott was first called for by the Peoples Democratic Party and was observed in the communes (*opštini*) of Debar, Gostivar, Kičevo, Kumanovo, Ohrid, Skopje, Struga, Tetovo, and Titov Veles.²⁶ The bureau of statistics estimated the data for Albanians in the boycotted communes by means of statistical projections utilizing the data from the 1981 census, natural growth of the population during the intercensus period, migration, and other statistical data.²⁷ The preliminary results were published in November 1991. Table A.3 (see pages 90–91) gives comparative statistics for all the post-war censuses conducted in the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.²⁸ The categories "Egyptian" and "Bosniac" represent new sociopolitical realities.²⁹

Before the preliminary figures for the 1991 census were published, Albanian political actors began an international media campaign declaring not merely that they had been miscounted, but that in fact Albanians constituted about 40 percent of the population of Macedonia, that is 700,000 to 800,000 people.³⁰ Albanian political actors were supported in their claim by Greece, which denies the existence of a Macedonian language and nationality altogether, particularly on its own territory.³¹ Representatives of other groups also cited larger statistics: Serbs claimed up to 300,000, Turks up to 200,000, Roms 200,000, Greeks 250,000, and Ćupci, Bulgarians, and Vlachs about 30,000 each.³² Added together, these claims surpassed the total number of inhabitants of Macedonia, even without counting Macedonians. These claims clearly sacrificed statistical accuracy to an effort to gain political power and hegemony.

The Albanian public relations effort was successful. Within a year of the publication of the preliminary results of the 1991 Yugoslav census, Geert-Hinrich Ahrens, a German diplomat with the rank of ambassador and head of the Working Group for Human Rights and Minorities within the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia (ICFY), called for an extraordinary census in Macedonia to be supervised by the "international community."³³ Ambassador Ahrens made two proposals: One involved only those areas with large Albanian populations, the other concerned the entire country. Such a pair of proposals had many implications and repercussions. The first proposal focused on the Albanians to the exclusion of all the other minorities of Macedonia, which, according to the 1991 census made up 14.37 percent of the

TABLE A.3

TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES FOR DECLARED NATIONALITY (NARODNOST) IN ALL POST-WORLD WAR II CENSUSES CONDUCTED IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

CENSUS TOTAL BY YEAR, NUMBER, AND PERCENTAGE (ROUNDED UPWARD WHERE NECESSARY)

DECLARED NATIONALITY (narodnost)	1948	%	1953	%	1961	%	1971	%	1981	%	1991	%	1994 ¹	%
Macedonians	789,548	68.5	860,699	66.0	1,000,854	71.2	1,142,375	69.3	1,279,323	67.0	1,328,187	65.3	1,288,330	66.5
Albanians	197,389	17.1	162,524	12.4	183,108	13.0	279,871	17.0	377,208	19.8	441,987	21.7	442,914	22.9
Turks	95,940	8.3	203,938	15.6	131,481	9.4	108,552	6.6	86,591	4.5	77,080	3.8	77,252	4.0
Roms ²	19,500	1.7	20,462	1.6	20,606	1.5	24,505	1.5	43,125	2.3	52,103	2.6	43,732	2.3
Vlahs	9,511	0.8	8,668	0.6	8,046	0.6	7,190	0.6	6,384	0.3	7,764	0.4	8,467	0.4
Serbs	29,721	2.6	35,112	2.7	42,728	3.0	46,465	2.8	44,468	2.3	42,775	2.1	39,260	2.0
Muslims	1,560	0.1	1,591	0.1	3,002	0.2	1,248	0.1	39,513	2.1	31,356	1.5	15,315	0.8
Bulgarians	889	0.1	920	0.1	3,087	0.2	3,334	0.2	1,980	0.1	1,370	0.0	1,547	0.1
Greeks	-	-	848	0.1	836	0.1	536	0.0	707	0.1	474	0.0	349	0.0
Egyptian	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,307	0.2	3,169	0.2
Bosniac	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,244	0.4
Yugoslav	-	-	-	-	1,260	0.1	3,652	0.2	14,225	0.7	15,703	0.8	595 ³	0.0
Other ⁴	8,928	0.8	9,752	0.8	10,995	0.7	29,580	1.7	15,612	0.8	31,858	1.6	8,703	0.4
Total	1,152,986	100	1,304,514	100	1,406,003	100	1,647,308	100	1,909,136	100	2,033,964	100	1,936,877	100

Sources: Svetlana Antonovska et al., *Broj i struktura na naselenieto vo Republika Makedonija po opštini i nacionalna pripadnost: Sostojba 31.03.1991 godina* (Skopje: Republički zavod za statistika, 1991); *Statistički godišnik na Republika Makedonija 1993* (Skopje: Republički Zavod za statistika, 1994); *Popis '94: Podatoci za segasnost i idinata. prvi rezultati. Soopštenie 1, Soopštenie 2* (Skopje: Republički Zavod za statistika, 1994); Ibrahim Latifc et al., *Vitalna, etnička i migraciona obeležja. Popis stanovništva 1961* (Belgrade: Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1970); Boro Pekeviski et al., *Naselenie po narodnost vo SR Makedonija. Popis na naselenie i stanovite, 1971 god* (Skopje: Republički zavod za statistika, 1973); *Stanovišvo po narodost (knj. 9): Konacni rezultati popisa stanovništva od 15 marta 1948 godine* (Belgrade: Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1954); *Statistički bilten broj 1295. Popis stanovništva domaćinstva i stanova u 1981 godini: Nacionalni sastav stanovništva po opštinama* (Belgrade: Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1981).

1. According to Dr. Svetlana Antonovska (personal communication, May 25, 1995), director of the Republic Bureau of Statistics, the lower figures for some nationalities in 1994 versus 1991 is due to the fact that citizens living abroad for more than one year were included in the 1991 census, whereas in the 1994 census—in accordance with international norms—only those citizens living abroad for one year or less were counted. The figures cited for 1994 are based on preliminary results available as of this writing (April 1996). The Republic Bureau of Statistics was scheduled to meet with the Group of Experts from June 18 to June 15, 1996 to produce the final result, which will be published subsequently.

2. The predominantly Romani-speaking ethnic group known as *Gypsies* in English and *Cigani* in Macedonian (similar ethnonyms are used in most of the languages of Central and Eastern Europe) is now referred to by the native ethnonym *Rom* (singular) in scholarly literature as well as official documents in many countries. (The term was official in the 1971 Macedonian census.) Although in languages other than English this form has been unhesitatingly adapted to the grammar of the language in which it is used (for example, in Macedonian the plural of *Rom* is *Romi*), considerable inconsistency has arisen in English usage. Thus as the plural of *Rom* some scholars and other serious writers use the Romani form *Roma*, others adapt the word to English morphology and write *Roms*, others use a pluralized adjective *Romanies*, and some treat the noun as uninflected, using *Rom* for both singular and plural. I have argued elsewhere (Freidman and Hancock, 1995) that just as in English the plural of *Turk* is *Turks* and not *Turkler*, so the plural of *Rom* should be *Roms* and not *Roma*. I would argue that the form *Roma* exoticizes and marginalizes rather than emphasizes the fact that the group in question is an ethnic group just as are *Turks*, *Magyars* (not *Magyarok*), and so forth (to be sure, a unique ethnic group, but still an ethnic group). The usage in other European languages supports this view.

3. This figure includes those who declared "Yugoslav" as well as nationalities not counted separately in the census, mostly from Africa, East Asia, and the Middle East (MIC, January 5, 1995).

4. Yugoslav and Macedonian censuses distinguished up to 34 nationality categories as well as several other types including those who declared a regional identity and those who did not declare a nationality. For the sake of conciseness, I have grouped all the smaller categories, none of which are relevant for this paper, under the designation "Other." This designation includes the following specified groups: Austrian, Belgian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Jewish, Montenegrin, Norwegian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Rsyn, Slovak, Slovenian, Swiss, Swedish, and Ukrainian. This category also includes intellectuals who protested the use of nationality as a classification by making facetious declarations, among which the most popular were "lightbulb" and "refrigerator" (personal communication, Robert Hayden, University of Pittsburgh).

population. It gave implicit legitimacy to Albanian claims for special treatment, in addition to legitimizing Albanian politicians' right to claim discrimination and to demand a recount, as it were. At the same time, the proposals helped reify as a Macedonian-Albanian conflict tensions that had been building since the riots in Kosovo in 1981 but that were not an inherent feature of Macedonian life at all periods.

THE 1994 "EUROPEAN" CENSUS IN MACEDONIA

Ahrens' announcement of November 1992 was followed by nineteen months of uninterrupted dispute. First there was an intense controversy over whether or not to hold the census.³⁴ This agreed upon, there followed prolonged debate over the wording of the census law, which was eventually passed with the support of the Albanian members of parliament. One of the chief issues was language use in the census, and article 35 of the census law provided for bilingual forms in Albanian, Turkish, Romani, Vlah, and Serbian in addition to Macedonian.³⁵ Finally, just as the census was actually beginning, there were serious behind-the-scenes negotiations with the Albanian members of parliament, who threatened to call for a boycott, despite the presence of observers from the International Census Observation Mission (ICOM) and the expense incurred by the European organizations.

The overseers of the census appointed by the European organizations were officially called the Group of Experts.³⁶ Their fields of expertise, however, did not include knowledge pertaining to Macedonia. Rather they were, for the most part, statisticians and bureaucrats without previous Balkan experience.³⁷ Many members of the ICOM team, including some of the highest ranking, told me that they were quite surprised when they discovered that they were embroiled in highly charged political issues, as opposed to a mechanical statistical exercise, and they expressed confusion and dismay over the complex ethnic situation they encountered. In view of the origins of the 1994 Macedonian census described above as well as explicit statements by Albanian political actors, the event was clearly linked to a political issue, namely the claim of Albanian politicians for special (nonminority) status for Albanians within Macedonia based on their large numbers.³⁸ The Group of Experts, however, attempted to avoid the impression that it was involving itself in the internal political affairs of a sovereign state by publicly declaring that the census was merely a statistical exercise. It can be argued that by labeling the leadership of ICOM the "Group of

Experts" while avoiding the direct involvement of anyone familiar with Macedonia, the CE was attempting to lay claim to adjudicating authority in Macedonian internal affairs and at the same time project an image of objectivity.³⁹

The lack of knowledge of Macedonia on the part of the CE and ICOM was given symbolic representation in the orientation packet for members of the ICOM team. The only item relating to the country itself rather than ICOM's mission in it, was a chart listing Cyrillic printed and cursive letters with the names of the letters in Cyrillic and Latin orthography and labeled simply "L'alphabet." The very lack of a qualifying adjective in a sense erases Macedonian from the observer's view, and in fact the chart was not a guide to Macedonian Cyrillic, but a table of Russian Cyrillic with the last six letters blanked out. Although the last six letters of Russian Cyrillic do not occur in Macedonian, seven other letters that are used in Macedonian Cyrillic but not in Russian were missing from the chart.⁴⁰ To compound the effect, the names of the Russian Cyrillic letters utilize a vowel whose letter comes at the end of the alphabet, so the names of the letters used a symbol that was not given in the list of letters. This chart not only embodied the lack of concern with which the CE and ICOM approached the Macedonian context in which it presumed to operate, but also gave false information to the purveyors of expert knowledge. In focusing on the Albanian question, ICOM lost sight of the Macedonian one.

Similarly, the privileging of Albanian claims over all others was symbolically represented on the ICOM observers' control forms for censused households.⁴¹ Although the Macedonian control forms had sections for indicating the six ethnic affiliations defined by the languages of the census forms, as did the ICOM control form on enumerators, the ICOM household control form specified only Macedonian and Albanian, the remainder being subsumed under "Others." The difference in these forms gave written representation to the different conceptions of ICOM and the Macedonian government concerning the purpose of the census.

On the first day of the census, June 21, 1994, I attended a press conference given by Ambassador Ahrens of ICFY, Werner Haug, chairman of the Group of Experts, and Robin Guthrie, director of Social and Economic Affairs, Council of Europe. In addition to insisting to those assembled that the census was a statistical exercise with no political dimension, the expert team focused on Albanian objections to question 6 on form p-1, citizenship, for which the four possible answers were Macedonian, alien, person without citizenship, and pending status

(*vo tek*). The chief problem was that, despite assurances to the contrary, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVR) had not succeeded in distributing all citizenship documents by the time the census began. In Eastern Macedonia that was not particularly important. Thus, for example, in Radoviš the local government actually used census enumerators to help distribute citizenship documents. Although the problems of document distribution occurred throughout Macedonia, Albanians maintained that a disproportionately high number of qualified Albanians were without citizenship documents. This problem was complicated by the number of Albanians who had fled oppression in Kosovo but whose status in Macedonia was unregulated. Although a compromise solution was eventually reached, a special MVR form tabulating citizenship was added on July 2 in three group areas, and the ICOM mission was upset at this irregularity.⁴²

After the press conference, I attended a separate meeting between members of the Group of Experts and a group of PPD members headed by Abdurahman Aliti, who later became president of the PPD. The topic was the threatened last-minute boycott mentioned above. Guthrie spoke in very strong terms to Aliti about the need for his party to cooperate with the census. Aliti unhappily noted that in reality the census did indeed have a political dimension, and that if he or his party openly called for support of the census they would be wiped off the political map. (Although Aliti did not state who would do this, the PDP or radicals in the PPD would have been the only logical candidates.) He said that the best his party could do was promise not to actually call for a boycott, but neither would they call for support of the census. Aliti made it clear that he understood the situation and wanted to see the census work, but he stated that he also saw no point in allowing radicals to destroy his political career. I then accompanied the experts to their offices at the Bureau of Statistics, where the citizenship question was again the main order of business. Because no one on the ICOM team knew either Macedonian or Albanian, they were at a disadvantage when a question of the wording of the rules concerning the citizenship question arose, and the only rule book available was in Macedonian. Members of ICOM also told me that they began their mission with no idea of its political implications or the tremendous ethnic and cultural complexity of the region. They thought they were going to be overseeing the technical aspects of a statistical exercise.

At the end of that first day, the Group of Experts' discussion about the complications they had encountered also revealed their view of Macedonia as something other than European. One member of the

group joked that they should conduct the census like the one 2,000 years ago, when everyone went to his or her native village, a reference to the Gospel of Luke mentioned at the beginning of this paper. The unintended irony of her comment was that this was precisely what the Macedonians would have wanted and what the Albanians would have feared, because an indeterminate number of Albanians had come to Macedonia from Kosovo and elsewhere since World War II, especially since the Kosovo uprising of 1981. The citizenship law set the term of residence at fifteen years, which had the effect of excluding the most recent wave of Albanian immigration. During the debate over this law, Macedonian nationalist politicians advocated a term of thirty years; Albanian politicians pressed for five years. The longer term would have excluded the majority of Albanians who had come to Macedonia from Kosovo.⁴³ Another member of the team, speaking in French, described how the census was conducted in Turkey, where there was a curfew (in French, *couvre-feu*), requiring everyone to stay indoors and await the census takers under penalty of a heavy fine. A British member of the team misunderstood the French and thought the Turks burned villages during their census. In both the joke and the misunderstanding, the Balkans in general and Macedonia in particular emerge as a primitive "other," backward or barbaric.

It was at the beginning of another meeting between the Group of Experts and Albanian political leaders the following morning that I asked Ambassador Ahrens if it might not be the case that ethnic tensions were in fact exacerbated by internationalizing Albanian claims in Macedonia via the CE/ICFY-sponsored census.⁴⁴ Dr. Ahrens responded that he thought the international intervention was beneficial and cited as evidence the fact that as soon as the CE agreed to fund the census, Albanian claims dropped immediately from 40 percent to 30 percent. Indeed, during the negotiations that I attended, at which Albanian politicians were expressing particular misgivings over the issue of citizenship, the figure they cited as being the minimum below which they would claim falsification was 25 percent. I should note that even before the first results were released, the percentage claimed had jumped, and after the first results were published, and despite ICOM approval, the figure 40 percent was again being cited (Albanian prime minister Alexander Meksi, for example, reportedly cited the figure 800,000).⁴⁵

At times ICOM approached the Macedonian government with a seriously distrustful, almost adversarial attitude. Because the 1994 census was being conducted as a result of the Albanian boycott of the 1991

census, there was a tendency at ICOM to view Albanian claims as based in fact rather than raising an unresolved question. Thus ICOM sometimes viewed the Macedonian government as guilty unless proven innocent. Censuses conducted by sovereign states are not normally overseen by other organizations, while censuses in colonies are supervised by their colonial rulers. The fact that the 1994 census in the Republic of Macedonia was conducted under pressure from and with funding from external organizations put that country in an ambiguous position. On the one hand, the external funding and oversight by individuals who were not citizens of Macedonia put the country in a position similar to that of a nonsovereign entity. On the other hand, Macedonia was treated as a sovereign state engaged in discriminatory behavior. The following incident shows how ICOM's lack of preparation combined with its tendency to view the Macedonian government with distrust led to incorrect judgments. In July I was approached by ICOM members who informed me that the government was discriminating against Muslims by not listing them as Bosniacs (Bošnjaci) or by not giving their language as Serbo-Croatian. These ICOM members had been in contact with Bosniac political activists who had tried to convince them that all Slavic Muslims in Macedonia are Serbo-Croatian-speaking, Bosniac, or both. When I responded that there was a significant number of Macedonian-speaking Muslims—popularly known as Torbeš, although they prefer to be called Muslimani—who do not speak Serbo-Croatian and who do not identify as Bosniac, the ICOM reaction was a combination of surprise and skepticism. In the end they came to understand that the situation was indeed as I had explained it to them, but the very fact that such a misunderstanding could arise demonstrates not only the distrust toward the Macedonians with which the European experts approached the census but also their difficulty in distinguishing information from misinformation disseminated by some ethnopolitical actors.

Macedonian Muslims often live in underdeveloped, neglected, and isolated areas, such as the municipalities of Debar and Kičevo, where there is no ethnic absolute majority. They have therefore been vulnerable to manipulation by Albanian and Turkish politicians who have convinced some of them that they are Slavicized Albanians or Turks rather than Islamicized Slavs and that they could therefore rely more on Turkish or Albanian political parties to support their economic interests, because in economies of shortage such interests tend to fragment along ethnic lines.⁴⁶ The emphasis of Macedonian nationalist politicians on the connection between the Macedonian Orthodox Church and

Macedonian nationality has further alienated some Macedonian Muslims.⁴⁷ Census attempts in Macedonian-speaking Muslim villages ran into cases where a monolingual Macedonian Muslim family would demand a bilingual Albanian or Turkish form with an interpreter but then have to have the Albanian or Turkish translated into Macedonian. These incidents were part of a larger pattern of conscious language shift based on religion, such as the incident in the monolingual Macedonian Muslim village of Bačište (Kičevo municipality), where parents demanded an Albanian school for their children.⁴⁸

A general problem with the 1994 Macedonian census, as with other European censuses, was the definition of the categories “mother tongue” and “nationality” (the ICOM control forms used “ethnic affiliation” and “national affiliation” interchangeably). The concepts of ethnicity, nationality, language, and religion have a complex history of interrelationships in Macedonia, one whose complexity continues today. Thus, for example, some Muslim speakers of Macedonian declare their nationality as Albanian or Turkish on the basis of identifying their religion with Turkish or Albanian ethnicity. Similarly, some Christian speakers of Albanian declare their nationality as Macedonian by equating Macedonian Orthodox Christianity with Macedonian ethnicity. As might be expected, Albanian ethnopoliticians insist that Macedonian-identified Albanian-speakers are Albanians, while Macedonians insist that Albanian-identified Macedonian speakers are Macedonians. There was also the citizenship-based category Yugoslav, which until 1991 was steadily growing in popularity among both Slavs and non-Slavs. Now that Macedonia is no longer part of Yugoslavia, however, this category has ceased to be valid for most people, because it refers to another country.⁴⁹

At least some ICOM observers were unaware of the difference between Serbo-Croatian and Macedonian when they arrived to observe the census, as reflected in their questions to me. When they finally grasped that the difference was a linguistic one, they concluded that language was therefore the basis of nationality. While language and ethnic or national affiliation coincide to a certain extent in Macedonia, such is clearly not always the case, as can be seen not only from such categories as “Muslim” but also from Table A.4 (see page 98), which gives statistics for the correspondence between declared nationality and declared mother tongue for the 1953 and 1981 censuses (figures for 1994 have not yet been processed).

By attempting to impose a West European construct equating language with nationality (and nationality with statehood), ICOM helped

TABLE A.4
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DECLARED NATIONALITY AND DECLARED MOTHER TONGUE
FOR THE SIX MAIN LANGUAGES OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA: 1953 AND 1981

DECLARED NATIONALITY	DECLARED MOTHER TONGUE					
	MACEDONIAN	ALBANIAN	TURKISH	SERBO-CROAT	ROMANI	VLAH
1953						
Macedonians	853,971	1,986	281	934	277	2,565
Albanians	2,152	153,502	6,569	181	70	1
Turks	32,392	27,087	143,615	534	70	10
Roms	1,040	860	2,066	25	16,456	1
Vlahs	137	4	2	14	0	8,130
Serbs	3,945	0	8	31,070	41	9
Muslim	*	*	*	*	*	*
Yugoslav	2,152	25	50	563	2	4
Other	322	341	569	5,258	173	31
Total	896,651	183,805	153,160	38,579	17,089	10,751
1981						
Macedonians	1,276,878	190	160	547	316	*
Albanians	1,218	374,181	3	440	1,697	*
Turks	16,608	8,592	60,768	366	94	*
Roms	4,160	1,697	808	24	36,399	*
Vlahs	1,111	1	0	3	2	5,257
Serbs	8,521	10	3	35,867	14	*
Muslim	15,075	4,968	2,038	16,325	308	30
Yugoslav	7,645	1,943	274	2,746	530	*
Other	13,282	4,247	2,853	17,031	1,280	*
Total	1,334,498	391,829	64,907	63,349	37,780	5,931

*Not specified

Sources: Savezni Zavod za statistiku, Stanovništvo po narodnosti (Knj. 9); Konacni rezultati popisa stanovništva od 15 marta 1948 godine (Belgrade: Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1954); Statistički Godišnjak Jugoslavije (Knj. 35) (Belgrade: Savezni zavod za statistiku, 1988).

force on people the kind of choices that have led to the current conflict.⁵⁰ Moreover, the composition of the census form, which required respondents to declare a single mother tongue, effectively erased the multilingualism that has characterized the Balkans for centuries—if not millennia—and that is still a significant feature of Macedonian life in some areas.⁵¹

Lability of identity has long been a feature of life in Macedonia. The oldest generation from Western Macedonia remembers when Christians and Muslims would live under the same roof as part of the same extended family. Before the Mürszteg agreement of October 2–3, 1903, only Muslims could serve as gendarmes, and such officials had significant power at the local level.⁵² In Christian families, therefore, it was not uncommon for one brother to convert to Islam in order to be in a position to protect the entire family. Everyone ate at a common table, and if, for example, pork were available and a *zelnik* (pie) was made, the women of the house would put pork in only half the pita and both the Christian and Muslim sides of the family would eat from the same pan. Marriages have always been freely contracted along religious lines but across linguistic ones. The children of such “mixed” marriages would grow up bilingual or multilingual. In recent times, when faced with the necessity of choosing a nationality, choices can follow gender lines; for example, if a Turkish man marries an Albanian woman, the sons may be Turks and the daughters Albanian, while in other families the choice may be for one son to be Albanian and one to be Turkish. The European concept of nationality, equating ethnicity with language with state, does not correspond to the complex realities of Macedonia (nor of many, perhaps most, other countries), and by focusing on “nationality” to the exclusion of other characteristics we get contradictory situations such as those of parents insisting that their children be schooled in a language that they do not know despite the fact that the primary justification for multilingual education at the elementary level is that children learn best when taught in their mother tongue.⁵³

The politicization of the language issue and its confusion with nationality in the 1994 census was highlighted in several incidents that occurred in Albanian-speaking villages in southwestern Macedonia, where citizens objected because some of the Albanian-speaking enumerators were not ethnic Albanians but rather Roms (Gypsies), Čupci (“Egyptians”), or Vlahs.⁵⁴ Since most Čupci in southwestern Macedonia have Albanian as their first language, and many Roms and Vlahs are fluent in it—especially in southwestern Macedonia—the issue clearly was not a question of the right to register in one’s mother tongue, but rather a demand for an ethnic Albanian, that is, an instance of ethnic prejudice.

The events leading up to the boycott of the 1991 census, the imposition of the 1994 census, and subsequent developments show a pattern of manipulation and fragmentation of ethnic and linguistic identities utilizing legitimate grievances to benefit certain types of political elites. At the time of the census, my assessment was that it would prove a statistical success but a political failure. Insofar as it has not resulted in any significant changes in the figures—both official and purported—according to which ethnically based political relations are determined, this prediction has held true. The ICOM final report, while not uncritical, affirmed that the census was carried out according to “European” or “international” standards. It has been refuted by the Albanian political actors who brought it about, but at the same time they have generally continued to try to work within the existing governmental framework. In January 1995, the constitutional court ruled that article 35 of the census law, which governed language use, was unconstitutional, that is, contrary to article 7, which declares Macedonian the official language and guarantees (or restricts) official minority language use at (or to) the local level.⁵⁵ Thus the census law solved nothing in this respect, and when I returned to Macedonia in December 1995 as part of the fact-finding mission for the South Balkans Working Group of the Center for Preventive Action, the question of language use at the federal level was still the focus of significant political tension.

AFTER THE CENSUS IS OVER

If one of the purposes of the externally sponsored census was either to legitimize or to silence Albanian claims and thereby promote in one way or another greater stability in Macedonian society, the presence of European mediators in the ongoing dispute is not necessarily serving to promote stabilization. In an editorial published by the outspoken, albeit government-dependent, weekly *Puls* more than half a year after the census ended, Ambassador Ahrens is cited in the following terms:

Arens [sic] developed a thesis of a parallel existence instead of a common existence between ethnic groups in Macedonia, particularly between Macedonians and ethnic Albanians. According to Arens, “there never was a true coexistence,” but nationalities in Macedonia “have always led parallel lives.” He said he had the feeling that he probably knows

more about Albanian history and culture than the average Macedonian. Also, he had the impression that nationalities had aversions to one other. He backed this claim by the fact that there are no mixed marriages, and there are ethnic tensions in both public and private communication, especially between Macedonians and Albanians.⁵⁶

This is a significant departure from Dr. Ahrens’ admonishment to Albanian politicians at the beginning of the census, when they were still threatening a boycott. At that time, he told them they were in the same boat with the Macedonians, and that if they—the Albanians—rocked the boat, they would all drown. My own experience with journalists has sensitized me to the fact that what appears in the press is not always what was actually said, but regardless of its accuracy, the statement itself is an exemplary instance of a present construction being projected onto the past. It imposes a view of Macedonian reality that at the same time serves the interest of the local political elite that gives a diplomat his international legitimacy and promotes a version of the history of Macedonia that is at variance with concrete evidence—for example, the assistant minister of education is the son of an Albanian father and a Macedonian mother, the prime minister’s brother-in-law is a Turk, a Macedonian friend of mine who used to work in the government has an Albanian wife—but also helps to reify modern ethnic conflicts.

In a slightly broader context, Todorova⁵⁷ also projects the present onto the past, albeit for quite different reasons, when she attempts to define the term “Balkanism” only as “politically and ethnically fragmented” or, citing Bercovici, “Austro-Hungarian political policy relating to the Balkans.”⁵⁸ There is, however, a widely accepted meaning of the term “Balkanism” that is precisely the opposite of fragmented. In linguistics, a Balkanism is a feature shared among the unrelated or only distantly related languages of the Balkans. The grammatical structures of the Balkan languages attest to centuries of multilingualism and interethnic contact at the most intimate levels. Some features shared by Balkan Slavic, Balkan Romance, Albanian, Greek, and even some Balkan Turkish dialects result from people speaking each others’ languages.⁵⁹ During the 1994 census, Debar proved to be the most intractable commune (for reasons relating more to competition between the periphery and the center than between ethnicities), and in the end it was the only commune in which the census was not completed. And yet, the Albanian and Macedonian dialects of Debar provide a striking example of phonological similarity that results from centuries of bilingualism.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission that was stationed in Skopje in December 1995 provided other examples of the need for outside observers to be better informed. I encountered among members of the mission the misconception that Macedonian is a “really a Bulgarian dialect,” an attitude that displays a remarkable insensitivity to the milieu in which they were supposed to operate as mediators.⁶⁰ I was particularly curious about an incident that had occurred in the village of Ognjanci. At the time of the census, I made the following observation concerning that village in my notes: “A mixed village (Macedonians, Turks, Albanians, Roms). It was reported that interethnic relations are excellent and everyone cooperated happily with the census.”⁶¹ And yet a little more than a year later the following news item appeared:

Yesterday in the Skopje village Ognjanci, a group of citizens of Macedonian and Serbian nationality tried to prevent the entrance in the school to 40 children of Albanian nationality. There was no incident because the police without using force dispersed the gathered people. The Ministry for Education has decided to include the teaching on the Albanian language for the Albanian children in the same school. Those protesting think that the school was built by them, and will not allow their children to learn in combined classes with children from different grades. They offer a solution—the children of Albanian nationality to continue their education in the former barrack in the village, until the Ministry reconsiders its own decision and finally decides who the school building will be given to. Minister of Education, Emilija Simoska, for the Macedonian TV stated the Ministry does not intend to succumb to any kind of formal pressure and unless there is some disturbances among local people, assistance from Ministry of Interior will be asked. [sic]⁶²

The OSCE had involved itself in the affair, which had been resolved peacefully. But when I inquired of one of the mission’s members how it was that interethnic relations had deteriorated so significantly in so short a time, my informant responded: “Maybe they were Serbs. We never found out. All we care about is human rights, and then we move on.”

This same member of the OSCE mission told me of their experience in Debarska Župa, where Macedonian-speaking Muslim parents have recently been demanding Turkish-language schools for their children

(recall the incident in Bačište cited above). The OSCE observer informed me that they had met the Turkish teacher who called on children “randomly” to demonstrate how well they spoke Turkish.⁶³ The observer also told me that the grandparents spoke Turkish, implying that the parents were seeking to return the children to their roots.⁶⁴ I asked the observer if they had spoken with any of the families. The observer responded that they did not visit any homes and did not care what the home language actually was. Parents have the human right to choose the language of the children’s school even if the decision handicaps the children by requiring them to begin school in a language they do not know. The circumstances that lead to such a situation and the resolution of the deeper causes of the problems it represents were explicitly of no interest. As with the ICOM observers, so, too, the OSCE mission does not appear to be prepared to address the complexities of the specific context in which it finds itself.

STATISTICAL SUCCESS, POLITICAL FAILURE: “EUROPE,” THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, AND THE FUTURE OF THE BALKANS

The 1994 census highlighted, among other things, the ambiguity of the term *Europe*. Geographically, it refers to a continent bounded by the Mediterranean and Black Seas, the southern slopes of the Caucasus and the western slopes of the Urals. Politically or culturally, however, the term “Europe” often still has the meaning of “Western Europe” or “Europe of the Great Powers.” Thus, for example, the most powerful political unit on the continent calls itself the European Union, although only Western European nations plus Greece are included in it. It is no coincidence that Greece has embarked on a vigorous internal propaganda campaign stressing its membership in this Europe. The exclusion of the southeastern peninsula of geographical Europe from what can be called political Europe is well known in the Balkans.⁶⁵ The sense of alienation generated thereby was eloquently expressed by the Bulgarian author and journalist Aleko Konstantinov at the end of a vignette in his famous work *Baj Ganjo*, which satirizes the adventures of a Bulgarian rose-oil merchant in the Western Europe of his day and subsequently in then newly liberated Bulgaria.⁶⁶ In the penultimate sentence of the story *Baj Ganjo žurnalist* (“Baj Ganjo as a Journalist”), Konstantinov writes, “*Evropejci sme nij, ama vse ne sme dotam!*” (“We’re Europeans—but still not quite!”) I heard a comparable use of the term “Europe” during the 1994 census, when an ethnic Albanian politician

brought me with him into a restricted building, explaining to the guard (in Macedonian): “*Toj e od Evropa*” (“He is from Europe”). My companion knew that I was an American and an employee of UNPROFOR, but he identified me as *od Evropa* because my role at that moment was that of a privileged Western outsider, just like a member of ICOM. Insofar as international European organizations succeeded in pressuring Macedonia into conducting a census that they funded and observed, it can be argued that political Europe was exerting authority in geographical Europe’s southeastern periphery and particularly in Macedonia as a periphery of peripheries.⁶⁷

This Europe was utilized by both Albanian and Macedonian political actors to further their particular goals. The Albanian politicians mobilized quite legitimate social and political grievances based on very real discrimination against ethnic Albanian citizens of Macedonia, ranging from censorship and restriction of language and property rights to firings and jail sentences—especially since 1981—to further their own careers and demands for autonomy, federalization, and ultimately irredentism.⁶⁸ Macedonian statisticians and politicians were faced with a choice between an externally imposed census or further destabilization caused by a loss of legitimacy in an international community that was at that time permitting Macedonia’s economic strangulation while continuing to prevent the full realization of its sovereignty; they chose the census. But they then imposed their own condition, namely that the funding be sufficient to cover not merely the nationality question, which was the only one Europe sought to resolve and the only one that Albanian ethnopoliticians could use to legitimize their claims on the international scene, but also all those features of the Macedonian economy (such as agricultural property and land use) that form part of a complete census but that had been omitted from the 1991 census because of insufficient funding resulting from the economic crisis.

The 1994 census was in sum a statistical success but a political failure. Although it legitimated the basic statistics of the 1991 census, it did nothing to resolve the issues of political hegemony and access to resources that continue to plague Macedonia. It did, however, help to reify a conflict whose roots in Macedonian history are not as deep as some political actors would pretend. In seeking to impose a vision of nationality that does not correspond to Macedonia’s complex cultural context, political Europe reproduced its vision of Balkan “otherness” and marginality in Macedonia more than it contributed to its stabilization.

The continued presence of various international organizations and actors in Macedonia and the ongoing tensions in the region raise the

question of how the current Balkan crisis can best be resolved. Hayden in his review of Woodward makes the point that scholars specializing in southeastern Europe—one can add many of them trained with the help of U.S. federal education grants designated specifically for the creation of a cadre of area specialists—were not consulted when U.S. government policies concerning the former Yugoslavia were discussed and adopted.⁶⁹ The activities of international organizations illustrated in the foregoing exposition reveal a similar exclusion of regional expertise. If the future is to be different from the past, a closer cooperation between scholars and political actors is one way to promote the kind of understanding that could lead to stability.