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**CONSEQUENCES OF CONSOCIATIONALISM IN NORTH
MACEDONIA: THE CHANGING INTER-COMMUNITY
RELATIONSHIP IN ELITE DISCOURSE**

MA Thesis

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Tartu 2021

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ABSTRACT

The fall of Yugoslavia resulted into the independence several countries among them Macedonia (North Macedonia now). However, the government form of new country brought mixed feelings for its citizens. Eventually frustrations for better representation of the ethnic Albanian in the new independent country led to an armed revolt. The revolt between ethnic Albanians and ethnic Macedonians in 2001 resulted in the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. The Ohrid Agreement introduced a Consociational government form in Macedonia. My research aim is to find how discourse has changed among Macedonians and Albanian political elite by the implementation of Consociational in the country. Using critical discourse analysis in a diachronic research design this thesis will contribute to the argument that Consociationalism has been successful in changing the political elite discourse in North Macedonia. A line can be drawn that with the introduction of Consociationalism in the country change in identification and vocabulary as well a decline in polarization and political elites' activities/behaviour has been changed. Additionally, the intervening factor is that Consociationalism worked in conjunction with the main external factors for North Macedonia that being the EU.

Keywords: Consociationalism, political elites, North Macedonia, discourse change.

ABBREVIATIONS

OFA – Ohrid Framework Agreement.

VMRO-DPMNE - Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity. (Macedonian: Внатрешна македонска револуционерна организација – Демократска партија за македонско национално единство–ВМРО–ДПМНЕ). Centre-right to right-wing political position.

SDUM - Social Democratic Union of Macedonia. (Macedonian: Социјалдемократски сојуз на Македонија–СДСМ). Centre-left political position.

DUI - Democratic Union for Integration. (Albanian: Bashkimi Demokratik për Integrim–BDI). Centre-left political position.

DPA - Democratic Party of Albanians. (Albanian: Partia Demokratike Shqiptare–PDSH). Centre-right to right-wing political position.

BESA - Besa Movement - (Albanian: Lëvizja Besa). Centre-right political position.

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1. Introduction

The 1991 independence of North Macedonia (henceforth North Macedonia will be referred for the political identity, while 'Macedonian' and 'Albanian' would then refer to the respective ethnic groups), brought mixed feelings for Albanians and Macedonians alike. One of the issues that gave mixed feelings to Macedonians since the independence of the republic was the Albanian issue. From the beginning Macedonian and Albanian elites had different goals as how the state should look like. According to Ackermann the Albanians after the independence of North Macedonia did not commit to the new state and worked to their own goal of Greater Albania.¹ Especially the boycotting of the independence referendum by Albanians felt like a backstabbing to Macedonians. This was because Albanians felt that their rights under the new state were much less than during Yugoslavia times. The 1991 Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia defined the country as “the national state of the Macedonian people” rather than “the state of the Macedonian people and the Albanian and the Turkish nationalities” as it had stood before, which in turn lead Albanian politicians to search for recognition.²

Changing the political scene by political tools was hard if not impossible since many of the Albanian politicians before the 2001 period had no real power or staff in the government, it was a form of tokenism.³ This frustration for a proper power-sharing model and better representation of their interest in the government led to a short conflict that erupted between Albanians and Macedonians in 2001. It ended quickly by foreign intervention mainly the US and the EU, who insisted on the conclusion of the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

The agreement had two goals: to demilitarize the National Liberation Army (NLA) and to promote democratic reforms in Macedonia. Many researchers consider this agreement as an important event that changed Macedonian politics. Generally, the Ohrid Framework Agreement is viewed as being based on a consociational approach.⁴ Critics of

¹ Dorian, JANO "ASPECTS OF SECURITY “DILEMMA” WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM THE MACEDONIAN CASE." *Perceptions: Journal of International Affairs* 14, no. 1 (2009): 73-90.

² Demjaha, Agon, and Ylber Sela. "Inter-Ethnic Relations in Albania: The Causality Between Inter-Ethnic and Inter-State Relations." *Revista de Stiințe Politice* 59 (2018): 34-44.

³ Pettifer, James. "The Albanians in western Macedonia after FYROM independence." In *The new Macedonian question*, pp. 137-147. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2001.

⁴ Bieber, Florian. "Power sharing and democracy in Southeast Europe." *Taiwan Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 1 (2013): 129-148.

consociationalism like Matthew Wilson claim that consociationalism has its flaws and is not perfect. He argues that the likelihood of civil conflict at mid-range levels of diversity is possible however that the risk of conflict decreases in more extremely divided settings.⁵ I agree with this point that in a more extremely divided settings it works perfectly since that is its main is conflict prevention. I have expanded more my second chapter regarding consociationalism as a theoretical concept.

My research aim is to find how political elite discourse have been affected by the consociational structure in the government after the Ohrid Framework Agreement (henceforth OFA). In my case, I have chosen North Macedonia for two reasons. Firstly, 2021 will be the 20-year anniversary of the consociational agreement in North Macedonia which is a perfect amount of time to study the consequences of Consociationalism, otherwise doing research after couple would be to judge Consociationalism prematurely.⁶ Secondly, North Macedonia being a relatively new country that adopted a Consociational approach has not been researched enough. Therefore, by studying this case I fill knowledge gaps on the effects of Consociationalism on political elite discourse.

Using critical discourse analysis in a diachronic research design (comparing discourse before and after the Ohrid Agreement), this thesis will contribute to the argument that consociationalism has been successful in changing the political elite discourse in North Macedonia. This change affected the prevalent/hegemonic articulations of Macedonian national identity and the identity of both ethnic groups. Albanian elites started to perceive Macedonian state as their own and asked for status elevation as a co-constituency. Macedonian elite on the other hand considered them as integral part of North Macedonian society.

Twenty years since the OFA agreement, this thesis work tries to understand the consequences of consociationalism in North Macedonian by examining the political elite discourse. I argue that because of the OFA we can see a change in identification and vocabulary as well a decline in polarization and we see political elites perform different activities/behaviour. These four parameters will be explored in the methodology part and I will refer them as the four parameters (Identification, Polarization, Vocabulary, Activities.). The discourse has been transformed and

McCulloch, Allison. "Consociational settlements in deeply divided societies: The liberal-corporate distinction." *Democratization* 21, no. 3 (2014): 501-518.

⁵ Wilson, Matthew Charles. "A Closer Look at the Limits of Consociationalism." *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 5 (2019): 700–733.

⁶Arend Lijphart, and Henry Jarrett, 2019.

shifted towards a more inclusive and compromising tone. In my thesis by the elite, I refer to individuals with political and party positions. Consequently, by examining identification, polarization, vocabulary and activities, **my research question** is: Did the discourse of North Macedonian elites change towards greater inclusivity before and after the implementation of the OFA taking those four parameters into account?

1.2 Theoretical Framework

In a binational country like North Macedonia, the majoritarian (Westminster) democracy is not appropriate and there are reasons to believe that a consociational system can work better.

According to Lijphart, a successful consociational democracy requires: (1) That the elites can accommodate the divergent interests and demands of the subcultures. (2) This requires that they can transcend cleavages and to join in a common effort with the elites of rival subcultures. (3) This in turn depends on their commitment to the maintenance of the system and to the improvement of its cohesion and stability. (4) Finally, all the above requirements assume that the elites understand the perils of political fragmentation.⁷

With this thesis I would like to contribute to the discussion about the changing inter-community relationship by arguing that the case of North Macedonia proves that Consociationalism works and was able to move political elite discourse towards a less polarizing and more cooperating one. My key argument is that by utilizing the four Consociationalism components grand coalitions, veto rights, proportional representation, and autonomy we see a change in the way political elites articulate the inter-community relationship. This indicates that consociationalism does what it is designed to do: manage conflict through recognizing and accommodating different groups in a divided society.⁸

⁷ Bogaards, Matthijs, Ludger Helms, and Arend Lijphart. "The Importance of Consociationalism for Twenty-First Century Politics and Political Science." *Swiss Political Science Review* 25, no. 4 (2019): 341-356.

⁸ Jakala, Michaelina, Durukan Kuzu, Matt Qvortrup, Arend Lijphart, and Henry Jarrett. "The Limits of Consociational Power Sharing." Essay. In *Consociationalism and Power-Sharing in Europe: Arend Lijphart's Theory of Political Accommodation*, 48–51. Basingstoke, 2019.

1.3 Research Design

My research design is going to use qualitative methods more specifically critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the political elite in the country, I must clarify that critical discourse analysis is a method and diachronic discourse analysis being a research design (diachronic meaning to be concerned with the study of changes occurring over a period). The purpose of discourse analysis is to test the hypothesis that the way the leaders articulate the inter-community relationship changed because of the OFA.

There could be many other factors that affect how ethnic leaders construct inter-community relationship but considering those alternative explanations would not be possible in one Master's thesis. Thus, I will not be able to fully prove my hypotheses but identifying the discursive change would be a crucial step in that direction.

A diachronic discourse analysis is attempted to compare how political elite from both ethnic groups speak and construct their discourse before the OFA and after. The first phase will be from the independence of Macedonia in 1991 until the signing of the OFA in 2001 and the second phase will be from 2001 until 2020. To make it more feasible I will not monitor the whole timeline because of the huge amount of data; instead, I will take probes into the discourse around important events.

It is an unwritten tradition that one ethnic Macedonia and one ethnic Albanian political party form the government coalition. They campaign on their respective regions and then form the government. I will examine the speeches of the elites from major ethnic Macedonian parties and the same will be done with the ethnic Albanians parties. The relevance will be determined by the number of MPs they have at any given time. Given the period from 1991 until 2020, I will have to focus only on the top political party leadership. This means only analysing speeches from party leaders, party deputy leaders, party members with governmental and party positions.

1.3.1 Data

I am using data that from online sources, like webpages of the government and political parties, newspapers, journal articles available in either Macedonian or Albanian. Apart from these I have also utilised all the social media channels of the political elites. This includes their Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts. Something that should be noted is that political elites in Macedonia use their social media in multiple languages, usually they would write their post in their native tongue and then Macedonian or Albanian. For a more detailed account please see the methodology part of this thesis.

In order to make discourse analysis feasible I must limit my scope of work to four events, two before and two after the OFA. Events will be chosen for their extraordinary characteristics (death toll/resulting in constitutional change) since this way we can track the change of discourse in the political elite. The goal of Consociationalism is conflict prevention and or conflict management henceforth I do not intend to understand the general discourse in Macedonian society but rather limit myself to understand discourse among elites in times of crisis. To observe if intercommunity discourse changes regarding the four parameters. I have described this into more details the selection of the cases to be analysed in section 4.1 Methodological Approach: Diachronic Discourse Analysis.

As mentioned below in the methodology part, I am doing discourse analysis with four events that are: Gostivar crisis of 1997, Conflict of 2001, Kumanovo clashes of 2015 and the name change of 2018.

1.4 Limitations

The main drawbacks and limitations have been described at the section below at 4.2.1 The limitations of the research method. They can be grouped into two groups, limitations that can be attributed to the theory I am working i.e., consociationalism. Second group are the limitations because of the methodology used here, namely discourse analysis. However, by picking four crucial events in recent Macedonian history, two events each before and two after the OFA we can see how political elites identify each other and what vocabulary they use. I believe discourse analysis can better measure the inter-ethnic community relationship in political elite discourse.

2. Theoretical literature review

The purpose of my second chapter is to outline the entire theoretical background of the thesis and then narrow it down to a specific research design. The Republic of North Macedonia is a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional country; however, until the end of 2001, this was not reflected in its form of government since it practiced a majoritarian form of democracy. After a bloody conflict in 2001, it adopted a non-majoritarian form of government called Consociationalism. For a more empirical background regarding North Macedonia, please have a look at chapter three. This chapter focuses on existing theoretical solutions, Consociationalism and its alternatives; after that, I will address the importance of political elites' play in this theory. The final part of this chapter will focus on available literature about North Macedonia.

2.1 Consociationalism and its alternatives in addressing deeply divided societies

This thesis aims to understand how consociational democracy has affected political elite discourse in North Macedonia. Lijphart would argue that this form of non-majoritarian democracy is just as plausible and may perform better to achieve political stability. It is unclear whether consociationalism is the one key factor that is shifting elite discourse in Macedonia. For sure, other factors have an impact on elite discourse; however, since Macedonia has adopted a more liberal form of consociationalism, I want to contribute to the ongoing debate between liberal and corporate consociationalism. The puzzle that I want to solve or help others solve is finding how political elite discourse changed when non-majoritarian groups (Albanians in our case) are invited in grand coalitions and given veto rights, proportional representation, and autonomy i.e., consociational arrangement.

The main theory here, Consociationalism, has been a go-to tool in the Balkans for accommodating deeply divided societies like Bosnia, Kosovo, and Macedonia. However, Consociationalism is not the only approach that addresses deeply divided societies. There is a wide array of public policies available; they broadly fall into two categories: the integrational approach and the accommodational approach. The integrationist approach promotes a homogeneous public identity where everyone is equal before the law in the meantime respecting differences in the private realm. Integrationists are against public institutions promoting group identities because they think that integration is progressive and the key to public unity. Accommodationists, on the other hand, respect differences and do not aim to

achieve uniformity. On the contrary, they promote dual or multiple identities and believe that what is necessary is managing differences and not suppressing them. They believe that every individual should be allowed to express their identity in the public as a tool to protect against the tyranny of the majority. According to literature, there are three major approaches to deal with differences under the accommodationist approach and they are: multiculturalism, centripetalism, and consociationalism.⁹

Multiculturalism as the name implies asks for creating space for all cultures be it private or public. In the Western world, this is not practised literally if measured to the principles of the Austrian-Marxist Otto Bauer and Karl Renner with the exception in Hungary, Russia, and Estonia.¹⁰ Where minorities can foster their culture and have schools in their language, a form of cultural autonomy. Multiculturalism practised today is integration in disguise where the idea is to not allow immigrants to form their separate public institutions, nevertheless, such differences are allowed in the private and through other measures to help them integrate with most of the society.¹¹ For example, allowing Muslim girls to wear hijab in schools or Sikhs to wear turbans in Canada, again all this is a form of easing their integration and not allowing them to remain separated indefinitely.

Centripetalism is associated with Donald Horowitz and his followers where they emphasise the centre, and or meeting at the centre the opposite of consociationalism which favours centrifugal policies. Centripetalisms main ideas are two, first is reforming the electoral system where elections incentivise moderation and second exploring the peace-making potentials deriving from federalism.¹² Horowitz insists that centripetalism is not an integrationist approach, rather an accommodationist approach and the best example would be Nigeria, a country divided into thirty-six federations. Where the three important tribes do not have a majority in every federation and therefore are required to cooperate with other tribes.¹³

⁹ McGarry, John, Brendan O’Leary, and Richard Simeon. “Integration or Accommodation? The Enduring Debate in Conflict Regulation.” Essay. In *Constitutional Design for Divided Societies: Integration or Accommodation?* 2010.

¹⁰ Otto Bauer, *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy* (Ephraim Nimni ed., Joe O’Donnell trans., Univ. Minn. Press, 2000); Karl Renner, *State and Nation*, in *National Cultural Autonomy and its Contemporary Critics* 15, 2015.

¹¹ McGarry, John, Brendan O’Leary, and Richard Simeon. “Integration or Accommodation? The Enduring Debate in Conflict Regulation.” Essay. In *Constitutional Design for Divided Societies: Integration or Accommodation?* 2010.

¹² Horowitz, Donald L. "Conciliatory institutions and constitutional processes in post-conflict states." 49 (2007): 1213. “Designs for Democracy.” Essay. In *A Democratic South Africa?: Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society*, 214. 1991.

¹³ *Ibid.* at 217–220.

Horowitz believes that ethnic divisions are resilient and hard to be replaced by civic or catch-all parties, this fact must be taken into consideration when dealing with divided societies.¹⁴

Consociationalism yet another policy that aims to manage divided societies is different from multiculturalism, it calls elites of a country to jointly participate and prevent conflicts. Cross-community power-sharing is a key tool that differentiates consociationalism from other forms. Consociationalism has been applied in several countries ranging from Malaysia to Lebanon, Cyprus, South Africa, and Macedonia. Arend Lijphart concludes that there are two major branches in democratic states, Majoritarian or Consensual and that consensual democracies outperform majoritarian democracies on many benchmarks like better representation and better policy implementation.¹⁵ However, consensual democracy has not been applied in the same form in all those countries that choose to implement it, different kinds of consensual democracies have resulted in different outcomes. Especially consociationalism in Macedonia has been not studied enough.

2.2 Why Consociationalism and why it is so promising

So far in this chapter, I have explained my theory and presented other alternatives to consociationalism that addresses deeply divided societies. They broadly fall into two categories the integrational approach and the accommodational approaches. Here I explain what is consociationalism and why is it so promising.

Although consociationalism has been credited to Arendt Lijphart, neither the term nor the general concept was new. He borrowed them from David Apter's 1961 study of Uganda, however in the 1990s he refined the term and concepts in many ways, and they have stayed the same since then.¹⁶ However, Lijphart is a leading authority in this field and I will work mostly with his work and that other leading voices in consociational and comparative politics like McEvoy, O'Leary, Horowitz, Choudhry, Almond and many other voices. Gabriel A. Almond's take with his typology of political systems in 1956 is significant since he observes three types of democracy: Anglo-Saxon, Continental Europe, and Scandinavian and Low Countries type.¹⁷ The Anglo-Saxon is characterised as more "homogeneous, secular political culture,"

¹⁴ Ibid. at 28–30.

¹⁵ Lijphart, 2012.

¹⁶ Lijphart, 2008.

¹⁷ Lijphart, 2008.

Continental Europe as a “fragmentation of political culture” with separate “political sub-cultures” and Scandinavian being a mix of both.¹⁸

Arend Lijphart being influenced by him in 1968 wrote the influential book “The Politics of Accommodation. Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands” that formalised the idea of how power-sharing is a better form of government for plural societies. First, let me define what is power-sharing and then plural society. According to Joanne McEvoy and Brendan O’Leary power-sharing means any set of rules arranged to prevent a winner take it all type of government, the opposite would be monopolisation.¹⁹ And a plural society is described as one that is divided into two or more segmental cleavages, it can be ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious or any other division.²⁰ Therefore one way to facilitate divided societies would be the implementation of a consociational type of government, accommodating different groups in governmental structures on a proportional basis.²¹ Lijphart in his 1977 book argues that achieving and maintaining a stable government is hard but possible in plural societies.²²

Consociationalism has four main pillars: grand coalition, mutual veto, proportionality, and segmented autonomy.²³ However, consociationalism is not a rigid form, every state performs a different form of it, from the more rigid with clear cut norms written in the constitution which are called corporate consociationalism like Bosnia, partly Northern Ireland and the liberal ones like Macedonia.²⁴ Corporate consociation accommodates ethnic or religious groups and other identities in an ascriptive way on the other hand liberal consociation rewards whatever identity exist or might emerge.²⁵ Many scholars believe that this form of consociationalism applied in Northern Ireland and Bosnia freezes conflict and inter-community cooperation.²⁶ The Macedonian case is praised to be a somewhat a success story however Lyon notes that Macedonia has diverged from initial goals set up by the Ohrid Agreement on an institutional level.²⁷

Still, no article has researched how the elite discourse in Macedonia has evolved since the adoption of consociational principles. Compared to Bosnia where the effects of the Dayton

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ McEvoy, O’Leary, 2013.

²⁰ Eckstein, 2016. Lijphart, 1977.

²¹ Lijphart, 1977. Taylor, Rupert, 2011.

²² Lijphart, 1977

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Piacentini, 2019. McCulloch, 2014

²⁵ Choudhry, 2008.

²⁶ Coakley, 2011. Finlay, 2011. Perry, 2019.

²⁷ Lyon, 2012.

Agreement are better understood, I failed to find conclusive research on the effects of consociationalism in Macedonia. However, there is conclusive research that Bosnia is a failure and there is a need to reform the consociational agreement.²⁸ 2021 will mark twenty years of consociationalism in Macedonia, twenty years since the Ohrid Agreement. Twenty years is a perfect amount of time to study the effects of consociationalism.²⁹

In the following paragraphs, it is important first to understand how consociational arrangements impact a plurinational state. Secondly, how and why the theory behind consociationalism prioritises the role of political elites. The main debate is between integrationists headed by Lijphart and his followers and the accommodationist approach spearheaded by Donald Horowitz and his followers as well. Both groups are in favour of the need for an accommodative power-sharing approach to prevent conflict in divided societies.³⁰ Where they differ is that Horowitz advocates that apart from accommodating there should be some integrationist principles to bridge the gap between divided communities.³¹ It is unclear, however, whether this approach can indeed fix the problem. According to Choudhry, Canada has implemented a mixture of accommodationist, and integrationist approach and the results are bad. Choudhry suggest the combination is not stable since this led to the constitutional crisis of the 1990s in Canada.³² According to Lyon, Macedonia because of its liberal consociational structure has a mixture of both accommodative and integrationist approach. However, he believes that reform implementation has diverged from the original intentions of the Ohrid Framework Agreement.³³

2.3 Consociationalism and the role of political elites

In consociational literature the elite have always been important since the father of consociationalism Lijphart has argued elite cooperation, would deliver political stability.³⁴ Lijphart believed that success ultimately depends on the motivation of the elites how fast they will adopt and maintain the consociational structure of the state.³⁵ Giovanni Sartori shared the

²⁸ McMahan, 2009. Dervisbegovic, 2020.

²⁹ Arend Lijphart, and Henry Jarrett, 2019.

³⁰ Taylor, 2009.

³¹ McGarry, John, and Horowitz., 2003., Rupert, and O'Flynn, 2011.

³² Choudhry, 2008.

³³ Lyon, 2012.

³⁴ Lijphart, 1968, 1969, 1977.

³⁵ McGarry, 2019.

same opinion that elites play an important role in a consociational democracy to work.³⁶ Dixon says that consociationalism is a top-down approach, nevertheless, he has been critical of it and suggested consociational theory should be elastic and provide space for redefinition whether it is positive or negative. White is another scientist who is critical of this approach since the levels of commitment by the elites in power might and can act as a hindrance in consociational power-sharing agreement this can lead to a potential political deadlock.³⁷ To pursue peace, one requires to persuade the elites of the parties in conflict that peace is more in their interest than continuing conflict or war.³⁸

Vitality to mention here is to understand what makes consociationalism stand out from other policies is that it aims to prevent armed conflicts.³⁹ Lijphart would argue over and over that consociationalism is the best option to choose for all types of communities.⁴⁰ Analysing case by case states from different continents or periods, he argues that consociational states have outperformed other states in better accountability, political equality, women representation, democracy quality. He would call this “kinder and gentle democracy”.⁴¹ Consociational literature is limited to case-to-case studies since there are not many large-N statistical studies. Walsh hopes that in the future there will be more large-N studies however she notes the limited universe of power-sharing states in making an excellent study.⁴² Apart from Lijphart, other scholars around the world are doing their case study research. Their findings suggest that indeed consociationalism works. For example, Reynal-Querol, arguing that consociational democracy with a proportional electoral system and a parliamentary government can significantly reduce ethnic violence.⁴³ Most of the scholars supporting consociationalism with their papers are of Anglo-Saxon origin. One third of US political scientist say that

³⁶ Sartori, 2002.

³⁷ Orlović, 2015.

³⁸ Werner, Suzanne, and Amy Yuen, 2005.

³⁹ Choudhry, Sujit, John McGarry, Brendan O’Leary, and Richard Simeon. “Integration or Accommodation? The Enduring Debate in Conflict Regulation.” Essay. In *Constitutional Design for Divided Societies: Integration or Accommodation?*, 57–58. , 2010.

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Lijphart, Arend. “The Quality of Democracy and a Kinder, Gentler’ Democracy: Consensus Democracy Makes A Difference.” Essay. In *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, 274–94. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.

⁴² Walsh, Dawn. "Go Big or Go Home: An Appeal to Let Power-Sharing Do More Not Less." *Ethnopolitics* 19, no. 1 (2020): 88-91.

⁴³ Reynal-Querol, Marta. "Ethnicity, political systems, and civil wars." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, no. 1 (2002): 29-54.

consociationalism is not just a solution for divided societies but *the best* solution. However just about the same number of scholars 36% disagree with consociationalism being a good solution at all and another 36% neither agree nor disagree.⁴⁴ Consociationalism having a good track record scholar have been suggesting it for current conflicts all around the world including Syria, South Sudan, Palestine/Israel, Myanmar, Ukraine.⁴⁵ Moreover, another example that confirms people believe in the capabilities of consociationalism to alleviate hostility between divided societies is that it has been suggested as an option for a post-war Syria for more read “Post-Conflict Power-Sharing Agreements: Options for Syria”.⁴⁶

Macedonian independence started on a bad foot when Albanians boycotted the independence referendum, as well later in 1997 the prohibition of the use of Albanian flags in municipalities run by Albanian mayors sparked protests among ethnic-Albanian minority.⁴⁷ Kiro Gligorov, the first Macedonian President in his interview for the Belgrade weekly Ekonomiska Politicia said that the goal of Macedonia should be more human rights for Albanians and they should be always invited into government coalitions however no official language, no symbols, no veto and no proportionality for the simple reason to protect the unitary profile of the state.⁴⁸ Scholars on the other hand offered different solutions to this problem like Vojislav Stanovcic but consociationalism was not the only option for Macedonia on the table. He offered three solutions for Macedonia, the first option being the improvement of minority rights, second federalisation since ethnic groups are concentrated Albanians on the west and Macedonians on the east. The last option he recommends is consociationalism, he warns that a successful implementation of consociationalism requires a democratic political culture.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Roberts, Andrew. "Consensus and dissensus in comparative politics: Do comparativists agree on the goals, methods, and results of the field?" *International Political Science Review* 41, no. 4 (2020): 490-506.

⁴⁵ Onditi, 2018. Marlin, 2016. Groarke, 2016. Dahbour, 2016. Kipgen, 2014.

⁴⁶ Salamey, Imad, Mohammed Abu-Nimer, and Elie Abouaoun. "Post-Conflict Power-Sharing Agreements." DOI 9443, no. 10.1007 (2018): 978-3.

⁴⁷“North Macedonia Profile - Timeline.” BBC News. BBC, February 15, 2019. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17553072>.

⁴⁸ Pettifer, James, and Kiro Gligorov. “The Unrealistic Dreams of Large States.” Essay. In *The New Macedonian Question*, 96–104. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999.

⁴⁹ Stanovčić, Vojislav. "Problems and options in institutionalizing ethnic relations." *International Political Science Review* 13, no. 4 (1992): 359-379.

2.4 Consociationalism and North Macedonia

The limited number of scholars that discuss Macedonian consociationalism have contradictory opinions on how to proceed further for example George Vasilev in his tentative to analyse the OFA twelve years after signing of it he concludes that a turn towards a more integrationist approach could save Macedonia.⁵⁰ His main idea is that blaming only OFA is not the right approach however that the main problem between Albanians and Macedonians is their struggle for recognition, to solve this more integrationist approach is needed like an integrated education system, Macedonian as the common language, and deliberate leadership.⁵¹ Spyros Sofos argues that a way out of the crisis would be the reversal of ethnicization of politics and more commitment to integrational policies.⁵² On the flip side Arianna Piacentini argues that the ethnic cleavage and the existing frustration for recognition is only one part of the problem, the ethnic divide is the fight for state ownership and ethnicity is just a tool.⁵³ She believes that the consociational model partly soothed both groups' frustrations and because for historical reasons these groups are deeply antagonized the way forward is for state sharing with official co-ownership of the state.⁵⁴

I believe the same that the two major ethnic groups in Macedonia are striving for two important issues first for recognition and second for co-ownership of the state and that this has been entrenched throughout recent history. Language and cultural heritage are the most ambivalent issue for Albanians and state-building being for Macedonians can be guaranteed through consociationalism only. Forcing Albanians to use the Macedonian language more widely or abandoning the Albanian language from schools and institutions altogether is not a solution since that was the cause for the conflict to begin with. Additionally, there is no guarantee that people with sharing the language are immune to antagonism or resentment for example Lebanon, Holland, or Bosnia. Trying to create a new integrationist culture in Macedonia is hard if not impossible since there is a wide-ranging option of media, cultural events, family links available for Albanians in Macedonia coming mainly from Kosovo and Albania will keep

⁵⁰ Vasilev, George. "Multiculturalism in post-Ohrid Macedonia: Some philosophical reflections." *East European Politics and Societies* 27, no. 04 (2013): 685-708.

⁵¹ *Ibid*

⁵² Sofos, Spyros. "Macedonia at the crossroads." *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans* 3, no. 2 (2001): 145-151.

⁵³ Piacentini, Arianna Maria. "State Ownership and "State-Sharing": The Role of Collective Identities and the Sociopolitical Cleavage between Ethnic Macedonians and Ethnic Albanians in the Republic of North Macedonia." *Nationalities Papers* 47, no. 3 (2019): 461-476.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

Albanians in Macedonia connected to their “Mother Nation”. I believe that the ideological distinctiveness that these two groups have can be nullified and the language of hostility can be calmed down by keeping the consociational policy in place for a long enough period. Examples from Netherlands and Austria show us that when divided groups are recognized, accommodated and enough democratic political culture is developed consociationalism becomes obsolete.⁵⁵ Therefore I believe to evaluate the state of consociationalism in Macedonia it is important to assess the changing inter-community relationship in elite discourse.

To conclude, I would say that consociationalism is the most promising policy that can offer a solution for divided societies. It is criticized a fair amount for reinforcing division and jeopardizing democracy, individualism, and equality of opportunity.⁵⁶ There are other non-conventional alternatives like the that provided by Luttwak who says “Give War a Chance” or Kaufmanns idea to partition countries that are in a civil war.⁵⁷ Brendan O’Leary in his essay Power Sharing: An Advocate’s Conclusion argues that all these other forms have been tried throughout history and still consociationalism has a better track record in guaranteeing peace.⁵⁸ This thesis tends to prove if a change in the inter-community relationship in elite discourse is evident after 20 years of liberal consociationalism in Macedonia. Diachronic discourse analysis helps to understand if elite discourse in Macedonia has evolved because of the consequences of consociationalism. This paper can be helpful for future research in understanding how inter-community relationship evolves, failure to understand every aspect of consociationalism will have consequences in future countries that will apply it.

⁵⁵ Andeweg, Rudy B., Lieven De Winter And, and Wolfgang C. Müller. "Parliamentary opposition in post-consociational democracies: Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands." *The Journal of Legislative Studies* 14, no. 1-2 (2008): 77-112.

⁵⁶ O'Leary, 2005.

⁵⁷ Luttwak, 2009. Kaufmann, 1996,1998.

⁵⁸ McEvoy, Joanne, Brendan O'Leary 2013.

3. Macedonian empirical literature review and historical background, politics and institutions

This chapter explains to the reader the political and institutional evolution of Macedonia since its independence. In most academic papers the history of modern Macedonia is divided into three parts. The first part describes the path and the history of Macedonia up until the independence, here I have touched this part of history as well. This helps the reader to better understand how the frustrations among Macedonians and Albanians in modern-day Macedonia came to be. The second part of Macedonian history is the pre-OFA period, where I have described the general political mood and the shape of institutions during that period. However, the events that I have chosen to analyse are discussed in more details in the empirical part so the reader will have fresh information when reading the findings. The third period of Macedonian history is that after OFA, the general political mood and the shape of institutions are described here as well. Events picked for analysis are better detailed the empirical part as well, my aim being is that the reader can better understand the general mood before and after OFA. In this chapter, the reader can understand the real-life implications of consociationalism in North Macedonia, tracking the evolution of the four main power-sharing concepts i.e., grand coalitions, proportionality, veto rights and regional autonomy.

3.1 Macedonia before 1991 independence

As mentioned above, parts important to our topic are the second and third part of Macedonian history. However, to understand the frustrations in the current Macedonia I must mention the first part of Macedonian history. The question about who the Macedonians are has been raised frequently like Pettifer and Poulton.⁵⁹ This question is hard to answer since Macedonian collective identity creation is an ongoing process and has implications for the future of the country. This is a political question, not a scholarly one. The history of the region is long and complicated, many empires or countries have influenced the region by trying to “Hellenise” “Bulgarianize” “Serbianize” or “Ottomanize”. Poulton argues that the Macedonian issue of today can be explained in three ways. The first explanation is that Macedonia can be

⁵⁹ Augustinos, Gerasimos. "Who Are the Macedonians?, by Hugh Poulton." (1997): 139. Pettifer, James. "The new Macedonian question." In *The new Macedonian question*, pp. 15-27. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2001.

categorized as a region or a geographic area, within today's modern border this region encompasses the whole of Macedonia, the Macedonian region of Greece and some parts in the south of Bulgaria. The second explanation that a Macedonian is a citizen of the current modern Republic of Macedonia. Thirdly we can categorise someone Macedonia who is ethnically Slav inhabitant in the region or the modern Macedonian state.⁶⁰ This fact is important in how the discourse has been evolved since 2001 in matters how the Albanians living in the country position themselves.

In the late 6th century, the Slavs arrived in the Balkan peninsula during which different forms of empires, kingdoms ruled the region up until the 14th century when the Ottomans conquered the peninsula and had a total power monopoly in the region. The monopoly rule of the Ottomans in the Balkans was not hostile in beginning to local cultures, their high level of tolerance in combination with their "millet system" allowed for the retention of the individual traditions and identities.⁶¹ However, in later stages of Ottoman rule during the 18th century, the relationship between local cultures and the sublime port started to exacerbate. The rise of nationalism in Greece, Serbia, and Macedonia changed the power balance between the local inhabitants and the Sublime Porte. However, the turning point was the war Russo-Turkish war of 1877–1878 contributed to the rise of national awakening movements all around the Balkan peninsula.⁶² The separate national awakening movements in Macedonia started as well during the 19th century with the creation of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) it was an organization founded in Thessaloniki in 1893. IMRO members organized the Ilinden uprising on the 2nd of August in 1903 in the city of Krusevo in today's western Macedonia, this premature uprising was destined to fail. Although the uprising failed because of ill preparations it had considerably strengthened the Macedonian national identity struggle.⁶³ Later during the Balkan wars (1912-1913), Macedonia was separated into three regions between Vardar Macedonia to Serbia, Pirin Macedonia under Bulgaria, and Aegean Macedonia under Greece. The separation of the territory of Macedonia and the Serbianization of Vardar Macedonia was a deep wound for Macedonian identity. Adding to this pain was also the constant denial of Macedonian identity at that time by all players in the region i.e., Serbia,

⁶⁰ Augustinos, Gerasimos. "Who Are the Macedonians? by Hugh Poulton." (1997): 139.

⁶¹ Barkey, Karen, and George Gavrilis. "The Ottoman millet system: Non-territorial autonomy and its contemporary legacy." *Ethnopolitics* 15, no. 1 (2016): 24-42.

⁶² Jelavich, Charles, and Barbara Jelavich. *The establishment of the Balkan national states, 1804-1920*. University of Washington Press, 2012.

⁶³ Gounaris, Basil C. "Social cleavages and national" awakening" in Ottoman Macedonia." *East European Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (1995): 409-426.

Bulgaria, and especially the Greeks would consider Macedonians just Slavic speaking Greeks.⁶⁴ On the other hand Albanian patriotic movements the Albanians were pre-occupied with their own national movement which led to the independence of Albania in 1912, this memory will be important for the 2001 conflict. Albanian elite would see Macedonian national struggle not as their own rather as something external.

At this point after the Balkan wars, the epicentre of Macedonian identity development was in Vardar Macedonia (current territory of Macedonia), when in 1918 Vardar Macedonia was included in the Serb, Croat, and Sloven Kingdom the heavy Serbianization of the region started. Macedonians were not fond of the policies under the kingdom therefore in 1944 they initially welcomed the Bulgarian occupation of the region where they immediately found themselves under the Bulgarization process.⁶⁵ This period was brief and ended when Yugoslavia was created, and Macedonia identity and region was included as a separate distinctive entity.⁶⁶ Before the second world war scholars like Ramet would argue that Macedonian considered themselves Bulgarians however when the region joined the Yugoslavian federation things changed.⁶⁷ Yugoslav authorities started actively to stop pro-Bulgarian feelings among the Macedonian population, to this day a legacy that haunts the region is that whether Tito created Macedonian identity and removing Bulgarian one.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, during the Yugoslavian era Macedonian identity grew out to be a serious endeavour and the Republic of Macedonia was accepted as a federal unit of Yugoslavia.⁶⁹ After the fall of Yugoslavia Macedonian identity was still an issue that haunts the current political elite there, internal, and external threats. External threats were mostly coming from the neighbours, for example, apart from Albania and Kosovo, every other neighbour did not recognize a part of the identity or the whole status of Macedonia. Greece up until the Prespa Agreement was denying Macedonian statehood

⁶⁴ Hugh Poulton; Rossos, Andrew. *Macedonia and the Macedonians: a history*. Hoover Press, 2013. Roudometof, Victor. *Collective memory, national identity, and ethnic conflict: Greece, Bulgaria, and the Macedonian question*, 2002.

⁶⁵ Kazamias, George. "'The Usual Bulgarian Stratagems': The Big Three and the End of the Bulgarian Occupation of Greek Eastern Macedonia and Thrace, September–October 1944." *European History Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (1999): 323-347.

⁶⁶ Thiessen, Ilka, and Lika Thiessen. *Waiting for Macedonia: identity in a changing world*, 2007.

⁶⁷ Ramet, Sabrina P. *Civic and uncivic values in Macedonia: value transformation, education, and media*, 2013.

⁶⁸ Parkas, Chris C. "The United States, Greece, and the Macedonian Issue: The Tito Legacy that Haunts the Southern Balkans." *World Affairs* 159, no. 3 (1997): 103-108.

⁶⁹ Koneska, Cvete. *After ethnic conflict: Policymaking in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia*. PP 61, 2016.

altogether, Serbian Orthodox Church does not recognize the Macedonian Church. Bulgaria on the other hand goes one step further and does not recognize the official language of Macedonia (they consider it a Bulgarian dialect) and they do not recognize the official interpretation of historical figures in Macedonia, in 2020 they threatened Macedonia with an EU accession veto.⁷⁰ The issue regarding Macedonian identity escalated recently when Bulgarian Defence Minister Krasimir Karakachanov said North Macedonia can only become an EU member if it became a part of Bulgaria or an Albanian province.⁷¹ Messages like these when entering Macedonian discourse can impact the inter-ethnic relationship for the worse. Albanian's separatist feelings would increase and Macedonian feelings of losing control of the state would increase as well. This could lead to future events where Albanians would arm themselves to separate from North Macedonia and join Albania.

Apart from external contestations Macedonia must deal also with internal issues, one of them being the sizable portion of Albanians living in western part of the country and other minorities like the Turks, Vlachs, Serbs and Roma. Albanian rising numerical power and their political movements during Yugoslavia for more rights have probably scared Macedonian political elite after the independence of the country in 1991. From Macedonian perspective the existence of their identity is dependent on the existence of the state and having a numerical majority over other ethnic groups.⁷² Before going to the next two sub-chapters were explained how politics of fear and struggle for recognition has shaped inter-ethnic politics and institutions. Here I must mention numerical proportions of Albanians and Macedonians in the country and their geographical position in the country. The country is statistically a multi confessional and multi-ethnic country and communities live in largely homogeneous environment where Albanians live in the west of the country and Macedonians on the east. Strangely enough the latest census is the 2002 one where out of 2,022,547 inhabitants 64.2% of them are Macedonians, 25.2% Albanians and the rest are Roma and Turkish.⁷³ As Rizvan Sulejmani pointed out that when analysing this number, the ratio between Macedonians vs. Albanians is 2.5:1, the ratio Albanians vs. other communities is 2.3:1, while the ratio Macedonians vs. other communities

⁷⁰ "Completely Irrational!": Skopje Anger at Bulgaria's EU Membership Veto." euronews, December 9, 2020. <https://www.euronews.com/2020/12/09/north-macedonia-pm-criticises-bulgaria-s-veto-of-eu-membership-talks>.

⁷¹ Antonopoulos, Paul. "Skopje To Decide Between Halting Yugoslav-Era Propaganda Against Bulgaria And Albanian Separatism." Greek City Times, February 9, 2021. <https://greekcitytimes.com/2021/02/10/skopje-yugoslav-bulgaria-albania/>.

⁷² Rossos, Andrew. Macedonia and the Macedonians: a history. Page 301, 2013.

⁷³ Државен завод за статистика. <http://www.stat.gov.mk/>.

is 1.8:1.⁷⁴ This is very close to the ratio of the German-, French- and Italian-speaking groups in Switzerland.⁷⁵ Ethnic maps of the country can be found everywhere for example the one published by The Economist is the most recent one, published in 2017.⁷⁶

3.2 Politics and Institutions before OFA

One can argue that the spirit of the 90s in the Balkans was filled with nationalism and democracy, at the same time Yugoslavia started to crumble. Amid this ambiguity, Macedonia opted for independence. When describing the two periods of Macedonian history I did not try to detail every single event or clash between political elites in Macedonia. Instead, what needs to be done to achieve my goals I wrote the empirical parts presenting how the four consociational elements i.e., veto, proportionality, greater coalitions, and autonomy have been before and after the OFA.

The transition from Yugoslavia to modern Macedonia was a difficult one, the Albanians in Kosovo and western Macedonia were frustrated when Milosevic in 1989 abolished Kosovo's autonomy. During the same time, the Socialist Republic of Macedonia rushed to change the constitution where they declared the Socialist Republic of Macedonia as "the national state of the Macedonian people," removing the phrase "and of Albanian and Turkish people" from the 1974 constitution.⁷⁷ Changing the constitution downgraded the status of Albanians and Turks to minority status, events like this will continue to follow Macedonia even after independence. Later the President of PDP one of the biggest Albanian political parties between 1991 until 2001 would say that the constitution is the crisis generator in the Republic of Macedonia.⁷⁸ Albanians saw this their rights being downgraded, and their culture, language and education being cornered therefore a sense of fear started to grow and inter-ethnic communication becomes harder. This would become immediately clear with the referendum for the

⁷⁴ Sulejmani, Rirvan. "Consensus democracy and power-sharing in Macedonia." *Power Sharing and the Implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement*. Skopje: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2008): 131-164.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ "A Macedonian Breakdown Gets Europe's Attention." *The Economist*. The Economist Newspaper. Accessed May 6, 2021. <https://www.economist.com/europe/2017/03/09/a-macedonian-breakdown-gets-europes-attention>.

⁷⁷ Rogel, Carole. "Kosovo: Where it all began." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 17, no. 1 (2003): 167-182.

⁷⁸ Sulejmani, Rirvan. "Consensus democracy and power-sharing in Macedonia." *Power Sharing and the Implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement*. Skopje: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2008): 131-164.

independence of 1991 when Albanians unanimously boycotted it. The Macedonians continued with the independence and a new constitution was approved and Macedonia was declared a nation-state for Macedonians only, exacerbating the relationships with Albanians even further. I would like to describe here the inter-ethnic power balance and the political institutions from the approval of the 1991 constitution until OFA.

Let us look at greater coalitions in Macedonia, there is even after the OFA no specific constitutional provision forcing an inter-ethnic government coalition. However, Inter-ethnic government coalition have been a norm ever since independence.⁷⁹ Coalition partners do not have to be the winners on one side, for example, there have been times when coalitions have been formed with the second-biggest party among Macedonian speaking and the second biggest party among Albanians. The first Macedonian government of 1990 was a technical government where every party was involved, it did not last that long until the next elections of 1992. Although in 1992 among Macedonian parties the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO–DPMNE) won this round of elections, they did not form the government. The 1992 government was formed between the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM) and the predominantly Albanian Party of Democratic Prosperity (PDP), even though SDSM did not win the elections. The second (1992) and third (1994) government was formed between SDSM and PDP but the third one of 1998 was formed between VMRO-DPMNE who won the elections and DPA (Democratic Party for Albanians) which did not win the most votes among Albanians, it ranked second. As we can observe is those inter-ethnic grand coalitions although not formalised by law they were using in practice, a bi-party political system between Macedonians and Albanians.

As seen above we can see those inter-ethnic coalitions were a non-written norm. However, the second element of consociationalism did not exist at all since the state was not meant to be that way. That is veto rights for the non-dominant groups, veto powers that could protect the Albanians from the tyranny of the majority for example language, symbols, and culture. Between 1990 and 2001 there were no veto rights that guaranteed Albanians any sort of protections however whenever political gridlocks would appear foreign ambassadors would intermediate like Gert Arens in 1991 and 1992.⁸⁰ However, I would like to present three

⁷⁹ No single paragraph in the Macedonian constitution implies inter-ethnic governmental coalitions.

⁸⁰ TIRANËS, UNIVERSITETI I., INSTITUTI I. STUDIMEVE EVROPIANE, and MARRËDHËNIE NDËRKOMBËTARE DHE DIPLOMACI. "Zhvillimet politiko-

examples where if such a tool would have been present just like it is present after the OFA we would have different discourse among political elites. The first example is the law on citizenship of 1992, this law was targeting Kosovar Albanians who during the times of Yugoslavia came in the 70s from Kosovo to Macedonia. The law made it impossible to gain citizenship for those that have not lived consequently for 15 years, this was targeting Kosovar Albanians.⁸¹ A compromise could not be reached at that time to settle this issue. The second example where veto powers given to Albanians could have protected them was regarding The Law on High Education. Albanians insisting that they should be allowed to have tertiary education in their mother tongue, finally in 1994 three Albanian dominated municipalities in western Macedonia created The University of Tetovo with their self-initiative.⁸² Although this initiative was supported by governing and non-governing Albanian parties, this was not legally accepted, and the pressure was made by the central government to close it, (after the OFA this institution will be legalized in 2004 and name University of Tetovo).⁸³ Years later in 1997 when there was an attempt to open the Faculty of Pedagogy in Albanian for Albanians, Macedonian students protested and chanted “Albanians to the gas chambers” and “Macedonia for Macedonians”.⁸⁴ The third example was regarding the law of the use of symbols, this political friction started when the charismatic mayor of Gostivar hoisted the Albanian in front of the municipality he was governing. In the aftermath of this Human Right Watch criticised how the government of Macedonia for handling this case badly first of all by imprisoning Rufi Osmani, and for the casualties during the protests in which three people lost their lives and many more were injured.⁸⁵ There were other cases where Albanians, where outvoted in issues

diplomatike në ish-Jugosllavi me theks të veçantë Kosova dhe Maqedonia 1981-2008." (2014).

⁸¹ Koppa, Maria-Eleni. "Ethnic Albanians in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: between nationality and citizenship." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 7, no. 4 (2001): 37-65. Holliday, Graham. 2005. "From Ethnic Privileging to Power-Sharing: Ethnic Dominance and Democracy in Macedonia." In *The fate of ethnic democracy in post-communist Europe* Eds, Smooha, Sammy, and Priit Järve 139–166. Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, 2005.

⁸² Kavaja, Kludjo. "Ethnicity, politics, and education in Macedonia." *European Journal of Education Studies* (2017).

⁸³ Ibid

⁸⁴ Piacentini, Arianna. *Ethnonationality's Evolution in Bosnia Herzegovina and Macedonia: Politics, Institutions, and Intergenerational Dis-continuities*. PP.58. Springer Nature, 2020.

⁸⁵ "Human Rights Groups Criticize Macedonian Court." Human Rights Watch, October 28, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/1998/02/20/human-rights-groups-criticize-macedonian-court>.

regarding culture, language, and higher education, in cases like these a veto power could have prevented Albanians being outvoted on issues important to them.

Proportional representation of Albanians in all governmental levels was always an issue during the 1991-2001 period. It was neither a tradition, law nor a norm promoting a more adequate representation of Albanians in governmental institutions. Example the percentage of MP in parliament would range from 19% to 15.8% from 1990 until 2001, and regarding ministerial positions they would get some symbolic ministries with limited powers.⁸⁶ However, other institutions would perform even worse compared to the parliament, for example, only 3% of Albanians worked for the state administration in 1998.⁸⁷ Similarly, the number of Albanians joining high-school education was at a precarious state, from the data that I have available the number of Albanians in elementary school in 1990/1991 was 27% while those graduating from high-school was 3.6%.⁸⁸

Segmental autonomy being the last pillar of consociationalism, this pillar did not exist at all in the constitution. Nearly all decision were made at a central level. Albanians being frustrated organized a referendum in 1992 where the question was “Are you in favour of political and territorial autonomy of the Albanians in Macedonia?”. Even though the organizers claimed it to be successful there are not many official documents available since the organizers were persecuted.⁸⁹ When reading the main laws that regulated how local governance should be organised, we can see that the central governance tried to keep them attached and depended to the centre. The two main laws were the Law on Local Governance of 1995 and the Law on Territorial division of 1996, where local governments can perform independently but act according to “law”. Which in real life translated to getting directories from the centre.

From what we can see so far, the history of institutions and politics from 1991 up until 2001 was not “equal”, not that there were racist or discriminatory laws but political culture and institutions available at that time did not produce inter-ethnic trust and equity. We can observe that although Albanians took part in the governments they were, their presence did not influence the decisions during that time. The status of Albanians did not upgrade from the times of Communism instead their life quality fell in areas like education, job prospects, use of symbols, safety, and participation in governmental institutions. Albanians created a big

⁸⁶ See election results and governmental coalition agreements of Macedonia between 1991-2001.

⁸⁷ “National statistical yearbook of Macedonia 1999” by Macedonian State Statistical Office. Figure 46.

⁸⁸ Ibid

⁸⁹ Stavrova, Biljana. "Macedonia: Drawing the Line." *Transitions Online* 08/17 (2004).

mistrust in governments, they started to not believe that solutions to their plight and truth come out of institutions therefore they turned to outer-institutional methods which resulted in the armed conflict of 2001.

3.3 Politics and Institutions after OFA

The Ohrid Framework Agreement was a simple 14-page document that introduces some of the key concepts of Arend Lijpharts consociationalism in Macedonian politics.⁹⁰ From reading the agreement we can see that consociational elements are present, however there is no mention of federalism or other forms of territorial separatism tools. The idea behind the agreement is not to create a bi-national state but to transform Macedonia from a mono-national state, purely a state for citizens. The new preamble does not simply state that Macedonia is a state of Macedonians people only, it adds that Macedonia a state of Macedonians, Albanians, Turks, Serbs, and others. However, this is not the case in real life, where most of the politics is all around the inter-ethnic relationship between Albanians and Macedonians. Even the signing of the 2001 agreement has been between Albanian and Macedonian politicians. From reading the agreement we can say that the major changes it introduces are: 1) Unitary state is here to stay. 2) Identity and cultures are guaranteed by the state. 3) Greater local autonomy for regions or municipalities.

In the previous section, I looked the history of Macedonia through the lens of the four elements of consociationalism, they are: grand coalition, proportional representation, veto rights, and segmental autonomy. Here I have done the same, for example as we saw previously that grand coalitions were a non-written norm before the OFA, it continued to be the same after the OFA. The difference is that after the OFA the state was perceived by Macedonians and Albanian elite as a bi-national one, Florian Bieber would call this partial co-ownership.⁹¹ As before the OFA, there were no special governing styles, a special partition of funds, special partition of ministries. Grand coalitions were up to political elites to decide how their partnership would look like, the only line in the agreement that touches this part would be section 1.3 where it says, “The multi-ethnic character of the society must be preserved and reflected in the public

⁹⁰ “Ohrid Framework Agreement.” OSCE. Accessed March 15, 2021. <https://www.osce.org/skopje/100622>.

⁹¹ Bieber, Florian. "Partial implementation, partial success: The case of Macedonia." *New challenges for power-sharing: Institutional and social reform in divided societies* (2005): 107-122.

life”. Some may be tempted to comment on this as a proportional representation of MPs and Ministerial positions however it is not, since the next line says, “adequate and just representation”. In practice, this has meant that more Albanians would be hired in high-level positions.

The second point of consociational democracy is proportional representation. Although proportional representation was not written in the agreement the number of Albanians employed in the administration grew exponentially after the OFA, since the agreement gave Albanian parties more leverage to ask for more governmental jobs.⁹² Public administration in Macedonia has been criticised for being ethnically stuffed and a resting place for political militants.⁹³ In addition to better representation in the public administration, Albanians got their University legalized and another private university called “South-East European University” in the Albanian language got opened in 2004, additionally, in 2016 a brand new University in the Albanian language opened in Skopje named after Mother Teresa. The two cases selected, Kumanovo and name change issue demonstrated proportional representation at work. For example, many of the policemen involved in the fight against the fighters in Kumanovo were Albanians and one of them lost his life, the same cannot be said for the Gostivar case.⁹⁴

The third element of consociational democracy is the existence of veto powers. The sections that deal with this are 5.1 and 5.2 in the Ohrid Agreement, where MPs that define themselves as minority i.e., Albanians have a veto power (double majority vote, the Badinter principle) in the parliament on issues regarding culture, symbols, language, and education. The same double majority vote in the parliament is required when electing Judges of the Constitutional Court, Security Council, or the Republican Judiciary Council. This indicates a clear difference from the pre-2001 period, now minorities have a form of power to protect themselves from the majority. Here the power of double majority vote has shown time and time again however the Albanians threatened negotiation team (this time they had also Albanians) that they will not accept a name that has Slavic connotation.⁹⁵

⁹² Politizimi në administratën publike të Maqedonisë. Analytica|Thinking Laboratory, 2011. <https://www.analyticamk.org/images/stories/files/report/2011/044/11044policyreport-sq.pdf>

⁹³ Daskalovski, Zhidas. "Democratic consolidation and the 'stateness' problem: The case of Macedonia." *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics* 3, no. 2 (2004): 52-66.

⁹⁴ VizionPlusAlbania. “8 Policë Të Vrarë Në Kumanovë, Mes Tyre Një Shqiptar - News, Lajme - Vizion Plus.” YouTube. YouTube, May 10, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JG8Auz24x3g&ab_channel=VizionPlusTV.

⁹⁵ televizioniKLAN. “Ali Ahmet, Maqedonia, Kufijte e Kosoves! (11 Shtator 2018).” YouTube. YouTube, September 11, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoBM-q51TW0&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=RTVKLAN.

Finally, the fourth and last element of consociationalism in Macedonia adopted after the 2001 OFA agreement is segmental autonomy. Here segmental autonomy should be understood in the framework of decentralisation as described by section 1.5.⁹⁶ The most important laws for municipalities that kickstarted the process of decentralization in Macedonia are these four laws: Law on Local Self-Government, the Law on the City of Skopje, the Law of Local Self-Government Finance and the fourth one the Law on Territorial Organization of the Local Self-Government in the Republic of Macedonia. From analysing these four important laws we can deduct that segmental autonomy is not a full Bosnia style autonomy, rather Macedonian elites have decided simply for more decentralisation. For example, financial decentralisation is not completely autonomous and not even new municipality border are made ethnically homogeneous. However, Albanians were happy to accept this form of decentralisation with the hope of achieving greater consideration in national political scene. In practical terms this means that out of 84 municipalities in Macedonia 16 have a majority Albanians which means the national flag of this community can be raised in all institutions inside the municipality and all documents are written in Macedonian and Albanian.⁹⁷ Another addition that OFA brought here was that the municipality councils can pick the chief of the police station following the recommendations by the Interior Ministry.⁹⁸

The important factor that should be factored in is that North Macedonian foreign policy looks much different than before the OFA. Although the country sought to join NATO and EU since its independence however no tangible progress until the turn of the millennium. NATO and EU membership has been top priority for both elites in Macedonia it gained importance since after OFA, however during the name change referendum Albanian's harbour a more strongly pro-NATO sentiment.⁹⁹ Macedonia's path towards NATO membership was impeded thanks to a veto by Greece in 2008 Bucharest summit. However, after much troubles, protests, an agreements, referendum and a constitutional change Macedonia was finally admitted as the

⁹⁶ The "Basic Principles" in the Framework Agreement: The development of the Local Self-Government is of crucial importance for securing citizens' participation in the democratic life and upgrading and respecting the identity of the communities".

⁹⁷ OFA, section 7.

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Marolov, Dejan. "The Euro-Atlantic aspirations of the Republic of Macedonia." *International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research* 13, no. 1 (2014): 268-273.

Bechev, Dimitar. "What next after the Failed Macedonian Referendum?" *North Macedonia | Al Jazeera*. Al Jazeera, October 2, 2018. <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2018/10/2/what-next-after-the-failed-macedonian-referendum/>.

30th member of NATO in 2019.¹⁰⁰ Regarding Macedonia's path to EU it also gained momentum in 2000 when the country formally approached the EU in 2000 by initiating the Stabilisation and Association Process and being the first country in the Balkans to sign the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) in April of 2001. It should be noticed that the SAA was signed in the middle of the 2001 conflict between UCK and the Macedonian state, this could be interpreted as an EU tool to influence Macedonian politics. Macedonia officially applied joining the EU in 2004 and since then its integration path has been depended on EU conditionality. The EU integration process has in return enforced consociationalism by calling for more democracy and more reforms to preserve and to strengthen inter-ethnic relations and to implement the Ohrid Framework Agreement (the EU was also a signatory of the OFA).¹⁰¹ Progress on EU membership was made with the name change and on 25 March 2020, the Council of the European Union decided to open accession negotiation.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Živković, Vukašin. "North Macedonia's NATO Membership: Decades-Long Ambition Finally Becomes a Reality." European Western Balkans, March 25, 2020. <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2020/03/26/north-macedonias-nato-membership-decades-long-ambition-finally-becomes-a-reality/>.

¹⁰¹ "Key Findings of the 2020 European Commission Report on North Macedonia." European Western Balkans, October 6, 2020. <https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2020/10/06/key-findings-of-the-2020-european-commission-report-on-north-macedonia/>.

¹⁰² "Council Conclusions on Enlargement and Stabilisation and Association Process - Albania and the Republic of North Macedonia." Consilium, March 25, 2020. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2020/03/25/council-conclusions-on-enlargement-and-stabilisation-and-association-process/>.

4. Methodological framework

My research design is going to use qualitative methods more specifically critical discourse analysis (CDA) of the political elite in the country, more details in the following sections. A diachronic discourse analysis is attempted to compare how political elite from both ethnic groups speak and construct their discourse before the OFA and after. The first phase will be from the independence of Macedonia in 1991 until the signing of the OFA in 2001 and the second phase will be from 2001 until 2020. To make it more feasible I will not monitor the whole timeline because of the huge amount of data; instead, I will take probes into the discourse around important events. Measuring the evolution of inter-ethnic relationship is done using these four parameters: a) Identification, b) Polarization, c) Vocabulary and d) Activities. By picking four crucial events in recent Macedonian history, two events before and two after the OFA we can see how political elites identify each other and what vocabulary they use. By using van Dijk's method, I hope to analyse discourse to discover what and how text, talk and communicative events play a role in power relationship between groups.

4.1 Methodological Approach: Diachronic Critical Discourse Analysis

Data or raw information has no meaning to itself; meaning is given.¹⁰³ With my thesis I use diachronic discourse analysis which is a research design with discourse analysis as a method. To understand if political elite discourse has changed after the introduction of consociationalism, a conflict management document adopted after 2001 in Macedonia. Waever argues that discourse analysis is a very useful tool that explains how political thoughts make sense.¹⁰⁴ Not just making sense discourse analysis can be used as a toolkit to for finding solutions for the “empirical, analytical and social puzzles”.¹⁰⁵ By using discourse analysis, we can understand the semantic, rhetorical aspects of speech. It will allow as well to understand interdependency between different language features. In my case I want to understand language

¹⁰³ Schreier, Margrit. *Qualitative Content Analysis in Practice*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications Ltd, 2012.

¹⁰⁴ Hansen, Lene, and Ole Waever. “Identity, Communities and Foreign Policy: Discourse Analysis as Foreign Policy Theory.” Essay. In *European Integration and National Identity: The Challenge of the Nordic States*, 26–27, 2002.

¹⁰⁵ Howarth, David R., and Jacob Torfing. “Achievements Arguments and Challenges.” Essay. In *Discourse Theory in European Politics: Identity, Policy, and Governance*, 22–22. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 2005.

and time including continuity and change. Give language some time and it becomes institutionalized and normalized.¹⁰⁶

The name of the tool that I will be using is critical discourse analysis (CDA), I must clarify that critical discourse analysis is a method and diachronic discourse analysis being a research design (diachronic meaning to be concerned with the study of changes occurring over a period). There is wide misunderstanding that in humanities and social sciences CDA is a special method of doing discourse analysis. In discourse studies all CDA methods can be used together with other relevant methods in humanities and social sciences.¹⁰⁷ In regard to my understanding of CDA most of my references are based on van Dijk mostly which I am discussing below. However another work by Wodak and Fairclough explains the main eight tenets of CDA in a compact way: 1. CDA addresses social problems. 2. Power relations are discursive. 3. Discourse constitutes society and culture. 4. Discourse does ideological work. 5. Discourse is historical. 6. The link between text and society is mediated. 7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory. 8. Discourse is a form of social action.¹⁰⁸

I choose CDA because it is problem oriented, and it is used for all sorts of purposes. In understanding inter-ethnic elite discourse in Macedonia, CDA is a useful tool that can explain how social practices are manifested. There are different CDA tools available to choose from however in my case I needed a tool that can help analyse social-cultural knowledge, rhetoric, socio-cognitive structures, attitudes, and ideology of the elite. Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach in doing discourse analysis is perfectly suitable since it has been widely used in papers dealing with nationalism, xenophobia and far right. In previous works discourse analysis has been used to understand consociationalism, like in Northern Ireland, Belgium, and Lebanon. Since consociationalism is depended on the cooperation of elite, CDA would be a better suit for my research.

In conclusion my research will analyse four events in total, two before and three after the Ohrid Framework Agreement. Criteria for choosing events to be analysed are death toll and extreme

¹⁰⁶ Krzyżanowski, Michał. "Normalization and the discursive construction of "new" norms and "new" normality: discourse in the paradoxes of populism and neoliberalism." (2020): 431-448.

¹⁰⁷ Titscher, Stefan, Michael Meyer, Ruth Wodak, Eva Vetter, and Bryan Jenner. *Methods of Text and Discourse Analysis*. Los Angeles, CA, 2015.

Wodak, Ruth, and Michael Meyer. *Methods of Critical Discourse Analysis*. London et al., 2009.

¹⁰⁸ van Dijk, Teun A, ed. "Discourse as Social Interaction: Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction." Essay. In *Critical Discourse Analysis 2*, 2:258–84. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997.

important events that triggered a constitutional change or both combined. Therefore, before OFA I picked one event that had the most death tolls and one that triggered a constitutional change. Gostivar crisis of 1997 for having a death toll of three people and the 2001-armed conflict for triggering the constitutional changes through the Ohrid Agreement. Gostivar crisis of 1997 and 2001 war are the events before the agreement and after the agreement are clashes in Kumanovo which had a total death toll of twenty-two and the name referendum in October of 2018 which was the most controversial for the political elite in the country and did change the constitution. Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach is used in this research; the following sub-chapter will expand further on his main ideas.¹⁰⁹

4.1.1 Critical discourse analysis Van Dijk's approach

As mentioned above the aim of my thesis is to understand the interchanging political elite discourse. Since the problem in North Macedonia is a bipolarity between two major ethnic groups, elites tend to speak on behalf of their own group which they belong. This would mean that I will analyse the discourse and try to find for repetitive patterns in the way how political elites talk on several key concepts before and after OFA. Political parties in North Macedonia tend to have strong hierarchical structure and leaders tend to stay for a long time as heads of parties and usually are elected without an opponent during party congresses.¹¹⁰ Therefore it is easy to pinpoint who the elites are, the leader and people close to him represent the interests of the party. Guisinger and Saunders argues that the elite are those who can create, maintain, and supply the masses with their own ideas and beliefs.¹¹¹ The researcher will focus on several key concepts for example me focusing on the four parameters that will be critically related to discourse and society. As mentioned on the previous section about CDA, there are different ways to do CDA and they can be quite diverse and do not have a uniform theoretical or

¹⁰⁹ Van Dijk, Teun A. "Critical discourse studies: A sociocognitive approach." *Methods of critical discourse analysis* 2, no. 1 (2009): 62-86.

¹¹⁰ Casal Bértoa, Fernando, and Dane Taleski. "Regulating party politics in the Western Balkans: the legal sources of party system development in Macedonia." *Democratization* 23, no. 3 (2016): 545-567.

Wojnicki, Jacek. "The formation of the Party System in the Republic of Macedonia." *Annales, Universitatis Marie Curie-Skłodowska, Sectio M, Balcaniensis et carpathiensis* 1 (2016): 157-72.

¹¹¹ Guisinger, Alexandra, and Elizabeth N. Saunders. "Mapping the boundaries of elite cues: How elites shape mass opinion across international issues." *International Studies Quarterly* 61, no. 2 (2017): 425-441.

analytical concept. Conventional scholars in CDA would use vocabulary like “race”, “power”, “institutions”, “reproduction” and other diverse ideas therefore they will focus on several key concepts and do critical discourse.

In regards the socio-cognitive structure presented by Van Dijk since this will help us further down the road. The three structures are:

- I. Understanding the socio-cultural knowledge of the elite and their voters is crucial.
The shared culture or information among the ethnic group members.
- II. Their shared xenophobic attitude towards their outer circle.
- III. Their ideological stance compared to outer groups.

These points above are helpful in shaping the triangular socio-cognitive account of both Macedonian and Albanian political elite discourse. Here I will add some different patterns related to political elite rhetoric in North Macedonia:

- I. The nationalistic component, for example with the claim of “Macedonia for Macedonians” or “West Macedonia is Albanian” and other specific arguments and points claimed by both sides.
- II. Ethnically shared prejudices and doctrines. The reframing of past legacies to fit current political situations by elites.
- III. The reproduction of inequalities and domination by Albanian political elites towards Macedonians.

As mentioned above that CDA scholars will focus on key concepts and do discourse, these parameters above will help me decompose and analyse the socio-cognitive account of Macedonian and Albanian political elite discourse in conjunction with the four sub-division mentioned below.

CDA deals with the relationship between the discourse of power i.e., domination, and dissent however this thesis does not aim to study the power or domination itself but rather to understand the consequences of Consociationalism in shifting discourse. Since Consociationalism did change power balance and to understand the shifting discourse I have set a specific database of discourses, which are presented below, and have decomposed each of them into discourse components. This will solidify my methodological process and create a miscellaneous analysis structure based on four main points suggested by Van Dijk¹¹²:

¹¹² Van Dijk, Teun A. "Critical discourse studies: A socio-cognitive approach." *Methods of critical discourse analysis* 2, no. 1 (2009): 62-86.

- I. Identification – what are the main tags, classifications that elites use to describe the others? For example, the use of religion, ethnicity, or language. One cannot speak about others without identifying them, therefore I will analyse how they are used since the independence and do they have the same meaning?
- II. Use of vocabulary – Understanding the undertone of vocabulary used for self-description and the description of others. Is the vocabulary used positive, negative, or neutral?
- III. Polarization – Here I will try to look how elites form speech, do they use pronouns “we”, “us” or “ours”, “yours” to create polarization? Learning the way language is created to establish inter-ethnic relationship during the four crucial events in Macedonian history that I will work later. Basically, in general terms I want to see if there is a common element that holds them together and how far polarization can go.
- IV. Activities – What kind of language is used when a group of elites does any kind of activity ranging from protesting to the use of national symbols, speaking in native language.

The above-mentioned tools should suffice to answer my main research question, which is: Did the discourse of North Macedonian elites change towards greater inclusivity before and after the implementation of the OFA taking those four parameters into account? Another point to be made here is to understand that after reading a huge variety of literature in CDA I believe Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach is more suitable for my thesis for two reasons compared to for example Fairclough's approach. The first reason is that the van Dijk's approach is more suitable because it focuses not just on rhetoric but on discourse as shaping basic forms of social cognition. Thus, what the political elites say about the other group reflects the socially acceptable 'truth', which then shapes the behaviour. The second reason is that Van Dijk's approach tackles political issues. CDA according to van Dijk should analyse texts to discover what and how “structures, strategies or other properties of text, talk, verbal interaction or communicative events” play a role in power relationship between groups.¹¹³

I believe that the OFA changed the power dynamics in North Macedonia, and it is one of the main reasons for change in discourse in conjunction with other external factors. A political deal

¹¹³ Van Dijk, Teun A. "Principles of critical discourse analysis." *Discourse & society* 4, no. 2 (1993): 249-283.

that changed the power balance where Albanians gain more access political, economic, and educational institutions thanks to consociationalism we can observe a shift of inter-ethnic political elite interactions as well. I believe that using diachronic research design with discourse analysis as a method, it can accurately prove the shift of political elite discourse.

4.2 Data collection

Since I am using qualitative methodology, I will collect discourse in textual, audio only, audio, and visual form. Discourse collected is obtained from primary sources and/or secondary sources e.g., newspapers articles, social media and only in Macedonian or Albanian language. The analysis will employ discourse from the political elite of the country, of all the major parties at the given time of the case. By political elite I mean party leaders, party deputy leaders, members of the parliament, party members with governmental and other party positions. Parties that are mentioned in my thesis are: VMRO-DPMN, LSDM, BDI, PDSH, PPD and Levizja Besa.¹¹⁴

The search for discourse has been carried out in these websites: a) Google advanced search was used (by advanced I mean tweaking the time range of the engine to fit every specific event); b) plus.mk.cobiss.net (Mutual electronic bibliographic catalogue database of the Republic of Northern Macedonia), c) Social media platforms (only facebook.com, twitter.com, Youtube.com). Terms used for the search are: “Gostivar 1997”, “2001 conflict”, “Kumanovo clashes of 2015” and “Prespa name change of 2018”. For the discourse to be analysed four criteria’s must be fulfilled: a) search term should be observed more than twice, b) discourse created by a political elite as mentioned in the previous paragraph c) within the given timeframe d) original text language either Macedonian or Albanian. It should be stated that the number of discourses before the Agreement are relatively lower compared to events after the Agreement however the total amount of discourse is represented below.

Gostivar crisis of 1997	30
Conflict of 2001	30
Kumanovo clashes	40
The name issue	40

¹¹⁴ Party acronyms are in original language.

I sampled data around key events and had to be flexible regarding the timeframe by flexible I mean that I have added six months of discourse prior to the event and one year after to develop a better picture. The reason for the long timeframe is that all four events lasted in average between six months and one year, therefore understanding discourse leading to the event is useful. Apart from that the wider timeframe allows me to better include all relevant and important discourse.

4.2.1 The limitations of the research method

The main drawbacks when using qualitative methods i.e., discourse analysis are four. First drawback is that I have two cases for the pre-Agreement period (1991-2001) and two events for the after-Agreement period (2001-2021). One must understand that because Consociationalism is a political elite dependent conflict prevention/management policy, I had to focus only on major events to understand if the policy works what it promises. There simply was no relevant major event after Agreement and Consociationalism can be better evaluated on how political elite acts on crisis. Secondly, it is impossible to read, understand and analyse all the discursive material available for a given topic. However, the most important discourse is included on the criteria of relevance and how often the keywords of the event are mentioned. Thirdly, focusing only on political elites is also relatively limiting since to better understand inter-ethnic discourse, we must analyse the wider public opinion and discourse on the chosen cases. However, since in our case consociationalism is a top-down elite driven approach, doing political elite discourse would suffice. Fourth point, the main drawback of a qualitative method is that it is prone to bias by the authors' interpretation, the likely hood of it being one sided is high. Despite all the drawbacks everyone would argue including Wodak, Milliken, Dunn and Neumann that this is not a problem, in fact discourse analysis is a useful tool to better understand how complex language is and at the same time understanding how socio-cultural structures affect language and vice versa.¹¹⁵ Finally, the most important limitation in my work would be that even as consociationalism has impacted Macedonia in reducing inter-ethnic tensions and changed political discourse for the better, can one present this as the only possible

¹¹⁵ Wodak, Ruth, Michael Meyer, and Martin Reisigl. "The Discourse Historical Approach." Essay. In *Methods Of Critical Discourse Studies*, 24–26, 2015.

Dunn, Kevin C., and Iver B. Neumann. *Undertaking Discourse Analysis for Social Research*. Ann Arbor, MI, 2019.

Milliken, Jennifer. "The study of discourse in international relations: A critique of research and methods." *European journal of international relations* 5, no. 2 (1999): 225-254.

explanation? There might be alternative explanations why inter-ethnic tensions are declining, like foreign pressure from the US, the EU and/or NATO, regional pressure from its neighbours like the most vocal ones Greece and Bulgaria.

Yes, other internal and external factors can determine the success of consociationalism, but if it is implemented in its entirety as explained in the theoretical part then this operating system can work. For example, one can argue that consociationalism failed in Lebanon because of regional tensions or that the success in Austria and the Netherlands is because of them joining the EU or because of the decline in the importance of religion.

As already mentioned, Wilson argued that in a very hostile situation where both parties have reached for their weapons in hopes to deal with their differences Consociationalism is the right approach.¹¹⁶ In the case of North Macedonia Consociationalism itself has been brought by external powers (the US and the EU being the signatories of the OFA) and still to this day I argue that they play an important role in enforcing peace and stability through soft power.¹¹⁷ For sure there have been other factors that could have influenced the political elite discourse in North Macedonia for example neighbouring countries like Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria or NATO membership aspirations however by far the biggest influence in Macedonian discourse has been the EU conditionality. EU conditionality is tied to North Macedonian aspiration to join the Union. However, EU conditionality has been focused on helping Macedonia to carry out the 2001 agreement by further reforming the judiciary and implementing further decentralisation in the country namely further deepening of consociational practices in the country.¹¹⁸ Therefore I believe that consociationalism worked in conjunction with the main external factors like the EU. Since the EU was an actor in the signing of the agreement, we can expect that they are focused on the successful implementation of the Agreement. The second part of the conjunction argument is that the expectations of domestic actors were also shaped by the OFA, so in a way it was a focal point of the transformation.

¹¹⁶ Wilson, Matthew Charles. "A Closer Look at the Limits of Consociationalism." *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 5 (2019): 700–733. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414019858956>.

¹¹⁷ Mulchinock, Niall. *NATO and the Western Balkans: From neutral spectator to proactive peacemaker*. Springer, 2017.

Patalakh, Artem. "EU soft power in the eastern neighbourhood and the Western Balkans in the context of crises." *Baltic Journal of European Studies* 7, no. 2 (2017): 148-167.

¹¹⁸ Peshkopia, Ridvan. *Conditioning Democratization: Institutional Reforms and EU Membership Conditionality in Albania and Macedonia*, 2014.

What this thesis aims to prove is that that with more and more Albanian elites gaining access to political, economic, and educational institutions of the state thanks to consociationalism, we can observe a shift in inter-ethnic relations. If access to these institutions would have been denied or language and cultural rights restricted, we would have a different picture of the country.

5. Empirical analysis

As demonstrated in the literature review section, institutions and politics have been affected in how they work and operate by the Ohrid agreement. Therefore, this point in the history of Macedonia serves as a turning point for the political scene in the country.

Since then, 13 August is commemorated every year and has been important. In the methodology part I described how I picked the events because the timespan is considerable, in measuring the role consociationalism before and after it was implemented, I have chosen these four very important events in the history of Macedonia. The Gostivar protests of 1997 which resulted in three deaths and many wounded; the armed conflict of 2001 which eventually led to the Ohrid Agreement; the clashes in Kumanovo and the name change to North Macedonia in 2018. In each of the four events analysed I will present a short background story and will do the analysis on the four tools provided by Van Dijk: Identification, Use of vocabulary, Polarization and Activities.

5.1 Gostivar 1997

Before we jump to this case, a little background information is necessary regarding the Gostivar incident of 1997. The unrest started immediately after the DPA¹¹⁹ party won the local elections in Gostivar in December of 1996 and they decided to put Albanian national symbols (flag, heroes) inside the buildings and the Albanian and Turkish flag in front of the municipality building despite this being banned by the Constitutional Court. The following days Macedonian parties announced that they would take it down however they did not take it immediately until the night of the 8th of July of 1997. Police raids took the flags down and the next morning the city was filled with protesters which used Molotov cocktails and there were some shootings from the balconies and 3 people died and many more got injured.¹²⁰ Therefore speeches that would be included here for the analysis are from December of 1996 to December of 1997.

Let us start analysing identification (I) during the 1997 unrests, the language used from both sides at some points appears to be vague and generic especially in the beginning there were no harsh tones used to describe each other. However, during the month of May we have stronger use of language to differentiate between us alike the Mayor of Gostivar saying “*Neve nuk na*

¹¹⁹ Democratic Party of Albanians (In Albanian PDSH-Partia Demokratike Shqipëtare).

¹²⁰ Makedonier. “Nemiri Vo Gostivar i Tetovo Vo 1997 (1).” YouTube, May 26, 2007.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfG0BWMtYPA&ab_channel=Makedonier. First transmitted on the 10.07.1997

zgjodhi qeveria e Maqedonisë, parlamenti ose presidenti, por na zgjodhët ju dhe mandatin tonë juve do tua japim. Ne do të marrim përsipër vetëm vullnetin tuaj politik” (we were not chosen by the president, parliament or Macedonian government we are chosen by you, the people of this city and will listen only to your will) with this speech here Rufi Osmani tries to frame the issue as us the periphery and those in the centre who do not share the same political goals and symbols.¹²¹ He tries to establish that the identity of the people from that city is different from those in the capital city, however on the other hand he made this identification more clearer when secret video recordings by the police reveal that on 26 May 1997 he said “Gostivari është një qytet Shqiptar” (Gostivar is an Albanian city).¹²² On the other hand after the July events the Interior Minister at the time who was ethnically Macedonian would say on national TV “*ние извршуваме државна должност, да ја штитиме држава, да го заштитиме интегритетот. што со активностите на тој албански политички субјект, кој има позиција во локалната власт и кој покажува цел да не биде дел од сеопфатниот државен систем.*” (we perform state duty, to protect the Macedonian state, to protect the integrity of the territory, etc. The activities of that Albanian political parties, which have the local government, and which shows aim to not be part state system, to act separately and even not to accept the decisions of the central state).¹²³ There can be no state if certain segments in that state are not ready to implement the decisions, laws, which are passed to the Parliament, the Executive and other institutions in the state. He identified Albanians as separatists and not respecting the existing laws of the state and working against the interests of the state and any action taken by the police is here to protect the Macedonian state from those separatists. Dime Gjurev who was a high-ranking official of SDSM and Police Chief of Gostivar he would describe the Albanian protesters as “*екстремисти кои се криеја низ градските продавници и станови*” (extremists who were hiding in around the town shops and apartments).¹²⁴ Polarization (II) during these unrests can be not ignored from both sides, from all the speeches given and interviews gathered what I can conclude is that the two poles are the rule breakers i.e., the Albanians and the law-and-order keepers i.e., Macedonians. The leader of PDSH (Albanian party) would call the handling of the police against the protestors as inhumane and incompetent live on National Television. He would say that “*...ситуацијата е многу напната, полицијата постапува неконтролирано кон граѓаните и сметаме дека целата*

¹²¹ First broadcasted on Macedonian National Television, 24.05.1997.

¹²² Court verdict K. nr 213/97, September 17, 1997.

¹²³ First broadcasted on Macedonian National Television, 19.07.1997.

¹²⁴ Dime Gjurev interview with Human Rights Watch, Skopje, December 18, 1997.

оваа ситуација е незрел производ на полицијата, која сакаше брутално да ги реши политичките проблеми...” (the situation is very tense, the police acted uncontrollably towards the citizens and we think that during this whole situation the police acted in an unprofessional way, which wanted to brutally resolve political problems).¹²⁵ On the other hand the Interior minister in an article for Nova Makedonija titled “Полицијата дејствуваше според прописите” (Police was acting according to the regulations), said that during the 9th of July when they raided the Municipality buildings they acted according to the procedures however “...a group of 200 people in 07:00AM would use force and violate public peace...”.¹²⁶ The clearest polarisation from all the speeches I analysed was that Albanian elite was portrayed as trouble makers, stubborn and challenging the status quo while Macedonians were portrayed as inhumane and not respecting Albanian national symbols.

When analysing the vocabulary (III) during this period we can group them into two groups, first would be terms associated with securitization like *интегритет на државата, закон и ред, јавен ред, безбедност* (state integrity, law and order, public order, security). Both sides would use these terms on many occasions however Macedonian Interior Minister and Macedonian members of the Parliament would use it more than Albanian counterparts. Second group would be descriptive vocabulary of the others, how Albanian elite would describe the Macedonians and the other way around. Albanians would describe the Macedonians as “*shovinistë, antinjerëzorë, shtypës*” (chauvinists, anti-humans, oppressors) however these terms would appear in Albanian only media outlets or in parliamentary speeches.¹²⁷ However the Albanian opposition MPs at that time, PDSH members would use these above terms more often than governing PPD since Rufe Osmani was their member. Macedonian elites like the president would use terms like law breakers, extremists, separatists.¹²⁸

Regarding activities (IV) carried out by the elites at that time four activities are important to be mentioned here. The first one would be the imprisonment of many Albanian political elites of PDSH starting from Mayor Rufe Osmani to spokesman of the PDSH Ernat Fejzullahu, and other activist like Sevret Ceka, and Afet Thaçi (brother of PDSH leader). Apart from just being

¹²⁵ First broadcasted on Macedonian National Television, 19.07.1997.

¹²⁶ " Полицијата дејствуваше според прописите", Nova Makedonija, July 25, 1997.

¹²⁷ Joint statement of the DPA leader (Albanian party in Macedonia) and other regional Albanian party leaders from Kosovo and Albania. Gazeta “Flaka e vëllazërimit”, Aksion policor nën ndikimin e regjimit serb, 12, July, 1997.

¹²⁸ President of the state Kiro Gligorov indirectly calling Albanian elites as separatists when he said the state does not tolerate anyone to create a parallel state for the Newspaper “Вечер”, Владата не толерира паралелни држави, 11, July, 1997.

detained they would be called separatists or extremists as mentioned above. The second activity carried out by the elites is that the next day after the unrest and some of the Albanian elites were detained. Then Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski paid a visit to the police station in Gostivar and gave them a “thumbs up” meaning that they did a great job which gave the message to the Albanian elites that the government will use force to maintain order.¹²⁹ The third important activity during this period is also the constant meeting of Albanian elites from Macedonia with those from Kosovo and Albania and getting constant verbal support from the Prime Minister of Albania Sali Berisha and members of LDK from Kosovo. Newspapers in Macedonian language would document these events and cite their speeches, they considered it as an act of foreign intervention in Macedonian politics.¹³⁰ For example in a joint statement from PDSH leader and LDK leader would describe the acts in Gostivar as “Masakrimi në Gostivar është një përpjekje për të imponuar me forcë konceptin maqedono-shovinist për shtetin e Maqedonisë, si shtet i vetëm të maqedonasve dhe pozitën e nënshtruar për shqiptarët dhe të tjerët” meaning (The Gostivar massacre is an attempt to forcefully impose the Macedonian-chauvinist concept on the state of Macedonia, as the only state of the Macedonians and the submissive position for the Albanians and others.).¹³¹ To conclude from these four parts, we can see that the Albanian elites would use harsh words in describing the Macedonian elite and participate personally in violent protests, on the other hand Macedonians would use harsh insulting language and use brute force to deal with protestors. Between the line we can see the request for recognition by the Albanian elites and Macedonians asking for law and order namely keeping the status quo.

5.2 Conflict of 2001

The conflict of 2001 was a short skirmish between the Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA) or UCK in Albanian and the Government of Macedonia. Most of their members were homegrown guerrilla fighters with war experience in Kosovo, the charismatic leader Ali Ahmeti would lead them with the wealth of experience he gained from Kosovo.¹³² In the beginning of the conflict they would not have international support, but the international

¹²⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. “Macedonia: Police Violence: Official Thumbs Up.” Refworld, April 1, 1998. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6a83314.html>.

¹³⁰ Newspaper “Вечер”, Недозволиво мешање во внатрешните работи, 14, July, 1997.

¹³¹ Newspaper “Flaka e vëllazërimit”, Aksion policor nën ndikimin e regjimit serb, 12, July, 1997.

¹³² “EUROPE, Macedonia | Who Are the Rebels?” BBC News. BBC, March 20, 2001. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1231596.stm>.

community refused to label them terrorists, from what I observed they would describe them as “rebels” “uprising” “insurgency group”.

The conflict lasted for 9 months from 22 January until 13 August of the same year. January of 2001 being the pivoting point, therefore here I will include discourse from June of 2000 until January of 2002. The number of civilian casualties is believed to be around 90 and the military ones around 150-200.¹³³ The NLA army would attack in villages in the North-western part of the country and temporary seize the city of Tetovo. In March of that year the government started a full-scale counter surgency campaign and refused to negotiate with the insurgency group but was ready to negotiate through Albanian parties present in the parliament. During this period there were some intermittent ceasefires, but the conflict eventually ended when the rebels agreed to hand their guns to an ad-hoc NATO mission and sign the Ohrid Agreement Framework on 13-August of 2001.

Identification (I) during the 2001 conflict is a bit different from the previous case of Gostivar, with the appearance of guerrillas in the scene in the beginning of the conflict Albanian parties had mixed feelings compared to Gostivar. For example, in an interview the deputy leader of PDSH Menduh Thaçi replied to a question and did not react to the term “terrorist” used for the rebels “*чести терористички напади во земјата*” (frequent terrorist attacks in the country). He continued and said among other things that “*тероризмот е тероризам, што ќе му нанесе повеќе штета на албанскиот народ*” (terrorism is terrorism, which will do more harm to the Albanian people).¹³⁴ He identified any threat to the Macedonian state as a threat to Albanian people in the country by saying “*Непријателите на Македонија се исто така непријатели на албанскиот народ*” (The enemies of Macedonia are also enemies of the Albanian people).¹³⁵ But what can be observed as well is that the governing PDSH changed their stance when the crisis deepened and did not identify the guerrilla fighters as terrorists. On 6 April during a meeting Arben Xhaferi the leader of PDSH reacted when British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook used the term “terrorist” for the rebels. Even though Arben Xhaferi was an opponent of UCK he reacted to the statement of Robin Cook by saying “*Тие не можат да бидат терористи ... имаме востание*” (They cannot be terrorists ... we have an uprising).¹³⁶

¹³³ Phillips, John. “What Options for Macedonia.” Essay. In Macedonia: Warlords and Rebels in the Balkans, 220–22. London: I.B. Tauris, 2004.

¹³⁴ Newspaper “Nova Makedonia”, 08, Feb 2001.

¹³⁵ Ibid

¹³⁶ Newspaper “Nova Makedonia”, 06, Apr 2001.

An UCK in many of their speeches would identify their cause as self-defence against the aggressors namely the Macedonians. For example, in their statement for the public opinion released on 15 March they stated that *“forcat tona janë në vetëmbrojtje, luftime me forcat agresive të pushtet mbajtësve”* (Our forces are in self-defence, fighting with the aggressive forces of those in power).¹³⁷ On the other hand, Macedonian Prime Minister Ljubco Georgievski who was a member of VMRO identified the UCK as a terrorist group and European Taliban's by saying *“...да се создадат нови талибанци во Европа...”* (create a new Taliban in Europe).¹³⁸ From this general overview we can see that the main identification among political ethnic elite is the same however Albanian elites in the beginning distanced themselves from the guerrilla uprising.

Polarization (II) among elites was evident on many issues. Polarizing language has been evident during the whole conflict however what could be observed from the data gathered according to the criteria described in the methodology part we can see two main polarizing topics. First polarizing topic was defining who the guerrilla fighters are and second topic how to deal with the issue. On the first polarizing issue regarding who the guerrillas are the Prime Minister Nikola Georgievski would claim they are foreigners from Kosovo by saying *“Оваа агресија за нас не е тајно пристаниште што се планира и максимално се спроведува со логистичка поддршка на политичките структури на Косово”* (This aggression for us is not a secret but it is planned and implemented with a high precision and with the logistical support of the political structures in Kosovo).¹³⁹ Here the Prime Minister tries to create a pole by identifying the guerrillas as “they” by alluding they are foreigners and not Macedonians but Albanians would disagree with that. Albanian political circles would vehemently refute it for example the leader of PDSH would say that *“Премиерот Георгиев има дезинформации, бидејќи кризата не доаѓа од Косово, туку од самите Албанци на Македонија”* (Prime Minister Georgiev is misinformed, because the crisis does not come from Kosovo, but from the Albanians in Macedonia itself).¹⁴⁰ The second point in how to address this issue was approached also in a very polarizing tone. The Albanian party in the government was the first to propose a solution by arguing for a proportional non-majoritarian democracy. Arben Xhaferi would propose the three-point non-paper document for solving the crisis. The three points were a) defining the concept of the state, b) implementing proportional representation in the

¹³⁷ Newspaper “Nova Makedonia”, 17 March 2001.

¹³⁸ Newspaper “Вечер”, 18, March 2001.

¹³⁹ Newspaper “Nova Makedonia”, 19 March 2001.

¹⁴⁰ Newspaper “Nova Makedonia”, 22 March 2001.

institutions of the country and c) political prisoners. He would say “*ne duam që Maqedonia të jetë një vend multi-etnik ku vendimet nuk detyrohen nga shumica e cila me automatizëm krijon antagonizem ndëretnik*” (we want Macedonia to be a multi-ethnic country where decisions are not forced by the majority which automatically creates interethnic antagonism).¹⁴¹ On the other hand intellectual advisors to the Macedonian party of VMRO, Mr Vlado Popovski said “*Македонија ќе се распадне ако имаме биетничка држава. Уставот на Македонија не треба да се менува, бидејќи станува збор за граѓанска влада*” (Macedonia will disintegrate if we have a bi-ethnic state. The Constitution of Macedonia does not need to be changed, as it is a “civil government”).¹⁴² From these two points we can see that the aim was to create a confusion where the struggle of the guerrillas is a foreign struggle and that they want to disintegrate Macedonia.

The general tone of the vocabulary (III) from the discourse analysed was that the vocabulary used during the event relatively non-vulgar. Politicians from both sides and the guerrilla fighters used a sophisticated language however they still would describe the other side as the aggressor and wrongdoers. For example, the President of Macedonia who at the same time was the commander of the army would often use the terms “terrorists” “evil” “guerrilla fighters” in the same context.¹⁴³ Listeners could easily confuse to what term means what and just say that these terms are synonyms. On the other hand, Albanian political elite would call for dialogue and reforms, they restrained from using demeaning description of the Macedonians. Example, Arben Xhaferi would use these terms often “reforms” and “redefinition of the state”.¹⁴⁴ Meanwhile the guerrillas would use a more antagonistic vocabulary by calling the Macedonian government a “*abuzues i të drejtave të njeriut*” (abuser of human rights) or calling the Macedonians “*sllavo Maqedonas*” (Slavic Macedonians).¹⁴⁵ Here what is interesting how the UCK fighters would link the words “*sllavo Maqedonas*” (Slavic Macedonians) and “*abuzues i të drejtave të njeriut*” (abuser of human rights) in many of their speeches.¹⁴⁶

The final part of this analysis has to do with activities (IV) during the 2001 conflict, the general nature of the activities can be labelled as confusing. On the one hand the whole Macedonia political elite was consistent in having rallies in Tetovo with banners and slogans that Tetovo

¹⁴¹ Newspaper “Вечер”, 9 April 2001.

¹⁴² Newspaper “Nova Makedonia”, 28 March 2001, Dr Vlado Popovski, interview.

¹⁴³ “Boris Trajkovski Statement to the People in Macedonia 2001.” YouTube, February 21, 2012. <https://youtu.be/1D24bYTUOIg>.

¹⁴⁴ Newspaper “Вечер”, 9 April 2001.

¹⁴⁵ Newspaper “Flaka e vëllazërimit”, 4 May 2001, Communication of the KLA General Staff.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid

is a Macedonian town.¹⁴⁷ And on the Albanian side we have two opposing marches one was for and the other was against the conflict. PDSH and their members on 13 March of 2001 held a march against the conflict and called for peace while holding sings and billboards “*Marshimi për paqe*” (The march for peace).¹⁴⁸ Couple of days later Albanian student unions and many ex-members from the two Albanian parties held a rally calling in support of the insurgency and calling the military and police forces to retreat from Albanian inhabited regions.¹⁴⁹ Here we can see that Albanian political elite was more fractured then previous times, this can be seen also in when many Albanian members of parliament resigned and joined the UCK.¹⁵⁰

To conclude, we can deduce several key points. The first one is that the Albanian elite in the government was confused and hesitant in the beginning of the conflict, even calling the fighters as terrorists and calling for urgent actions to be taken by the state to neutralise them. However later during the conflict PDSH changed position and protected them politically and calling them freedom fighters. Later PDSH leader Arben Xhaferi came up with the propositions to redefine the state and having a non-majoritarian republic. The second point is that the Macedonians would continue to call the fighters and their supporters Taliban’s and terrorists and foreign secret entities. By calling them foreigners it was easier to reject any internal call for political reforms.

Before I jump to the next pair of events which analyse the political elite discourse after the Agreement, I would like to give a summary of these two events about their shared characteristics. The general nature of the discourse in both events is about nationalistic purposes, Macedonians try to preserve the unitary nature of the country while Albanians aspire for a more proportional and representative country. The subsequent deduction is that political parties tend to exclusively stay on ethnic lines and calls for reforms by Albanians are branded as foreign plans. The final piece of information that can be deducted is that it gives the falls impression that violence is the solution but probably this might be because Albanian political elite believed that institutional ways are futile.

¹⁴⁷ “Boris Trajkovski Statement to the People in Macedonia 2001.” YouTube, February 21, 2012. <https://youtu.be/1D24bYTUIg>.

¹⁴⁸ Newspaper “Nova Makedonia”, 13 March 2001.

¹⁴⁹ Newspaper “International Herald Tribune”, 16 March 2001. Civilians Call It a War.

¹⁵⁰ Newspaper “Nova Makedonia”, 29 March 2001.

5.3 Kumanovo clashes

Kumanovo clashes of 2015 between ethnic Albanian rebels and the state security apparatus is another crucial event where we can observe how political elites from both sides reacted. The clashes of 2015 did not start of the blue, during the same period we have the “Bomba affair” where opposition leader Zoran Zaev was leaking recorded conversations of the ruling politicians of VMRO-DPMNE to showcase corruption in top-level institutions.¹⁵¹ Mirka Velinovska a journalist close to VMRO-DPMNE and former General Stojance Angelov claimed that the government might pay someone 2 million USD to instigate a crisis in the country to destabilise or distract us from the corruption affairs.¹⁵² A couple of weeks later on May the 8th of 2015, a group of armed ethnic Albanians from Macedonia and Kosovo stormed the northern city of Kumanovo and fought with security forces there for two days until the 10th of May. From this two-day mini conflict 8 policemen died from which one was Albanian and 22 members of the paramilitary group died, two years later 33 other members were convicted and imprisoned.¹⁵³ The paramilitary group did not get support from any Albanian party, Albanian political elite considered this paramilitary group as illegitimate. Therefore, different from the previous two cases analysed where popular resistance would get support from the Albanian elite, herewith I want to dive deeper to see how political elites reacted this time.

The first step is understanding how identification (I) was played out this time. A couple of days after the clashes in Kumanovo the leader of BDI Mr Ali Ahmeti would give a full-length interview for Alsat-TV among other things he would distance himself and say “*une nuk e di pse kjo ka ndodhur*” (I do not know why this happened).¹⁵⁴ Then Interior Minister spokesman Ivo Kotevski would say that the group wore the insignia of UCK and “*ja neutraliziraa najopasната терористичка група на Балканот*” they (have neutralised the most dangerous terrorist group in the Balkans).¹⁵⁵ The president of the country Mr Ivanov would describe them too as terrorists, however in the same speech he would say that “*Оваа група нема поддршка*

¹⁵¹ “North Macedonia: Eavesdropped Conversations Leaked in Social Networks.”

Independent Balkan News Agency, June 7, 2019. <https://balkan.eu.com/north-macedonia-eavesdropped-conversations-leaked-in-social-networks/>.

¹⁵² Marolov, Dejan. “The EU Must Take Its Share of the Blame for the Political Crisis in Macedonia.” LSE-Blog, May 31, 2015. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2015/05/26/the-eu-must-take-its-share-of-the-blame-for-the-political-crisis-in-macedonia/>.

¹⁵³ “Macedonian Court Convicts 33 People of Planning Terrorist Attacks.” Voice of America, November 2, 2017. <https://www.voanews.com/europe/macedonian-court-convicts-33-people-planning-terrorist-attacks>.

¹⁵⁴ First broadcasted on Alsat-Tv 14-05-2015

¹⁵⁵ TVNovaWeb. “Ivo Kotevski - Nenutralised.” YouTube. YouTube, May 9, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q3GSxbjodbg&ab_channel=NOVATVMK.

од никого во Македонија” (This group has no support from anyone in Macedonia).¹⁵⁶ The president would mention in the same speech that these people are “*криминалци, хулигани*” criminals, hooligans. On the other hand, Albanian elites, distance themselves from the event with some exceptional statements here and there from the opposition which would describe this event as staged and serving the secret agenda of the government. For example, Levizja Besa said that “*këto incidente u shërbejnë vetëm njerëzve në pushtet*” (these incidents only serve the people in power).¹⁵⁷ The Albanian opposition would identify the governing Albanian party as a “spectator”, “*kërkojmë nga BDI të mos qëndrojë si spektator në këtë krizë*” (we ask BDI to not stand as a spectator in this crisis).¹⁵⁸ Another fact to remember is that there are no statements where the Albanian elite would identify the group as terrorists.

Polarization (II) between the elites in Macedonia after the OFA takes a different turn. As seen from the previous analysed events, in times of crisis before the OFA elites would divide into ethnic lines. However, in the Kumanovo crisis, we see that there is no clear polarization along ethnic lines but more according to political party lines. Elites from all parties would declare that this conflict is not an inter-ethnic conflict, the leader of governing party at the time VMRO-DPMNE would be the first to issue a statement declaring “*Ова не беше македонско-албански судир, туку судир на лица кои не и мислат добро на државата и лица кои ја бранат*” (This was not a Macedonian-Albanian conflict, but a conflict of people who do not think well of the state and people who defend it).¹⁵⁹ Macedonian opposition elite would share the same belief that the conflict this time is not between the two major ethnicities but between the state and criminal gangs. For example, a couple of days after the incident SDSM leader Zoran Zaev would visit Kumanovo and say “*заедно, ние сите граѓани Македонци и Албанци се спротивставивме на поразените криминалци тука во Куманово*” (together, we all citizens Macedonians and Albanians resisted and defeated the criminals here in Kumanovo) and he added “*треба да побараме од ВМРО, да објасни зошто се случи сето ова*” (that we should

¹⁵⁶ AlsatmTV. “Ivanov: Nuk Do Të Lejojmë Prishjen e Marrëdhënieve Ndëretnike.” YouTube. YouTube, May 10, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKvWxaS-Cz8&ab_channel=NationalTelevisionAlsatM.

¹⁵⁷ “Levizja BESA Sulmet Ne Kumanove (Levizjabesa.mk).” YouTube. YouTube, May 9, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJbhJOajuQk&ab_channel=LevizjaBESA.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Макфакс++, Од. “Груевски: Ова Не Беше Македонско-Албански Судир.” МАКФАКС, January 1, 1AD. <https://makfax.com.mk/makedonija/gruevski-ova-ne-bese-makedonsko-albanski-sudir-tuku-sudir-na-lica-koi-ne-i-mislat-dobro-na-drzavata-i-lica-koi-ja-branat/>.

ask VMRO, to explain why all this happened).¹⁶⁰ Menduh Thaçi the Albanian the leader of PDSH in a press conference would declare that “*kjo nuk është beteja jonë ... dhe u bëj thirrje të gjithë shqiptarëve që të mos bashkohen me thirrjen e luftëtarëve*” (this is not our battle...and I call upon all Albanians to not join the fighters call).¹⁶¹ On the same press conference he stated “*çdo çështje që mund të kemi, ne mund t'i zgjidhim ato përmes dialogut ... qeveria duhet të japë një shpjegim në lidhje me këtë ngjarje.*” .” (any issue that we might have we can solve them through dialogue...the government should explain this event). As we can observe the polarization has shifted to an inter-party problem rather than an inter-ethnic one. Lack of polarization between ethnicities can be attributed to consociationalism since elites call for dialogue and believe only through dialogue in the parliament things can be cleared out. Fourteen years after the implementation of consociationalism we can objectively notice that the inter-ethnic political elite vocabulary (III) has shifted to a more inclusive tone. In this incident we can categorize the vocabulary into two categories, a) vocabulary used to describe the paramilitary group by both elites b) vocabulary elites use to describe each other. In the first category when it comes to describing the paramilitary group there is a clear divergence in how Albanian and Macedonian elite would describe them. From previously cited sources we can observe that the most prevalent term among the Albanian elites was “*grupi i Kumanovës*” (the Kumanovo group). Here we can see that Albanians avoid using the word terrorist however at the same time avoid describing them with heroic names. However Macedonian elite from SDSM and VMRO would use harsher language like “*криминалци, терористи*”. A quick look in the YouTube channels of SDSM and VMRO from videos uploaded in 2015 we can see different party members using these terms.¹⁶² In the second category how the elites would describe each other during this period is less about between the elites politics and more between the party’s discourse. Therefore, in search for speeches elites describing each other, I was unable to find relevant sources compared to previous cases where there was enough material,

¹⁶⁰ SDSMtube. “Заев: Одговор Должат, Како Дојдоа Криминални Групи Во Срцето На Куманово?” YouTube. YouTube, May 11, 2015.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0xpRS6Xdeo&ab_channel=SDSMtube.

¹⁶¹ PDSHoficiale. “Kryetari i PDSH-Së z. Menduh Thaçi Në Konferencë Për Shtyp Lidhur Me Zhvillimet Aktuale Politike.” YouTube. YouTube, May 12, 2015.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcmeY5NKiQY&ab_channel=PDSHoficiale.

¹⁶² “SDSM- Youtube.” YouTube. YouTube. Accessed April 22, 2021.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSj5OsDyVsD6si3UdhQCQNw>.

“BMPO - ДПМНЕ.” YouTube. YouTube. Accessed April 22, 2021.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/vmrodpmnemacedonia>.

so the lack of vocabulary describing each other is a sign that this problem must be dealt with a unified voice.

In the activities (IV) part of this case, I found a strong argument that can show how relationship among elites has improved. The first point is that immediately after a meeting between all political party leaders on the 14 May of 2015, leaders called for calmness and agreed to have further meetings if needed.¹⁶³ The second point is how contrarily the people affected by the clashes in that part of the town reacted to official visits by Albanians and Macedonian politicians. It should be noticed that this part of the town is inhabited by Albanians and when Macedonian opposition leader Zoran Zaev visited the city he was greeted positively and held a brief speech in front of Albanian inhabitants in which he promised justice and rebuilding the damaged buildings. Among many things he stated “Тука сум да дадам пример како не треба да биде иднината” (I am here to give an example of how the future should not be) hinting to a future where Albanians and Macedonians are together.¹⁶⁴ On the other hand, the leader of the governing Albanian party BDI Ali Ahmeti did not come for a visit for the next 12 months. He came only in November of 2016 to visit that part of the town and was greeted by an angry huge crowd of protestors.¹⁶⁵ The Albanian inhabitants of the city believed that allegedly this could have been an inside job orchestrated jointly by VMRO and BDI, however there is no proof.

In summary the key points that can be deducted from this event are two. First point Violence is not an option and is not supported either by Albanian political elite or by ordinary citizens. All parties involved believed that if there are any issues (in this case the corruption affairs known as “Bomba”) they can be solved through available institutions. Second point is low level of polarization and the high level of maturity shown during this event. Statements like “This was not a Macedonian-Albanian conflict, but a conflict of people who do not think well of the state and people who defend it” by Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and instant call for using institutional tools to solve the problem are hallmarks of Consociationalism. Since I believe without Consociationalism we could have seen something similar like the 2001 conflict.

¹⁶³ -, Nga Zëri i Kosovës. “Nesër Do Zhvillohet Takim Ndërmjet Liderëve Të VMRO-Së, BDI-Së, LSDM-Së Dhe PDSH-Së.” Zëri i Kosovës, May 13, 2015.

<https://zerikosoves.com/neser-do-zhvillohet-takim-ndermjet-lidereve-te-vmro-se-bdi-se-lsdm-se-dhe-pdsh-se/>.

¹⁶⁴ ZhurnalTV. “Zoran Zaev Ne Kumanove - Lagja e Trimave.” YouTube. YouTube, December 28, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sof2dv78-Do&t=214s&ab_channel=ZhurnalTVLajme.

¹⁶⁵ TV-21. “PAMJE EKSKLUZIVE: ALI AHMETI PRITET ME GURË NË KUMANOVË!” YouTube. YouTube, November 13, 2016.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Juvuo1uYaj0&t=5s&ab_channel=TV21.

5.4 Prespa agreement and the name issue

The issue regarding the name of Macedonia between Greece and Macedonia started with the independence of the country. There had been multiple attempts to solve the problem, however it failed to be solved completely, the main reason being the lack of political will from both North Macedonia and Greece. The double name proposal of 2005, the 2009 proposal, the 2010 developments and finally the 2014 negotiations, just to name just few moments when a possible name solution failed.¹⁶⁶ Mathew Nimitz the chief negotiator would add that the role of Albanian political party was immensely important as well to push this cause.¹⁶⁷

After the Macedonian conservative party, VMRO lost the general (2016) and the local elections (2017) to the SDSM, the issue could be taken seriously again. SDSM with the Albanian party BDI gave the name issue a fresh momentum. After back and forth negotiations between Greece and Macedonia the UN-sponsored negotiations headed by Matthew Nimetz achieved a breakthrough with the signing of the Prespa agreement on 17 June of 2018 and North Macedonia was chosen as the new name. This issue was followed closely by all Macedonian and Albanian party since it was very galvanizing on the one hand Albanians did not want the new name to have a Slavic connotation and on the other hand, VMRO accused SDMS of scamming and tricking the nation into selling their identity. I cover six months before the 17 June 2018 Prespa agreement and one year after the event which means the discourse analysed below will cover from January 2018 until June 2019

The name change issue was mostly revolved between VMRO and SDSM while BDI and BESA kept a relatively low profile. Regarding inner group identification (I) here we see few characteristics for each party, SDSM would describe themselves as a party for the future. For example, Prime Minister Zoran Zaev would say about the referendum *“сега од оваа одлука зависи дали ќе си ја осигуриме и обезбедиме иднината на нашата независна Македонија”* (now it depends on this decision whether we will secure and secure the future of our independent Macedonia).¹⁶⁸ Or on another occasion he said *“Очекувам да се одважиме и да покажеме дека навистина сите сме за ЕУ и НАТО и дека сме за обезбедување на иднина на Македонија и на сите наши граѓани”* (I expect us to dare and show that we are really all for the EU and NATO and that we are for securing the future of Macedonia and all

¹⁶⁶ Nimetz, Matthew. "The Macedonian "Name" Dispute: The Macedonian Question—Resolved?." Nationalities Papers 48, no. 2 (2020): 205-214.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid

¹⁶⁸ -, Од НМ. “Референдумска Кампања.” Нова Македонија, September 17, 2018. <https://bit.ly/3hiosMp>.

our citizens).¹⁶⁹ VMRO political elites identification would be more about protecting the nation or the protectors of true Macedonian identity (whatever that means for them). For example, they would attack the Prespa agreement by saying “*Овој договор е директен удар на темелите на државноста и го поткопува уставниот поредок на Република Македонија*” (This agreement is a direct blow to the foundations of statehood and undermines the constitutional order of the Republic of Macedonia).¹⁷⁰ The only solution is for them to come again in power and fix it and protect the identity of the country “*За Македонија да оди напред СДСМ мора да замине што поскоро*” (For Macedonia to move forward, SDSM must leave as soon as possible).¹⁷¹ Another VMRO member of the parliament stated that the reason she does not support the Prespa Agreement is to protect the ancient identity of Macedonia. She said “*Нема да бидам пратеник ... кој ќе се согласи да се избрише минатото на државата, да се избрише делото на нашите предци и да придонесам во создавање на идина на младите генерации без минато*” (I will not be an MP ... who will agree to erase the past of the country, to erase the work of our ancestors and to contribute to creating the future of the young generations without a past).¹⁷²

The Albanian Party, BDI they took a constructive approach towards the name issue by arguing that any party who supports the agreement contributes to the stability of the state and wider region. Their leader Ali Ahmeti stated “*договорот е прашање што произведува стабилност, безбедност, добри меѓуетнички и меѓусоседски односи*” the agreement is a matter that produces stability, security, good interethnic and inter-neighbourly relations.¹⁷³

During the name change, we can observe two main polarization (II) points. First polarization being inter-party between SDSM and VMRO in which the Socialists position themselves as moderates and a mature party and by arguing in favour for compromise with the name saying “*доволно сме созрени како општество за да се соочиме со реалноста – патот кон ЕУ и НАТО води преку договорот со Грција за името*” (we are mature enough as a society to face the reality - the road to the EU and NATO leads through the name agreement with Greece

¹⁶⁹ -, Од НМ. “Почна Лидерската Средба Во Клубот На Пратениците (Видео).” Нова Македонија, July 18, 2018. <https://bit.ly/3у3Fhk6>.

¹⁷⁰ -, Од НМ. “Власта Говори За Гордост, Опозицијата За Понижување.” Нова Македонија, January 28, 2019. <https://bit.ly/3ocFihh>.

¹⁷¹ Ibid

¹⁷² “Пратеници На ВМРО-ДПМНЕ Преку Фејсбук Почнуваат Да Се Изјаснуваат Дека Нема Да Гласаат За Уставните Измени.” МКД.мк, September 19, 2018. <https://www.mkd.mk/makedonija/partii/pratenici-na-vmro-dpmne-preku-fejsbuk-pochnuvaat-da-se-izjasnuvaat-deka-nema-da>.

¹⁷³ Ibid

enough as a society to face the reality - the road to the EU and NATO leads through the name agreement with Greece).¹⁷⁴ However, this compromise is seen as treason by VMRO MPs: for example Jovanovski said “*Вие сте предавници, безрбетници кои го продадоа светото име*” (You are traitors, invertebrates who sold the holy name).¹⁷⁵ And they positioned themselves as the ones who bring order and can protect the future, Hristijan Mickoski called in his Facebook profile “*...За Македонија да оди напред СДСМ мора да замине што поскоро...*” (For Macedonia to move forward SDSM must leave as soon as possible).¹⁷⁶ In the same Facebook post Mickoski would say “*Заев не се бори за европските вредности, напротив тој и неговиот криминален картел на власт се борат за наместените тендери*” (Zaev is not fighting for European values, on the contrary he and his criminal cartel in power are fighting for rigged tenders).¹⁷⁷ The aim of Mickoski speech here is to present Zaev as a criminal and as an enemy of the nation so all voters who feel threatened by this have a safe place and that is VMRO.

The second point which I would point here is again the non-existence of polarization point is that between Albanian BDI party and its Macedonian governing coalition partner SDSM. During the whole name issue which was crucial for both Albanian and Macedonian elites had a discourse without any polarization between them. During a TV interview BDI leader would answer the question of why it is important for Albanians to vote for the referendum by saying “*nese Shqipetaret duan paqe dhe harmoni dhe marredhenie te mira nderetnike ateher duhet te votojn masovikisht*” (if Albanians want peace and harmony and good interethnic relations then they must vote in masse).¹⁷⁸

The vocabulary (III) here may have a war undertone behind the rhetoric of VMRO and SDSM, and a constructive undertone by Albanian parties. For example, terms like may belong war semantic group: “*Татковината ни е света*” (Our homeland is sacred), “*Ја носам во*

¹⁷⁴ Ibid

¹⁷⁵ “*Јовановски: Вие Сте Предавници, Безрбетници Кои Го Продадоа Светото Име.*” YouTube. YouTube, July 2, 2018.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3OqCpgZyMg&ab_channel=MAKFAX.

¹⁷⁶ -, Од НМ. “*Власта Говори За Гордост, Опозицијата За Понижување.*” Нова Македонија, January 28, 2019. <https://bit.ly/3ocFihh>.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid

¹⁷⁸ Televizioni Klan. “*Ali Ahmet, Maqedonia, Kufijte e Kosoves! (11 Shtator 2018).*” YouTube. YouTube, September 11, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoBM-q51TW0&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=RTVKLAN.

срцето” (I carry it in my heart), *Вечна да ни е Македонија*” (May Macedonia be eternal for us), “загуба” (loss), “катастрофално” (disastrous).¹⁷⁹

It is also interesting how all the parties combine multiple words in the same sentence which could lead the public to believe that they are synonyms. When SDSM describes themselves, they always combine it with term like: “*просперитет, светла иднина, интеграција во ЕУ, зрелост*” (prosperity, bright future, EU integration, maturity) giving the impression of progression.¹⁸⁰ VMRO on the other hand sticks to terms like: “*идентитет, предци, славно минато*” (identity, ancestors, glorious past) terms which are in line with their party identity for being more conservative.¹⁸¹ While BDI would use terms like “*paqe dhe harmoni dhe marredhenie te mira nderetnike*” (peace and harmony and good interethnic relations) in many occasions especially when addressing the importance of finding a solution towards the name issue.¹⁸²

Regarding activities (IV) during this period what we can distinguish here is the leadership meeting before the referendum since the reason behind the meeting was to resolve differences between position and opposition. Still the disagreements between SDSM and VMRO did not resolve. VMRO party leader said “несогласувањата се однесуваат на карактерот и прашањето на референдумот” (disagreements are about the character and the issue of the referendum).¹⁸³ While BDI and SDSM leader said that “*Опозицијата треба да ги стави државните интереси над партиските*” (The opposition should put state interests above party interests).¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ “Владимир Ѓорчев- Пратеник На Својот Народ.” Брегалнички Портал, September 20, 2018. <https://bregalnickski.mk/vladimir-orchev-pratenik-na-svo-ot-narod/>.

Од НМ. “Референдумска Кампања.” Нова Македонија, September 17, 2018. <https://bit.ly/3hiosMr>.

¹⁸⁰ “Референдумска Кампања.” Нова Македонија, September 17, 2018. <https://bit.ly/3hiosMr>.

-, Од НМ. “Пендаровски: Постојат Алтернативи За НАТО, Но Прашање е Колку Се Квалитетни.” Нова Македонија, April 3, 2018. <https://bit.ly/3eHbiXF>.

¹⁸¹ Check citation number 162.

¹⁸² Televizioni Klan. “Ali Ahmet, Maqedonia, Kufijte e Kosoves! (11 Shtator 2018).” YouTube. YouTube, September 11, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoBM-q51TW0&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=RTVKLAN.

¹⁸³ “НЕСОГЛАСУВАЊАТА СЕ ОКОЛУ КАРАКТЕРОТ И ПРАШАЊЕТО НА РЕФЕРЕНДУМОТ, РЕЧЕ МИЦКОСКИ ПО ЛИДЕРСКАТА СРЕДБА.” Сакам Да Кажам, July 23, 2018. <https://sdk.mk/index.php/makedonija/nesoglasuvanata-se-okolu-karakterot-prashaneto-na-referendumot-reche-mitskoski-po-liderskata-sredba/>.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid

In summary in this section, we can observe a further development of the points from the third case, meaning further fall of ethnic polarization and further inter party discourse about social issues. In addition, this event shows that the Albanian elite is further strengthened by the important role they play in crafting the future of the country namely deciding about its name. This pair of events, meaning Kumanovo clashes and Name issue clearly show a changing inter-ethnic discourse. We see that in the case of Kumanovo we see a fall in polarization among the political elite and how crisis events are managed together. In the case of the name issue we that Albanians can be part of the solution instead part of the problem.

5.5 Summary of the empirical part

From my empirical part I would conclude that the key take away points are that discourse shifted in three distinctive ways. The first shift we see is that identification and type of vocabulary changed significantly, from Albanians being a problem to being part of a solution. The second shift is that the discourse after OFA tends to foreground interparty issues rather than the interethnic conflict. The third visible discourse is the shift from issues related to nationalism and language towards more tangible issues like social ones.

The general nature of the first two events is more nationalistic, Macedonians try to preserve the unitary nature of the country while Albanians aspire for a more proportional and representative country. It can be deducted that political parties tend to exclusively stay on ethnic lines and calls for reforms by Albanians are branded as foreign plans. The two cases after the Agreement reveal that discourse is moving from nationalistic towards social issues. In addition, Kumanovo clashes and name issue clearly show a changing inter-ethnic discourse. We see that in the case of Kumanovo we see a fall in polarization among the political elite and how crisis events are managed together. In the case of the name issue we that Albanians can be part of the solution instead part of the problem.

6. Conclusion

The main ambition of this study is to better understand the consequences of Consociationalism in North Macedonian political elite discourse. I decided to measure the discursive change by analysing identification, polarization, vocabulary, and activities among Macedonian and Albanian political elites in a diachronic way, the OFA being the turning point. In the concluding part, I go through all the four events analysed above to highlight how the discourse has transformed and what are the key takeaways from this research. As explained in section 3.2 of this thesis, with state institutions adopting a consociational approach to government (i.e., robust grand coalitions, better proportional representation in institutions, Badinter double majority system as a powerful veto tool, and decentralisation) we can observe three shifts deduced from my empirical findings.

The first shift we see is that identification and type of vocabulary changed significantly, from Albanians being a problem to being part of a solution. For example, during the Gostivar case the simple issue of carrying an Albanian flag would escalate quickly. When analysing Gostivar and the 2001 conflict the Macedonian discourse gives the impression that Albanian political elite are extremist, troublemaker foreigners with concealed agenda. However, with a wider inclusion of Albanians in public institutions thanks to the Consociational approach, we can observe that Albanian political elite can be part of the solution and not only part of the problem. During the Kumanovo clashes and the name issue the elites from both ethnicities would construct a more cooperative discourse to tackle the problems.

The second shift is that discourse after OFA tends to foreground interparty issues rather than the interethnic conflict. For example, during the Gostivar riots Rufe Osmani, the mayor of the city, would claim that Gostivar is exclusively an Albanian town and during the 2001 conflict Boris Trajkovski, the President of Macedonia, when visiting Tetovo, a town mostly inhabited by Albanians, would declare it a Macedonian town. However, in the aftermath of the Kumanovo clashes, when SDSM leader Zoran Zaev visited the part of the city which was affected by the clashes, he was greeted with cheers and applause by the Albanians living there. He would go on and say “together we all citizens, Macedonians and Albanians resisted and defeated the criminals here in Kumanovo” in front of the crowd.

The third visible discourse is the shift from issues related to nationalism and language towards more tangible issues like social ones. Before OFA especially the Albanians during the Gostivar issue and the 2001 conflict would ask better representation, wider use of ethnic symbols and

for Macedonia to be a multi-ethnic country. After the implementation of the Agreement, which introduced better power-sharing mechanisms, we see a shift from nationalism issue towards social issues. For example, after OFA the main vocabulary used by all parties in the country is that of prosperity, bright future, EU integration and peace and harmony and better interethnic relations.

Finally, I have to re-address the limitations of this Master thesis. The first limitation that could be pointed at is that I focused only on the four major political events in which there is a wide gap between the input i.e., OFA and the measurements Kumanovo clashes of 2015 and the Name change issue of 2018. Nevertheless, Consociational theorists would argue that gap a 15 to 20 year gap is explained in order to better evaluate the effects of the policy. The second limitation of my thesis is that it is limited only to political elite discourse and not the wider social elite leaves a lot of data out of my research but again Consociationalism is a top-down approach to government. Third issue to be addressed is that there might be alternative explanations to why discourse among elite has changed but all other factors in the case of North Macedonia worked in conjunction with Consociationalism. For example, one of the key external factors is the EU, them being one of the signatories of the Agreement, we can expect that they are focused on the successful implementation of the Agreement this in return affects the political elite discourse.

However, in the quest to find a tool good enough to create peace I believe further research should be done in understanding and studying how Consociationalism operates and reacts in conflicts. Researchers could focus in measuring social media as well and/or interviews with the political elite who played a crucial role during those events it could give us immense data on the importance and effects of Consociationalism.

My reason for studying the effects of Consociationalism after twenty years of implementation was based on the Lijpharts hypothesis that fifteen to twenty years would be enough for Consociationalism to show its first effects. I hope my thesis can be used for further research. I believe a follow up research on Macedonia after twenty more years would be useful to see how it has progressed or regressed for that matter. In the future social scientists should work with historians to see why some cases of Consociationalism do not work (like Bosnia, Lebanon) and why some do work (like Switzerland, Belgium and until now North Macedonia).

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