ETHNIC POLITICS IN NEW STATES: RUSSIAN AND SERBIAN MINORITIES AFTER SIECESSION

Anna Batta

Dissertation Prepared for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

May 2013

APPROVED:

Idean Salehyan, Major Professor
John Ishiyama, Co-Major Professor
T. David Mason, Committee Member
Steven Forde, Committee Member
Richard Ruderman, Chair of the Department of Political Science
Mark Wardell, Dean of the Toulouse Graduate School
New states are often born in a volatile environment, in which the survival of the new country is uncertain. While analysis of the nationalizing new governments exists, research focuses mainly on domestic politics. I argue that the treatment of minority that remains in the new states is a function of the interaction of the dual threat posed by the minority itself domestically on one hand and the international threat coming from the mother state to protect its kin abroad on the other hand. Specifically, I argue that there is a curvilinear relationship between domestic and international threat and the extent of discrimination against the politically relevant minority. Most discrimination takes place when domestic and international threats are moderate because in this case there is a balance of power between the government, the minority, and the rump state. With time-series-cross-sectional (TSCS) data analysis this dissertation systematically tests the treatment of Russian and Serbian minorities in all post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav states between 1991 and 2006 and finds statistically significant results for the curvilinear hypothesis. Territorial concentration of the minority and the ratio of national capabilities between the mother and the seceded states prove to be especially important predictors of minority treatment. In addition, with most similar systems (MSS), most different systems (MDS) design methods, and directed case studies I apply the curvilinear hypothesis to the Russian minority in the Baltic States and the Central Asian Republics, and also to the Serb minority in the countries of the former Yugoslavia to present a detailed analysis.
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In July 2012 the Ukrainian Parliament approved a bill that reaffirmed Ukrainian as the country’s only national language, while local and regional governments were allowed to designate Russian as an official language in towns where Russian is spoken by at least ten percent of the residents. The measure caused an outcry in a country where more than 11 million people speak Russian as a first language. Demonstrators gathered and lawmakers engaged in fistfights and ripping off each other’s clothes in the Parliament over the issue. Some argue that the passing of the bill was intended to distract from the jailing of Yulia V. Tymoshenko, the opponent of President Victor F. Yanukovitch. Opponents also say that the president wants to use the move to gather support for the upcoming election.¹ This incident shows us the salience of minority issues in political debates today and that initial problems which were burning questions after the breakup of the Soviet Union are still far from being completely resolved in the successor states.

Over 25 million Russians lived outside of the Russian Republic in 1991 at the fall of communism in the newly seceded states (Figure 1). Their fate has turned as dramatic structural changes started to take place and one by one countries such as the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Georgia, Estonia, Turkmenistan, etc, became independent. Overnight, Russians went from being members of the dominant ethnic group in the Soviet Union with immense political power to being stranded minorities in the new successor states, fearful of how they will be treated in

the nationalizing new republics. Will the titulars\(^2\), who have finally thrown off the Russian yoke, get back at the imperialists, or will they respect the political and cultural rights of the Russians who remained in the country?

Especially in the early years, policy makers in these states as well as in the international community were on high alert because of the danger of possible irredentist conflicts, in case the stranded Russian minority decided to join with Russia territorially.\(^3\) What has not come to pass in the former Soviet Union (with some exceptions, such as Transnistria) unfortunately has been the somber reality in the former Yugoslavia, where violent conflict occurred when the country disintegrated. What drove the Yugoslav conflict were Serbian concerns over the stranded minorities in Croatia and Bosnia. Slobodan Milosevic sent troops to protect the Serb minority in Croatia during the war for instance and supported the Bosnian Serbs in their effort to maintain a separate Serb entity in Bosnia.\(^4\) Although the state of Yugoslavia no longer exists, the falling apart of this country has not been entirely complete, for Kosovo declared independence in 2008 but thus far has only been recognized by less than half of all legally sovereign states. One of the key issues in the case of Kosovo is the protection of the Serbian minority that remains in the country.

Irredentism poses a serious threat to global security as some of the bloodiest and most protracted conflicts in the world involve the intervention by states that are protecting their stranded ethnic kin group (Saideman 2008). Both World Wars started on the basis of the

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\(^2\) Titular nationalities refer to the nationalities of the seceded states, such as Latvian, Estonian, Bosnian, etc.

\(^3\) I define irredentism as the stranded minority’s aim to join parts of the seceded state’s territory with the rump state. Secession is “an internally motivated division of a country’s homeland (i.e. non-colonial) territory,” during which at least one new independent state is created “with full sovereign rights and legal recognition by the international community” (Tir 2006: 46).

\(^4\) [http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=4028&tmpl=printpage](http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=4028&tmpl=printpage)
mother state intervening on behalf of its dispersed minority beyond its borders. Serb irredentists set off World War I and Hitler initiated the Second World War on the ground of intending to reunify the German peoples (Saideman 2008: 3; Mandelbaum 2000). Real or imagined, the threat posed to the ethnic kin living beyond the nation-state’s borders has often been used as a motivating factor of major conflicts. Recent events, such as the secession of Southern Sudan in 2011 and Kosovo’s declaration of independence leave kin groups in the new states.

In order to find lasting solutions to such conflicts, secession as a policy has been increasingly used after the Cold War. However, even if territorial separation does take place, it is not possible to completely divide ethnic groups without “organized population transfers” (Johnson 2008: 150). Completely sterilizing a country to rid itself from the unwanted ethnic group, whatever the reason the other is hated for, has not proven to be a successful policy strategy. Since such involuntary transfers compose a violation of fundamental human rights and more often than not lead to more bloodshed and suffering than if they had not been carried out, (Johnson 2008: 150) this option has been mostly ruled out as a solution to separatist conflicts. As a result, a certain number of minorities will always be part of newly founded countries going forward. Future governments therefore will need to find acceptable solutions to the problem of ensuring the rights of minority. Both practitioners and the scholarly community need to find ways of achieving peace after violent multi-ethnic conflicts and protection of stranded minorities is a crucial part of this quest.

In order to address this issue, it is necessary to analyze both conflictual as well as peaceful cases. Therefore I investigate two regions where secessions occurred, the former
Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia, the former being the relatively peaceful cluster and
the latter the conflictual one. I attempt to answer two major questions. First, how have the
Russian and Serbian minorities been treated overtime in the seceded countries after the
collapse of communism? Second, what might be possible explanations for the differing degree
of treatment of these two minority groups post-secession? In other words: Why do we observe
such marked differences in the treatment of minorities across the successor states of the Soviet
Union and Yugoslavia? Further, why is there variation even within clusters of Soviet States given
their own similarities? Also, I attempt to find out what lessons can we take away from the post-
Soviet and post-Yugoslav cases that might give us guidance to future secessionist and
irredentist conflict prevention.

In this dissertation minority refers to ethnic kin that remained in the states that seceded
from their parent countries. Specifically, I am examining those ethnic Russians and Serbs who
remained in the states that seceded from the Former Soviet Union and Former Yugoslavia
respectively, such as Serbs in Croatia or Montenegro and Russians in Turkmenistan or
Uzbekistan. These ethnic groups became stranded after secession, therefore they can also be
described as “stranded diaspora” or “marooned diaspora.” This term originally comes from Paul
Kolstø and it refers to individuals who were cut off from main land Russia and left behind
forgotten by their parent state (Kolstø 1999: 17).

Further, I side with Brubaker’s definition, based on which a national minority is an
ethnic group with a political stance with different ethnocultural characteristics from the
dominant majority and that members of the group assert their claim to certain collective and
cultural rights (Brubaker 1996). However, while for Brubaker a minority group has to have a
“demand for state recognition of this distinct ethno-cultural nationality,” my definition differs since I analyze both those communities that claim a state on their own and want to further secede from the majority and also those groups that do not necessarily assert such claims (Brubaker 1996: 60). Also, the Russian and Serbian minority in any given state can be either the numerical or political minority. In other words, groups with little or negligible political power are also analyzed.

The topic of how minorities are treated in newly seceded states has not received much in the way of systematic comparative attention. In addition, there has been little theoretical treatment of how international factors intersect with domestic conditions to explain why minorities fare better in some seceded states as compared to others. The wave of independent states after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia present an opportune set of cases as we see wide variation in the treatment of Russian and Serbian populations in the states that broke off. In addition, not only is there variation across these two clusters, but also within them. For example, nations of the Baltic Republics treat their minorities differently, even though they have a similar past, political institutions, and Western orientation. For instance, while Lithuania ensured citizenship and language rights early on, Estonia and Latvia enacted highly discriminatory language laws against Russian minorities. Likewise, Russians within the Central Asian Republics are treated differently in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, for example, despite the fact that these republics share similar political and cultural features. In addition, we can also see wide variation in how the Serbian minority’s rights fare in the states of the former Yugoslavia, such as Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.
While the study of ethnic politics is of central concern to political scientists, scant attention has been paid to the protection of minorities in newly-independent states. These cases present a unique opportunity to investigate the dynamics of ethnic politics in unconsolidated regimes. As Fearon (1998) notes, one of the major causes of conflict in new states is the inability of a nascent government to credibly commit to minority protection. Yet this conundrum presents an empirical puzzle in that while some states, such as Kyrgyzstan, were able to assuage minority fears, in other cases, such as Uzbekistan, ethnic tensions have persisted in the two decades since independence. While solving the credible commitment problem may be difficult, some new states have had a better track-record than others.

Although a substantial amount of work exists on the “stranded minorities” in post communist politics, most of this work has focused on minority politics in general and regional understanding of certain groups (Flynn 2004; Barrington, Herron, and Silver 2003; Zevelev 2001; Kolstø 1999; King and Melvin 1999; Smith 1999; Ishiyama and Breuning 1998; Kolstø 1995; Shlapentokh et al. 1994); however there has not been a systematic evaluation and focused comparison of all Soviet successor states with respect to minority politics, or comparison between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. In addition, now we have twenty years to look back on, while most early works did not have such long perspective to evaluate minority relations. This dissertation’s goal is to provide a well specified theoretical explanation and robust empirical analysis that accounts for the differences in the treatment of minorities between the above post-secessionist clusters.

Indeed, common explanations that appear in the literature for differences in minority rights, such as 1) democracy (Cederman and Gleditsch 2009; Russett and Oneal 2001;
Mousseau 1998), 2) the draw of international institutions (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeir 2005; Vachudova 2005; Kelley 2004a, 2004b, Cronin 2002; Ambrosio 2001; Linden 2000, 2002;)\(^5\) and 3) the presence of external grantor and kinship ties (Cetinyan 2002; Saideman 1997) do not fully explain the discrepancy between minority rights protection across these countries.

For instance, all Baltic States, and many former Yugoslav countries, adopted democratic constitutions after independence. All Baltic States were expected to behave democratically and return to the democratic tradition they left off during interwar independence. However, Estonia and Latvia took a different approach than Lithuania, the latter being the only one providing sufficient minority protection to Russian minorities. The first two countries enacted strongly nationalistic measures in the form of discriminative citizenship and language laws, but Lithuania did not. Further, the uniformly autocratic Central Asian Republics differ substantially in terms of minority protection within their borders as well.

In addition, membership in international organizations, such as the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alone do not explain variation in the treatment of minorities in the republics of the former Soviet Union (FSU) and former Yugoslavia (FYU) either (Table 2.3). All Baltic States are now members of the EU and NATO, but despite common membership in this western “club,” the treatment of Russian minorities varies across countries and across time. According to the Minorities at Risk Project, only Lithuania does not engage in systematic discrimination against the Russian population.\(^6\) Also, the Commonwealth of Independence States (CIS) is a regional organization that was created after the collapse of the

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\(^5\) Dynamics related to the power of international institutions are analyzed in the conditionality literature.

\(^6\) Note that important factors in Lithuania are the small size of the Russian minority and the presence of a larger Polish minority.
former Soviet Union for cooperation purposes. Nearly all seceded states joined the organization shortly after they have gained independence, therefore membership in the CIS cannot provide us with an answer for the discrepancies of rights. As for international ethnic guarantors, all cases within the Yugoslav and Russian clusters have the same external ‘watchdog,’ namely Serbia and Russia respectively; for that reason, this cannot be a sufficient explanation alone for minority protection either.

Therefore, I argue that a more complete explanation for variation in the treatment of minorities in post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav states needs to examine both domestic and international factors simultaneously, especially the interaction between the two. Specifically, I argue that the extent of domestic threat of the group interact with the extent of international threat by the mother country (Russia or Serbia), which explains differing minority treatment.

1.1 A Different Kind of Diaspora

The Russian minority in the former Soviet Republics is a unique form of diaspora and “do not easily conform to those features commonly ascribed to archetypical global diasporas like the Jews, Armenians or Palestinians” (Smith 1999: 78). Shafir argues that they are essentially a hybrid group between a minority and immigrants, as prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union they internally migrated within the empire and it is only after secession that they have assumed minority status (Shafir 1995). This leads us to the notion that the Russian diaspora essentially was never truly a diaspora in the classical sense, since they have never crossed borders, but borders have moved instead. Perhaps in this sense then it is better to
define this group as the “Russian settler community” (Melvin 1995) or “colonizers” prior to socialism, and “Russian minority” after independence.

The term “Russian minority” is problematic in other ways as well. Those Russians who migrated across the Soviet Union do not constitute a homogeneous group. Oftentimes Belarusians and Ukrainians were also counted as “Russians” (Galbreath 2005; Ishiyama and Breuning 1998). In some cases people from ethnicities other than the titular group were called “Russian speakers,” therefore even Georgians and Greeks living in Kazakhstan were considered “Russians” for instance (Zardykhan 2004: 69). Thus the idea of the “Russian minority” is misleading. Some scholars use the terminology “Russophones” to describe this particular group based on language rather than ethnicity (Barrington, Herron, and Silver 2003; Ishiyama and Breuning 1998). For the purpose of this dissertation, I am using the term “Russian minority” because my analysis focuses on their treatment after independence, and because I would like to compare this group to the “Serb minority.” So, this is also a choice made for the sake of consistency.

The Russian minority in the republics is different from other typical diasporas in three ways. First, their sense of communal identity within countries is weak and therefore very little political mobilization took place among them over time (Smith 1999: 78). Second, the group’s connection to each other across countries is also fairly week or non-existent which is likely due the fact that interaction mostly occurs between the diaspora and the rump state, which is Russia. In other words, interaction is vertical instead of horizontal (Smith 1999: 78). Third, most other diasporas come about as a result of a specific trauma, for example the Jews during the Holocaust and Exodus, or the expulsion of the Palestinians after World War II and 1967. In
these instances a group of people leave their country of origin as refugees. In the case of the Russian minority however, it is their status that has changed after the fall of communism and people did not necessarily leave their country. Their migration occurred within the Soviet Union, within their own country at the time. After 1991 a reverse migration occurred as many of them migrated back to Russia proper but a great number of them, if not most, have stayed in the Baltic States for reasons of better economic opportunities.

1.2 Theoretical Sketch

Newly consolidating regimes face uncertain internal and external threats to political stability and economic prosperity. Following the wave of nationalist sentiment leading up to independence, the political status of ethnic diasporas from the rump, or formerly dominant state, poses one of the most difficult questions to be resolved. Governments often perceive these groups as threatening to their nationalist ambitions and to their very survival. This is often exacerbated by the additional threat posed by the mother state which may come to the rescue of its stranded minority or use the opportunity to re-exert its lost power.

The literature typically assesses threat from the perception of the public towards immigrants via examining the social attitude of people living in a country (Galbreath 2006; Hamberger and Hewstone 1997; Pettigrew and Meetens 1995) or if the analysis goes beyond the individual level, it neglects the perceptions of ethnic threat (Quillian 1995). Other works that combine individual and conceptual levels however do not examine threat perception on the side of the government of the newly created state (Scheepers et al. 2002). Yet in the context of post-secession, threat perception of the government is especially important since it
has repercussions on domestic and foreign policy. In this dissertation threat is analyzed from the side of the newly established government after independence. Having said this, my intent is to provide a comprehensive theoretical framework to explain differing degrees of minority protection, therefore the two level interaction between the domestic and international factors is key for understanding the overarching theory.

One of the obstacles to long lasting peace after secessions is that the parties renege on the terms of the agreement and that the dominant ethnic group cannot credibly commit not to take advantage of the stranded minorities in the new state (Fearon 1998). However, the problem of credible commitment does not explain cases when the new government does ensure minority rights (Jenne 2007). Further, another problem arises about how to handle issue indivisibility among the different ethnic groups, such as dividing territory, resources, etc. Territorial concentration has been argued to be a factor to lead to secessionist violence, albeit in a linear fashion, which leads to over predicting violence (Toft 2003; Horowitz 1984).

Building on prior literature I argue that the government of the new state faces four types of threats from the minority and the mother state once the state is formed, such as the threat of 1) further secession; 2) irredentism; 3) autonomy demands by the minority and 4) the threat to the government’s national authority. The first two types of threats are both domestic and international, whereas the last two kinds of threats are observable on the domestic level. With the exception of the last one, the above forms of threats relate to geography. In this sense I view geography as a threat, which adds to prior literature because previously geography in the literature was seen only as either opportunity or motivation (Weidmann 2009).
I argue that there is a curvilinear relationship between how the government treats its minority post-secession on one hand and domestic and international threat on the other hand. This relationship resembles an inverted U-shape in its abstraction. At low levels of threat, when the minority is small in size, territorial concentration is low, and the mother state poses minimal threat, the government will be less inclined to discriminate against the minority group. This is because it is relatively costless to grant rights and minority politics is not the dominant concern. Similarly, if the minority is large, territorially concentrated, and the mother state is very threatening, better treatment of the minority will be forthcoming. In this case the government is forced to grant concessions. I argue that most discrimination of the stranded minority will take place in the middle cases where we observe a balance of power between the parties. Overall, the power distribution of the parties is atypical, since most theories view power between states only. Here, this relationship is different in a sense that on one side there is the power of the seceded state, while on the other side the power of the minority and the mother state is combined (Figure 1).

I emphasize the presence of two major threats that influence government behavior towards its minority, such as the threat of further secession and the outside threat by the rump state. In a volatile environment of nation-building newly seceded states are fearful of their country’s survival and since the possibility of further secession almost always exists, this will be an important aspect in minority relations. Table 1.1 lists territorial enclaves with Russian and Serbian minorities that at some point did have the possibility to secede further, as well as regions that used to function or still function as de facto states in the international system, undermining the territorial integrity of their parent state (Table 1.1).
This theoretical argument is grounded in theories of the distribution of power, such as the balance of power and power preponderance theories. According to the balance of power theory, if the parties have similar degrees of power, they will be less likely to enter into a conflictual relationship, because it will be difficult to win against the side that has similar level of power to the instigator (Moul 1989; Waltz 1979). However, based on power preponderance theories, power preponderance leads to more peaceful outcomes because it is clear to each party who has more power and therefore the weak is less likely to challenge the strong (Kugler and Organski 1989). I apply the above theories of distribution of power to the treatment of minorities and find that most discrimination against minorities takes place when the parties have a balance of power because the seceded state believes that it can challenge the mother state and the minority in case the mother state intervenes in behalf of its minority.

This theory has implications for post-conflict stability, nation-building, secession, irredentism, diaspora relations, nationalism, as well as ethnic politics. I believe that in the case of the Soviet Union one of the major changes in the course of events was that the previous communist cleavage was gradually replaced by an ethnic cleavage as the basis of confrontation between the parties. For example, Kolstø argues that “in the Soviet-loyalist Baltic press the controversy with the Baltic leaders was presented for the first time in ethnic terms. In 1990 focusing on ethnic issues was still extremely rare in Interfront publications. However, in the spring of 1991, [...] ‘the Russian idea’ rather than Communism as a new ideological platform” came to the forefront of discussion (Kolstø 1995: 115). Interestingly, Galbreath argues that ethnicity as a factor decreased over time (Galbreath 2005), which is something that cannot be said about the seceded countries of Yugoslavia.
This dissertation applies rational choice theories to provide an explanation to the research question and emphasizes domestic and international threat as motivations for the government’s behavior. However, the presence of threat in itself is not enough for changes to take place, the strategic interaction between the government, the minority, and the rump state is equally important for the outcome. In addition, ultimately power relations underpin these relationships and the fear of losing power influences the government’s behavior to treat its minority accordingly.

The reader will notice that I do not put a strong emphasis on identity relations in this dissertation. The issue of identity formation after secession is certainly important, on the side of the diaspora, the titular nation, and also how Russia and Serbia developed their identity after having lost the republics. Also, I do not discount explanations that state that weak Russian identity (Lieven 1999) and the reassertion of the national identity of the newly founded states have been important in the developments of the state-building process. However, I side with the instrumentalist approach, which states that individuals have multiple identities and choose which identities are most beneficial to them at a given time. Based on this approach, actors weigh the available options, while they also tailor their actions to particular situations (Fearon and Laitin 1996). Also, I agree with the constructivist approach that each individual has multiple identities based on gender, class, race, ethnicity, and language and that ethnicity is a product of our social context (Fearon and Laitin 2000). At the same time, I disagree with the primordialist view which states that ethnicity is considered as a given, fixed, immutable relationship which individuals are born into. Based on this view ethnic groups are defined by their attachment to their homeland (Van Hanen 1999; Horowitz 1985). This position views this attachment to the
homeland by and large unproblematic and does not account for instances when identity is used for accomplishing a certain goal. For example language in the Yugoslav conflict was used as a way to distance oneself from a certain ethnic group. There are minimal differences in the Serbian and Croatian languages for instance, and some linguists argue that the two are mere dialects of each other. Overall the differences between the accent and phonetics of Serbian and Croatian are fairly minimal. Greenberg (1998) argues that in fact the process of language coalescence probably would have continued had it not been for the conflict that essentially led to policy makers intentionally differentiating the Bosnian language from the Croatian and the Serbian languages.

1.3 Outline of Dissertation

The plan of this dissertation is as follows. Chapter 2 describes the historical background of the Russian and Serb migration prior to 1991 and presents an overview of how the Russian and Serb minority has been treated over the past twenty years since the fall of communism. Relations between Russia and its seceded states and between Serbia and its former states are also assessed. Chapter 3 provides a theoretical framework of stranded ethnic minorities after secession. The question of why there has been a dramatic difference in the treatment of minorities by the seceded states is explained in detail. Specific focus is given to the threat of further secession by the minority, the curvilinear relationship between domestic threat and minority discrimination, as well as the linear relationship between international threat and minority discrimination. A large-N empirical analysis follows next in Chapter 4 which presents the research design and findings with respect to all post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav cases.
Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are case study chapters that use the most similar systems (MSS) design methodology within the cases and the most different systems (MDS) design across the clusters.

Chapter 5 compares the status of the Russian minority in the Baltic States, i.e. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and provides background information about the ethnic politics of nation-building. Moreover, the threat of further secession to the survival of the new governments and the relationship between Russia and the Baltic Republics is evaluated. The next chapter, Chapter 6, compares the Central Asian Republics of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan with respect to discrimination against the Russian minority. The attempted further secession of the Russian Altai Republic and relations with Russia are also analyzed. The following case study chapter, Chapter 7, focuses on the states of the former Yugoslavia and shows how the Serbian minorities have been treated overtime, as well as the dynamics of the threat of further secession. This section also explains the relations between Serbia and its former states in the context of threat. Finally, in Chapter 8 concluding remarks as well as ideas for future research close this work.⁷

With over 11 million Russians, Ukraine has the highest number of Russian minority in any of the seceded Soviet states. Moreover, the country has the highest degree of territorial concentration among all the observed cases in this dissertation; therefore the status of the Russian minority in the Ukraine is most relevant for international security. The case of Ukraine in the context of assessing the treatment of the Russian minority is complex. Even though the country is a unitary state, special provisions are given to the Autonomous Republic of the

⁷ Note that the countries of the Caucasus are not covered in detail in a separate case study chapter as the number of Russian minority is low and their potential to pose a territorial threat to these states is negligible. However, these countries are included in the overall large-N analysis.
Crimea where nearly 60% of the population is of Russian ethnicity. This is also the part of the country where the Black Sea Fleet is positioned. Although in 1993 Russia and the Ukraine have reached an agreement about dividing the fleet, this agreement has not been implemented because of disagreements between ownership and where the task force should be based. At present, both Russia’s Black Sea Fleet as well as the Ukrainian Naval Force is based in Sebastopol on the Crimea. Russia has a twenty year lease on the area where the fleet is located (Caspersen 2012: 4).

Further, the Ukraine is also the largest customer of oil sold by Gasprom within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). It has siphoned off oil from Russian pipelines during communist times and this continued activity causes tensions between the mother country, Russia, and the Ukraine. Overall, the Ukraine is an important case because of the large, relatively resource-rich and influential group of Russian minority as well as the relationship between Russia and Ukraine.

The country of Ukraine, along with Moldova, Transnistria, and Belarus, is a stand-alone chapter and constitutes a post-dissertation project. I am planning to conduct field research in both Kiev and the Crimea region. I would like to compare the treatment of Russians in Kiev, which is bicultural in the context that Russian and Ukrainian ethnicities mix, to the level of discrimination in the Crimea, where Russians are more influential. This comparison will give a more complete and balanced picture of inquiry.
Figure 1.1: Location and Size of Ethnic Russians in the Newly Independent States

Source: Russia Ex-Soviet Heartland Map, academic.evergreen.edu [accessed on 2-24-2011]
Table 1.1: Territorial Enclaves and De Facto States

**Territorial Enclaves with Russian or Serb Minorities**

Ida-Virumaa in Estonia

Latgale in Latvia

Russian Altai Republic in Kazakhstan

Crimea in Ukraine

Republika Srpska (RS) in Bosnia-Herzegovina (de facto state between 1992-1995)

Republika Srpska Krajina (RSK) in Croatia (de facto state between 1991-1995)

**De Facto States with Russian or Serb Minorities**

Transnistria in Moldova (1991-)

Kosovo in Serbia (1999-)


**Other Unrecognized States**

Abkhazia in Georgia (1993-)

Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan (1994-)

South Ossetia in Georgia (1992-)
CHAPTER 2
THE RUSSIAN AND SERBIAN MINORITIES

2.1 History of Migration

2.1.1 The Russians

Russian minorities in the republics arrived in three waves, the first wave occurred during
the period of Tsarist colonialization in the mid 15th century, the second wave in the wake of the
Russian Revolution in 1917, and the third after the Second World War. There are important
differences in the status of Russian minority based on which historical period they arrived in.
Those who settled before the twentieth century are viewed as “native to the area” (Chinn and
Kaiser 1996: 40; Mosely 1948). Examples include Russians in Kazakhstan and the Ukraine. Many
of these people were Cossacks, who were responsible for the military security and
administrative order in the Russian Empire during the Tsarist period. Also, in the Baltic States
those who arrived earlier than World War I are considered “historic settlers” and they are
accorded “greater consideration, both in law and in attitudes of the indigenous peoples, than

However, the majority of Russians migrated after World War II in great numbers for
either political or economic purposes. Russians were sent from the core to ensure the
appropriate implementation of the communist ideology and to carry out the massive
industrialization plans of the Soviet Union. As such communist party, military, and security
personnel arrived in the Caucasus, Baltics, and Central Asian territories, among others. Many
came as skilled technicians to Central Asia and as blue collar workers to enhance their
economic opportunities in the Baltic Republics. Therefore a distinction can be made not only
about when these migrants arrived but also on the basis of what type of function they served in the areas they now lived (Chinn and Kaiser 1996).

The first wave or the early migration of the Russian minority is intertwined with colonial expansion. Russian colonialization during the reign of the Tsars began around the 1550s and took on many different forms, such as the migration of the Cossacks, peasants, traders and handicraftsmen, skilled workers, religious people and intellectuals. In essence, Cossacks were the first true Russian migrants to the near abroad. They constitute a unique form of migratory group as they ensured that the Tsarist expansion functioned smoothly and provided the stability of the borders. Cossacks functioned in essence as “border defense” by combining military and economic colonialization. As such, Cossacks were “both soldiers and land tillers” (Levita and Loiberg, in Slapentokh et al. 1994: 6) since in exchange for their service they received land that was much bigger than the average size of land peasants in the area were able to obtain.

Russian peasants arrived to the Volga region, Bashkiriia, Siberia, and the Far East, and as they have occupied land, the titular ethnicities were forced to give up their land in return. For instance, in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan natives were “banished from their land en masse and their settlements and mosques were razed.” Further, during the nineteenth and early twentieth century traders and craftsmen arrived in the Volga region from the center (Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 6). Skilled Russian workers were another group related to Russian colonialization. At the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century Russians migrated into areas, such
as the Baku oil fields, Turkestan, and especially to the Don Basin in Ukraine, where today they comprise about half of the population (Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 7).

Some Russians moved to colonized territory, mainly the Caucasus, for fear of religious persecution, for example the Old Believers and the Molokans. The Old Believers migrated in order to achieve religious freedom without restrictions imposed by the Tsars. The Molokan movement emerged in the 17th century and it is characterized as a proto-Protestant religion. These groups formed their own communities and never truly integrated with the titular population. Russians in the near abroad often settled in a way that they were separated by a river from the indigenous people. Also, many Russian intellectuals, doctors, teachers, engineers, etc moved to the colonies to provide the intellectual backbone of Russian Imperialism at the time (Shlapentokh et al. 1994).

By 1917 the Russian Empire was falling apart. The Bolsheviks under Lenin’s leadership set out to fulfill the communist agenda and Russia, previously engaged in the war, pulled out of World War I after the revolution. In the period between 1917 and 1920 some countries of the former Russian Empire became formally independent, such as Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and “Russia also lost some power over Turkestan” (Shlapetokh et al. 1994: 9). The interwar period is a crucial time for the Baltic Republics since they count the establishment of nationhood from this time and returned to the

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8 Some notable Kursk residents were Nikita Khrushchev, a locksmith, and Iliia Brezhnev, a metalworker, who was the father of Leonid Brezhnev (Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 7). Khruschchev became the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union between 1953 and 1964. Leonid Brezhnev was the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union between 1964 and 1982.

9 For more on this topic see the “Russians in the Baltic States” chapter.

constitution and other legislation of this time period once they regained their independence in 1991 (Table 2.1).

The second wave of Russian migration occurred during the time of the Russian Revolution. Once the revolution started to gain full momentum in the 1920s, migration to the republics became more systematic and goal oriented (Shlapentokh et al. 1994). This is the time period when we speak of a very high rate of migration of Russians into the territories. A large number of migrants arrived as a result of the industrialization campaigns of the 1920s and 1930s. Later on as World War II was progressing, much of the Soviet enterprises were moved East within the empire, mainly to Kazakhstan and Central Asia. During this time over 300 large enterprises, comprising about 20 percent of total industry, were moved eastward and Russians who migrated to this area mostly remained there (Shlapentokh et al. 1994).

The third major wave of migration took place between 1959-1970 and was related to Nikita Khrushchev’s “Virgin Lands Program” in Kazakhstan, during which a large number of Russians moved to the country and started the agricultural development of previously vast empty steppe. During this time the population of Kazakhstan expanded from 4 million to 5.5 million, which means that an immense 1.5 million people were added to the population as a result of the Virgin Lands Program in Kazakhstan, most of them Russians and Russian-speakers. Another major migration wave occurred between 1959 and 1989 to the Baltic Republics. At this time, both Estonia’s and Latvia’s Russian population grew substantially, from about 20 percent to around 30 percent each (Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 14).

Russians who migrated to the republics during the Soviet system often occupied high ranking political positions and were the glue to the Soviet Union. Data shows that “the
percentage of Russians in the administration of the national regions of the Russian Federation was extremely high, and the closer to the top, the higher.” Even though the party first secretary was elected from the titulars, the actual power was in the hands of the second secretary, who was appointed by the center in Moscow (Levita and Loiberg, cited in Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 11).

Generally, Russian immigrants in the Baltic Republics were mainly low skilled workers, working in heavy industries, such as mines and construction, whereas in the Central Asian Republic the majority of them were skilled workers, employed as technicians, machine operators or engineers. In Kazakhstan and in Uzbekistan, where Russians migrated for agricultural purposes, they were “mostly rural machine operators (often low-skilled ones), urban lumpen, and low-paid employees who had few if any skills and hoped by acquiring a new trade to change their lives for the better” (Levita and Loiberg, cited in Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 15).

2.1.2 The Serbs

The migration of Serbs can be traced back to three major historic periods, each of which have been followed by subsequent nation building efforts during which the status of Serbs as well as the kaleidoscope of ethnic minorities had to be settled and regulated. These three periods are following 1) the Ottoman occupation, 2) World War I and 3) World War II. During the Ottoman period ethnic minorities have been able to manage their own affairs because of the “millet system” which allowed a certain level of religious and administrative autonomy to non-Muslims. Representatives of the Ottoman Empire were more interested in collecting taxes
than meddling into the affairs of various ethnic groups (Black 2001). However, as the Ottoman Empire began to disintegrate many countries broke away and once Austro-Hungary and the Russian Empire pushed southward to take over territory, it resulted in two Balkan Wars taking place in the 1900s.

Further, during Ottoman occupation in the 15th century, many Serbs migrated North and to Bosnian Krajina in the West. Serbs have lived in Kosovo since the 11th century and “some important Christian Orthodox sites were built in Kosovo” during this time period. Kosovo was conquered by the Ottomans in 1455 and remained under Ottoman rule for 450 years. Further, the Muslims in Bosnia are “Slav descendants of the Bogomils, a heretic Christian sect, persecuted by both Orthodox and Catholic churches, who converted to Islam under the Ottoman Empire” (Coulson 1993: 95).

In an effort to isolate Serbia from the possession of the coastline of the Adriatic Sea, Austro-Hungary annexed Bosnia and promoted the creation of Albania as a separate country. In 1914 Serb nationalists assassinated the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir of Austro-Hungary, which gave the spark to the break out of World War I. Shortly after the war, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes became Yugoslavia, the Land of South Slavs. This is the period when the formation of Yugoslavia began to take shape.

During World War II Yugoslavia fought on the side of fascist Germany and Italy, but when anti-Nazi Serb radicals took over the government, Germany invaded. As a result, hundreds and thousands of Serbs were murdered during the fascist Ustasa rule in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia (Stipčević 1974). In Croatia during fascist Ustasa rule fascist Croats

11 www.minorityrights.org
collaborated with the Nazis and created concentration camps in which not only Jews and Gypsies but also many Serbs died. The Yugoslav Resistance to the German incursion was led by Josip Broz Tito, who directed the Partisans of the Communist Party and became the leader of Yugoslavia after the war.

The concentration camps in which many Serbs died in Croatia and the massacres against Serbs in Bosnia during the Second World War were crucial historical episodes later on as the Yugoslav Wars took place after the fall of the communism in 1989. Developments during the Yugoslav Wars and the strategic and emotional stance of the Serbs during this time are determined by these events. Literature mainly focuses on Milosevic’ attempt to keep a Greater Serbia together, and clearly this is an important development in the course of the conflict. However, the ethnic security dilemma and the Bosnian and Croatian Serbs’ insistence on keeping with Serbia are also explained by the fear of prior historical mistreatment of Serbs during World War II. Parallels were drawn between fascist times and after the collapse of socialism in Yugoslavia with respect to what could have been anticipated as to how the Serbs will be treated if they become a minority in the seceded states of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Coulson 1993: 91).

The year 1989 was not the first time in the history of Serbia and Yugoslavia when the people of the Balkans had to face the complex task of nation-building. After each of the three historical periods described above the Serbs, Bosniaks, Croats, Albanians, Macedonians, etc, had to find a way to establish administrative systems, fight through the power struggle of elites, and to get along in a multi-ethnic setting. Each time this had to be accomplished in the aftermath of the fall of empires and heavy, devastating, violent, worldwide conflicts. The
complicity of the task of nation-building in the case of Bosnia Herzegovina, for instance lies in the fact that no one group could claim titular status after secession. All three major groups, such as the Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats “vied for the status of state-constituting nation,” (Burg and Shoup 1999: 5), which lead to difficult power struggle between them.

After Tito’s death in 1980, problems in the Yugoslav political structure began to surface. Some argue that Tito held the country together symbolically and practically (Coulson 1993: 91). Tito’s own way of socialism kept a distance from the Soviets and was characterized by the Non-Aligned Movement beginning 1961 until the dissolution of the country. The fact that subversion in the political system in Yugoslavia could occur can be traced back to the absence of his leadership. As a result, ethnic tensions increased significantly after Tito’s death.

At the wake of the falling apart of Yugoslavia in 1990 about two million Serbs (about 20 percent) lived outside of rump Serbia. As Serbia struggled for establishing its hegemony of Greater Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia equally struggled, initially to achieve the devolution of power to them within the federation, and later pushed for complete independence (Jesse and Williams 2011). Afterward other republics followed suit. Initially, Tito dealt with ethnic problems in Kosovo by creating the 1974 constitution that gave more power to the autonomous republics of Kosovo and Vojvodina. However, Milosevic reversed this action and curtailed the power of these two regions. As a result the number of Serbs in Kosovo has dropped significantly to 10 percent as many of them left for fear of possible atrocities against them.

At the root, the Yugoslav Wars were the result of the complex secessionist and irredentist attempts of Serbs within Croatia and Bosnia and the issue of credible commitment.
In both states Serbs feared that the secession of Croatia and Bosnia would lead to their severe discrimination, as was the case during the Fascist occupation of Yugoslavia, therefore they wanted to keep with Serbia proper territorially. Serbs essentially mistrusted the evolving governments of Croatia and Bosnia based on prior historical discrimination. Also, Milosevic provided ample support to the Serbs in each case and fueled existing fears by Serbs. In the end, Serbs did not want to become a minority in the seceded states and when the disintegration of Yugoslavia was inevitable, they pushed for further secession of Serbian areas within Croatia and Bosnia. The result of these developments was prolonged bloodshed and several years of war, as well as the almost complete emigration of Serbs from Croatia, Bosnia, and Slovenia. As Ćircović sums it up “significant parts of the Serbian people were eradicated from territories where they had existed for centuries (parts of Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, Kosovo and Metohija). Serbia was flooded with hundreds and thousands of refugees, only a very small portion of whom have returned home to date” (Čircović 2004: 289).

During the Yugoslav Wars the Serbs attempted to gain their own territory in two areas, such as Serbian Krajina in Croatia and the Repubika Srpska in Bosnia Herzegovina. In Croatia they established the Republic of Serbian Krajina for a short period between 1991-1994 under Milan Babic’ presidency. In Bosnia Herzegovina during the referendum of 1991 Bosnian Serbs expressed their desire to stay within Serbia. However, once Bosnian independence took place, the Serbs in Bosnia declared the independence of Republika Srpska. At the end, this area became a separate entity within Bosnia Herzegovina as part of the negotiations during the Dayton Accords in 1995.
The treatment of Serbs by other ethnic groups on the area of the former Yugoslavia can be best described by mutual historic discrimination. It seems that discrimination by Croats, Bosniaks, or other ethnic groups was frequently a reaction to discrimination that took place by the hands of Serbs in the past. Often this took the form of violence between various groups. At the end, discrimination by for example the Kosovo Albanians against Serbs created a cycle by which the Serbs reciprocated with discrimination against the Kosovo Albanians and so on. Discrimination fed further discrimination that took place over time. The time period after the collapse of socialism was also subject to the same cycle, albeit accompanied by heavy elite manipulation.

2.2 The Russian Minority after Independence

The Russian minority varies a great deal in their characteristics in the states that seceded from the Soviet Union. Their size, lifestyle, knowledge of the language of the titular nation is very different country by country. They are not very cohesive as a group across countries and their ties to Russia are not particularly strong either as many of them do not identify strongly with Russia and do not consider it their homeland (Barrington et al. 2003). Zevelev breaks down the typology of the Russian Disapora into four major groups. The first group of Russian minority is located in Belarus and the Ukraine, where they “hardly constitute separate well-defined communities” (Zevelev 2001: 124). In terms of social conditions, culture, and political orientation, the Russian minority is very similar to the nationals in these countries. Nonetheless the issue of the Russian minority constitutes one of the key political debates in the

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12 Titular nationalities refer to the nationalities of the seceded states, such as Latvian, Estonian, Bosnian, etc.
country today. As mentioned in the introduction before, problems related to using the Russian language illustrates this. The second group of Russian minority lives in Northern-Kazakhstan, the Crimea, North-Eastern Estonia, and Pridnestrovye in Moldova. This group is distinct from others in a sense that Russians pose possible separatist tendencies or claims of autonomy to the governments of the host states. Third, Russians are politically underrepresented and dispersed in Central Asia and Transcaucasia. This region shows the most cultural and educational differences between the nationals and the Russian diaspora. Overall, political bodies are dominated by titulars that operate through kinship ties. Finally, the Baltic Republics are a distinct group that are most separated from Russia proper and where severe discrimination exists in the form of citizenship and language laws in Latvia and Estonia against Russian minorities (Zevelev 2001). Although citizenship laws have undergone important changes since the nationalist period immediately after independence in 1991, discrimination against Russians is still present in these two states.

Most authors analyze the question of how the Russian minority has been treated in the former Soviet republics in the context of democratic consolidation, nation-building, nationalism, and identity formation (Galbreath 2005; Mandelbaum 2000; King and Melvin 1999; Laitin 1998; Ishiyama and Breuning 1998; Chinn and Kaiser 1996; Kolstø 1995). After the collapse of communism the titular majorities struggled with creating a nation that follows a democratic pattern. Favorable treatment of minorities is one important aspect of a democratically governed country. Multi-ethnic societies in which minorities are formally included in the political power fulfill the norm of democracy. However, some countries, such as Estonia and Latvia for example, practice “ethnic democracy,” as Smith defines it, in which the
sizable Russian minority is deprived from political participation (Smith 1999: 80). Galbreath lists four possible institutional designs that have been used to handle problems related to democratic transition in multi-ethnic states, such as 1) constitutional neutrality 2) interest group pluralism 3) consociationalism and 4) democratic liberalism (Galbreath 2005: 47). Consociationalism is most applicable to groups that are geographically concentrated, such as the Russian minority in Estonia’s North-East region (Galbreath 2005: 51).

Based on Lijphart, consociationalism entails the elements of 1) grand coalition by multiple elites, 2) mutual veto to protect minority interests, 3) proportionality of political representation, and 4) high degree of autonomy for each segment or groups (Lijphart 1977: 25). Elite cooperation is the primary feature of consociational democracy which will lead to stable democracies (Lijphart 1977: 1). Other authors develop the idea of stability in this form and add to it by arguing that instead of majority rule, proportional representation is preferred over other institutional designs (Horowitz 1985: 29), and that the proliferation of multiple ethnic majorities must be encouraged (Chandra 2005).

The above literature mostly refers to already established democracies. Given the nature of this dissertation, the context is different since the dynamics of nation-building occur after secession when the country is just born, when it is newly established in the international system. I believe that the subsequent relations within the state between the titular majority and its minority will be different if the country is newly established as opposed to when it is an already established democracy.

The theoretical premise of Chinn and Kaiser’s *Russians as the New Minority* (1996), which is perhaps the most comprehensive book on Russians in the new states, is the
“interactive nationalism” that takes place at the collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s. The authors argue that it is not primordial ancient hatred which led to nationalist tendencies and conflict in the republics that broke off. But instead what occurred was a more complex interaction between the newly nationalizing states and the Russian minority that reacted to those actions with its own form of counter-nationalism. Also, Chinn and Kaiser do not bring this discussion out but allude to the idea that both the dynamics of external and internal threat were at works during this crucial time period. The Russian minority in the seceded countries had essentially three options to react to internal nationalism; they could emigrate to Russia, which discouraged it on economic grounds, they could also organize politically via forming political parties, or turn to further secession or irredentism, and essentially all of these options came in these states. The authors provide a brief section on policy recommendation to avoid future problems related to minority protection, which is to advocate for accommodation and inclusion of the Russian minority “to dampen counter-hegemonic reaction on the part of national minorities” (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 33).

In addition to the nationalism v. counter-nationalism viewpoint, the question about the status of Russians abroad is also approached on the basis of inclusion v. exclusion of the Russian minority. Commercio argues that the Russian minority is well integrated economically in Latvia, but not in Kyrgyzstan due to limited informal economic networks (Commercio 2010). Kolstø similarly argues that in Latvia the Russians are able to take part in the economy and have access to jobs and markets, as opposed to Estonia, where this is not the case, however political integration is better in Estonia (Kolstø 1995). The latter argument is also supported by Ishiyama

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13 More on this topic see Chapter 6 on Central Asia.
and Breuning, who argue that in Estonia, the Russian minorities were able to form political parties, whereas in Latvia, only associations formed (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998). In fact, Estonia was the only post-Soviet state where political parties representing the Russian minority formed after independence.

Titular nationalism was most successful in excluding the Russian minority in the Baltic Republics, Georgia, and Moldova. Power sharing arrangements were implemented to varying degrees in the Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, in which Russians have been, at least formally, included in governance. On the other hand, both in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan, the national elites held power but had to relinquish it eventually and exclusionary policies have not been implemented against Russophones. Moderate nationalism was practiced in Armenia, and finally, Soviet era politicians were able to keep the opposition away from power and kept the status quo in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 271).

In terms of changes in the level of exclusion of the Russian minority in the country, Lithuania and Moldova moderated their position the most since independence and the declaration of a quasi-state respectively. Latvia, Estonia, and Georgia are still somewhat exclusionary; however they have moderated their stance towards Russians since the 1990s. Finally, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have taken a reverse change from inclusionary policies at the beginning and now they have become more closed and have been excluding the Russian minority from political power (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 272).

The prospects of assimilation of the Russian minority in the cases of the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Estonia, and Latvia, depend on the degree of the titular elites’ mobility to the center during Soviet times (Laitin 1998). His projection is that assimilation of Russians will be
greater in the Baltic States than in Ukraine and Kazakstan, despite higher prior discrimination.

Laitin’s rich and well written analysis stands out because it is “grounded in the lives of real people” as he himself states it (Laitin 1998: 33). He provides a detailed account of Russian families who had to deal with the discrimination first hand after the independence of the Baltic States.

After secession nearly all newly established states of the FSU enacted laws on language and citizenship regarding the Russian as well as other minorities. Lawrence R. Robertson has established a coding criteria of language laws and determined their “secessionist strength” based on five indicators, such as 1) the timing of the laws, 2) the degree to which the titular language would be required for economic exchange, 3) the role in the republic foreseen for the Russian language, 4) the extent to which knowing the titular language would become mandatory in the republic, and 5) the timetable for the full implementation of the law’s provisions. Based on “secessionist strength” indicators Estonia and Latvia have higher scores and Ukraine as well as Kazakhstan have somewhat lower scores (Robertson 1995: 106-109; cited in Laitin 1998: 89). Language and citizenship laws were most problematic in Estonia and Latvia, where the titular majority used them as venues to exclude the Russian minority from governance.14

2.3 The Serb Minority after Independence

At this point systematic work does not exist that would evaluate the status of the Serb minority in the post-Yugoslav states in a comprehensive manner. Part of the explanation for

14 More detailed explanation of this topic will be given during the coverage of specific case studies.
this gap in the literature is that the secession of the former Yugoslavia occurred in increments and was accompanied by violence. Also, I believe that the falling apart of Yugoslavia is not entirely complete at this point. Even though Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia in 2008, its status remains questionable as a great number of countries have not recognized it as a state.\textsuperscript{15}

Problems between Serbs and the respective majority groups in many of the republics are still present at this day. Discrimination against Serbs still have been occurring after independence in Kosovo, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Croatia, and less so in Macedonia, Montenegro, and Slovenia. Serbs in Croatia face harassment, unfair treatment in court proceedings, as well as limited access to employment and economic opportunities. The Croatian government is criticized for not providing adequate housing for returning Serb refugees.\textsuperscript{16}

Tensions between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo and to a lesser extent between Serbs and Macedonians, occur in religious forms. In Kosovo, Serbs have been restricted to practice their Christian Orthodox religion and a Serbian Orthodox Church has been vandalized. Similarly, in Macedonia Serbian Orthodox clergymen have been attacked and several churches and monasteries have been destroyed.\textsuperscript{17}

After the conflict ended in Croatia one of the key problems regarding Serbian minorities was the return of Croatian Serb Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and refugees who have fled

\textsuperscript{15} Especially Russia and the republics of the Former Soviet Union are against Kosovo becoming a separate nation state.
\textsuperscript{17} www.minorityrights.org; Freedom House Report 2006.
the country during the war. These people were considered “a threat to the country’s fragile peace and political stability” by the Croatian government; therefore the Croatian government was initially reluctant to admit them back into the country. Croatia argued that it would overstretch its economic resources, and that infrastructure and institutional capacity was lacking for their repatriation (Djuric 2010: 1639). Shortly after the war during the 1990s Croatia’s policy towards Serb refugee repatriation followed the most closed approach. Because of widespread patron-client relations in Croatia, ethnic Croats supported local politicians with policies that “hindered refugee repatriation” (Djuric 2010: 1646).

After President Tudjman’s death Croatia’s leadership changed, and with it we can also see a turning point in refugee repatriation policy between the years of 2000-2003. However, the change in leadership was not occurring merely in Croatia, but also in Serbia. As former President Milosevic went to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) trial in 2001, essentially both countries, Serbia and Croatia experienced a change in government. The new governments in both states were more democratic, less hardliner authoritarian and nationalist (Djuric 2010: 1650) and refugee repatriation policy slowly normalized. In 2010 over 34% of Croatian Serb refugees returned to Croatia.18

Serbs in Bosnia Herzegovina are considered a minority, however since Serbs make up 37% of the overall population and Bosniaks make up 48%, Serbs are very large minority. Croats account for 14% of the total population of the country. This ratio is key to the nation-building question, since all three groups aimed at claiming titular status, which hindered nation-building following secession and led to severe violence. In addition, Burg and Shoup argue that the

18 US Department of State
conflict that arouse as a result is primarily due to the problem that the international community attempted to implement both pluralist and power-sharing approaches at the same time, but could not reconcile the two (Burg and Shoup 1999). Essentially, “the Bosnian government argued that its refusal to accept autonomy for the Croats and Serbs was based on its adherence to the pluralist principles of human rights. Serb and Croat nationalists argued that their claims to autonomy [...] were based on [...] the collective right of nations to self-determination” (Burg and Shoup 1999: 8). Again, this theoretical discrepancy relates to how international human rights norms applicable to every individual within a country, are reconciled with group rights, such as minority rights. As mentioned earlier, Kymlicka suggests applying these two types of rights simultaneously (Kymlicka 1995).

Serbs in Bosnia Herzegovina primarily live in the Republika Srpska, which constitute a separate entity within the country, as it was agreed on at Dayton in 1995. They are well organized politically, at least 17 political parties exist, such as the Social-Liberal Party, the Independent Social-Democrats, the Yugoslav United Left, and the Socialist Party RS, etc. They control about a third of the Presidency and the House based on power-sharing arrangements that were negotiated after the war. Outside of the Republika Srpska, Serbs feel that they are being discriminated against in areas such as denied schooling in the Serbian language, wage discrimination and problems in terms of returning refugees.19

The case of Kosovo is most representative of mutual discrimination (Zdravkovic-Zonta 2011), since both groups, the Kosovo Albanians and the Kosovo Serbs, have committed discrimination against each other. The initial mistreatment of Albanians in Kosovo by the Serbs

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19 MAR Risk Assessment for Serbs in Bosnia, accessed 2-2-2011.
was reciprocated by similar mistreatment of the Serbian minority by the Albanians who became
the titular nationality after 2008. While the 1974 constitution of Kosovo granted autonomy
status for the territory under Tito, Milosevic took away much of this autonomy and the
“condition of the Kosovo Albanians became dire.” Albanians were unable to buy and sell
property without special permission, they were frequently dismissed from state-owned firms,
students were banned from entering university buildings and university education took place in
Serbian only (Caplan 1998: 751).

After 1999 Serbs in Kosovo have been completely eliminated in the political and
economic centers, and they were fired on the basis of their ethnicity “from hospitals to mines.”
The situation of Serbs has not changed in the country for the past ten years and serious human
rights violations exist, “the Serb community has been denied civil and political rights, such as
the right to life, freedom of movement, freedom of expression, [...] the right to education, the
right to healthcare, and the right to participate in cultural life. Zdravkovic-Zonta argues that
human rights violations against Serbs have been systematic and institutionalized continuously
since the end of the Yugoslav Wars.

2.4 Relations with Russia

While relations between Russia and the former Soviet Union republics differ by
individual countries, some patterns can be observed during the past twenty years. First, Russia
has been assertive over the years to regain its influence in these states and re-establish as
much of its prior sphere of influence as that has been possible. Second, this process took place

20 US Department of State Human Rights Report Kosovo 2008-2009
via the channels of political, economic, and military relations such as creating and strengthening economic alliances, delaying troop withdrawal, and withholding energy resources. Third, while Russia has been exerting its influence towards the post-Soviet states, those countries have also been able to influence Russia by turning to alternative sources for military protection or economic connections, such as the West or China.

The initial hope that Russia will become part of the prestigious group of the G-7, e.g. the economically successful West, wore off and the optimism of the time was replaced by skepticism towards the West. At the end, subsequent NATO expansions made Russia ask, against whom this expansion and the deployment of nuclear weapons into former satellite states was directed against. Further, Buszynski argues that the past few years Russia strengthened its role in Central Asia for instance, for “fear of displacement by America” as well as because of Islamic fundamentalism and in order to keep its solid network of oil and gas with those states (Buszynski 2005). Lynch also argues that the initial Western-oriented Russian diplomacy took a shift in 1996 and Russia took on a “Eurasian-oriented foreign policy” (Lynch 2001: 9). Some of this shift has been attributed to the change in personnel, such as the replacement of Andrei Kozyrev by Evgenii Primakov as Foreign Minister. Since that time, especially with the inception of the War on Terror, Russian foreign policy has been conducted more or less with the goal of reasserting former Russian hegemony. In other words, we may be seeing the resurrection of a new wave of “Russian expansion” (Mosely 1948).

The Commonwealth of Independent States was created in 1991 to maintain Russian dominance, although the influence of the organization diminished over time. Initially Russia has been able to exert power over CIS countries with the deployment and withdrawal of its military,
either in the form of troop withdrawal, for instance in the Baltics, or establishing military bases, such as those in Central Asia. While Russian soldiers completely withdrew from the Baltics, their presence and degree of troops varies across the former empire (Lachowski 2007). Armenia and Georgia have especially high number of Russian troops along with Tajikistan in the form of “Russian blue helmets” participating in peace keeping operations in conflict torn areas, such as the breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, as well as the result of the civil war in Tajikistan (Goltz 1993). The highest number of Russian military is located in the Ukraine’s Crimea region.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, fleets, army and military equipment in the republics were contested whether those belonged to Russia or the new states (Twinning 1993: 12). In the Ukraine for instance, Russian soldiers sided with the country rather than Russia to bring about independence (Golovakha et al., in Shlapentokh et al. 1994). Especially in the early years, the overall status of equipment and soldiers had not been entirely clarified as to whom those belonged. While in the initial years this has been problematic, the issue of troop presence has not disappeared from policy discussions completely, since some of the seceded states are still requesting Russian troop withdrawal and as a result of The War on Terror Russia established additional bases in order to protect its southern borders. The latter was essentially a reaction to the United States establishing bases in Central Asia, such as those in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Troop withdrawal was used by Russia “as a bargaining chip” in Estonia, Latvia, and Moldova in order to force the political elite to take a more inclusive approach toward the Russian minority (Simonsen 2001; Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 279). Even though Yeltsin warned the
Baltic States that Russia will not withdraw its troops until better treatment of the Russian minority was forthcoming, in the end, his words did not mean much, since discrimination against the Russians continued for a long time, with the exception of Lithuania. Similarly, problems with the Black Sea Fleet and its disputed nature are closely tied to the issue of the Russian minority in Ukraine’s Crimea region. Further, Russia maintained its military role in Abkhazia and Tajikistan as well, and it used the protection of the Russian minority in Tajikistan to justify its military presence (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 279).

Russia has retained its military presence in Tajikistan, established a base in Kyrgyzstan, and moved closer to Uzbekistan in terms of military cooperation (Buszynski 2005). It justified the necessity of additional bases and military cooperation on the grounds of dealing with terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism, and narcotics trafficking; in addition it argued that these nations are “gatekeepers” to Russia and therefore their security is important to Russia’s security (Buszynski 2005: 554). But besides the security argument, Russia essentially was afraid that it was losing influence over Central Asia to America. Opening the airbase in Kant, Kyrgyzstan, was one sign that Russia was regaining some power, although Kyrgyzstan allowed the operation of both, NATO and Russian bases.

With respect to the economy, Russia has been able to influence its former states via withholding energy resources and establishing economic institutional connections. Russia has cut off gas supplies to the Ukraine and Belarus several times over the years to make it clear that not complying with its terms will have serious consequences. In fact, such foreign policy has been indicated that it will be used as a tool to secure improved minority rights for Russians abroad (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 279). Withholding energy resources however weren’t always
necessarily directed towards the former Soviet states only. The Ukraine for instance owned
enough energy resources that they could use for heating during the time Russia shut off gas to
the country in 2006. Former satellite states, such as Poland, Hungary, and the Check Republic
receive much of their energy from Russia through pipelines via the Ukraine. Thus indirectly,
Russia targeted the European Union with its decision to disrupt energy flow through the
Ukraine, most likely as a retribution for the EU’s stance on the war in Georgia.

After independence in 1991 the former Soviet States agreed to mutually cooperate with
one another and established the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Most former
countries joined; however the Baltic States decided not to participate and later on became
members of the European Union (EU) exclusively. The CIS was founded on the idea of
cooperation with regards to military, nuclear, and strategic issues that were intended to be
decided jointly. Other functions, such as foreign and economic affairs, transportation,
communication, environmental affairs and crime prevention were also planned to be decided
together within the framework of the organization (Twining 1993: 8).

Russia has the ability to exert control over the post-Soviet states economically and
militarily. International organizations in the region function as venues to maintain and expand
Russian influence. Via these organizations Russia is able to keep and reassert its formal power.
The CIS as an international organization is largely defunct today. The Eurasian Union, the
Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC), and the new Collective Security Treaty Organization
(CSTO) however are active institutions Russia has been using to establish closer economic and
security ties to the republics. Countries that are members of the Eurasian Economic Community
are most dependent on Russia for security and trade, such as Belarus, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan,
and Kazakhstan (Kokoshin, cited in Buszynski 551). With other words, these states have the closest ties to Russia and they are most interdependent on Russian economic ties and diplomatic relations.

In 1994, Kazakhstan’s president, Nursultan Nazarbaev, proposed the creation of the Eurasian Union and later on in 2001 he also proposed the formation of the Eurasian Economic Community. Both organizations were intended to correct the deficiencies of the CIS and to establish closer ties to Russia. In 2011 Putin brought the idea back to life and an agreement was signed between Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan that the Eurasian Union (EAU) will be established by 2015. The EAU is intended as a regional organization promoting economic and political integration, similarly to the idea of the European Union. Since trade with Russia accounts for 25% of Kazakhstan’s overall trade and Kazakhstan’s oil and gas are exported through Russia’s pipeline system to Europe, Kazakhstan is heavily dependent on Russia (Antsiferov 2004, cited in Buszynski 2005). Other states that have committed to become members of the EAU, such as Belarus, also will benefit from close economic ties with Russia.

The new Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) also serves as an institution to tie the former republics to Russia politically and in terms of security. It is a supplement organization to the initial CIS Collective Security Treaty which was signed in 1992. At present the following countries are members of the CSTO: Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Armenia, and Belarus. The organization was founded in 2003 for the purpose of combating terrorism and drug trafficking. Furthermore, even though Armenia and Belarus are formally members of the institution, the most active and influential members are Russia and the Central
Asian Republics, which indicates Russia’s connection to the Central Asian region (Buszynski 2005: 552).

While Russia has the ability to exert control over the post-Soviet states economically and militarily, this relationship also needs to be observed from the receiving end. As Buszynski points out, even though some countries may be highly dependent on Russia, these states have an option to turn to other countries that can serve as either “big brothers” for diplomatic protection or states the countries in question can establish economic connections with. For instance, Russia has initiated the Russian-Turkmen gas partnership, however Turkmenistan’s president, Saparmurat Niyazov, stated that he will pursue investment connections with the United States instead (Panfilova, cited in Buszynski 2005: 563). Similarly, the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, which was inaugurated in 2005 and was backed by the United States, is one venue that can circumvent the existing Russian pipeline, providing Kazakhstan with a more diversified resource transportation infrastructure (Buszynski 2005: 560). Therefore, as indicated by these examples, the former Soviet States are not necessarily passive actors on the receiving end; Russia also needs them to further its own economic and political interests within the region. The relationship then is mutual and interactive between the players. Further, the relationship between the mother and the seceded states can also change over time (Wu 2010). Uzbekistan, for example, was an ally of Russia first; however, later on it took on a more independent path (Buszynski 2005: 561).
2.5 Relations with Serbia

The separation between the former Yugoslavia and its republics has been accompanied by a great deal of violence, which was partially due to conflicting irredentist claims, or as Saideman terms it “Dueling Irredentisms” in the case of Croatia for example (Saideman and Ayres 2008: 52). Essentially, both sides aimed for retaking the same parts of territory and fought for it. Serbia intended to create “Greater Serbia” and Croatia wanted to include Bosnian Croats within its territory by attaching certain regions.

However, Serbia was selective in focusing on aiding Serb irredentism in certain countries, such as in Bosnia and Croatia and largely ignored the exit of Macedonia, despite a small but significant Serb minority there (Saideman and Ayres 2008). Overall, relations between the rump and many of the secessionist states have been overshadowed by several years of painful conflict which by in large determines future relations between Serbia and the republics.

Irredentism was a successful strategy for conservative elites, such as Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic, since they were able to maintain political control for a long time (Gagnon 2004: 88-89, cited in Saideman and Ayres 2008). Serb irredentism in Croatia actually started about a year before Croatia declared independence. Serbs within the territory of Croatia aimed at creating their own state and announced the establishment of the Republic of Serbian Krajina. Their action was allegedly incited by Serbia and peaceful resolution to the conflict, such as the organization of Serb political parties by Milan Dukic and Veljko Dzakula ended up being prevented by Serb militants. The Republic of Serbian Krajina was fairly short-lived. Serb Krajina ended up being incorporated into Croatia after the war stopped and Milan Babic, the first president between 1991-1994, eventually was
indicted on war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague.

Irredentism in Bosnia had a different flow of events and outcome. After Bosnian independence in 1992, Serbs declared the independence of Republika Srpska and began the nearly complete ethnic cleansing of Croats and Bosniaks from the area. Ethnic cleansing of these two groups were heavily backed and supported by Serbia proper, similarly to the way Serbia also supported Serbs in Croatia during the Yugoslav Wars. The atrocities reached their peak in the Srebrenica massacre in 1995 when Bosnian Serb forces attacked a UN safe area and executed over 7,000 men and boys, making the event the largest European massacre since World War II (www.minorityrights.org). During final negotiations the Dayton Accords created two separate entities in Bosnia Herzegovina, such as the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina.

While Serbia supported both Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia, the territorial resolution of the two republics was different and irredentism was handled differently. Croatia’s heavy handed approach led to Serb Krajina being absorbed into Croatia, whereas in Bosnia, the separate entity of the Republika Srpska was created with separate administrative entities, such as police forces.

Since the Dayton Accord in 1995, relations between Serbia and its former states have been relatively stable, with the exception of Kosovo (www.minorityrights.org). The strongest political and economic ties can be observed between Serbia and Montenegro, which was the last country to secede from Yugoslavia in 2007. While tensions have eased since 1995 between Croatia and Serbia, repatriation of refugees into Croatia and widespread discrimination of
returning Serb refugees continued to be a problem and created occasional discrepancies between the two countries until about 2000. Since the leadership change that occurred both in Serbia and Croatia after 2000, Croatian Serb Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and refugee repatriation to Croatia have normalized, which some see as the result of Croatia’s intention of accession to the European Union (Djuric 2010).

Prior to the regime change in 2000, the Serbian government “actively prevented Serb refugee repatriation” (Djuric 2010: 1650) However, when Zoran Dindic, became president of Serbia in 2000, he relinquished the idea of manipulating the Serbian refugees (Djuric 2010). As a result, more Serbs were able to return to the areas they previously lived in, such as those in Croatia and Bosnia. Dindic’s term however was short lived after he extradited Slobodan Milosevic to the ICTY, Kosovo born Zvezdan Jovanovic assassinated him in 2003 on the grounds of selling out the Serbs.21

Serbia’s intention of keeping Kosovo was made clear early on in the conflict. In 1989 Milosevic gave a speech in Kosovo for the 600th anniversary for the Battle of Kosovo in which Lazar, a medieval Serbian ruler, died. He told the Kosovo Serbs the following: “You should stay here, both for your ancestors and your descendants. Otherwise you would shame your ancestors and disappoint your descendants...Yugoslavia does not exist without Kosovo! Yugoslavia would disintegrate without Kosovo! Yugoslavia and Serbia are not going to give up Kosovo!” (Judah 1997: 29).

At the end of the war, Kosovo never made it to the Dayton Agenda in 1995. The Serbian minority problem needed to be settled and a comprehensive approach was needed to the issue

of national minorities “one which took account of the problems of minorities across all of the former Yugoslavia” (Caplan 1998: 750). However, this issue would have been another complex problem to be solved at Dayton, therefore it was never touched (Caplan 1998: 750). Further, Milosevic had already conceded a great deal in Bosnia, and Kosovo seemed like an equally difficult predicament to be settled. At the end no one wanted to alienate Milosevic from the bargaining table when he was willing to compromise on Bosnia. Compromising on Kosovo also, may have been simply asking too much at a time. It appears that in complex conflicts over territory the issue of minorities, refugees, or people is left to be solved last. During the multi-phase Palestinian negotiations over decades, the issue of Palestinian refugees, such as the right of return, never made it to the agenda either. Even at the latest phases of the conflict, specifically at Camp David in 2000, the status of the Palestinian refugees was not discussed. A comprehensive approach to the Serb minority question had a similar fate.

Relations between Serbia and Kosovo have been strained since the end of the Yugoslav Wars, but especially since Serbia, along with Russia and some other countries, did not recognize Kosovo’s independence in 2008. Serbia requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) about whether Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence was legal and the court responded by stating that Kosovo’s declaration of independence “did not violate general international law.” (www.thedailystar.net). However, the court also stated that Kosovo’s legitimacy will be decided by the individual countries in the international system that make a decision on whether to recognize the country or not (Tansey 2009; Wilson 2009).

Consequently, the existence of Kosovo as a state has still not been entirely settled. Unfortunately, severe discrimination against Serb minorities continues to exist. Serbs as a
community have been denied political and social rights, such as the right to freedom of expression, the right to education and health care, etc. As a result, Serbia proper has set up a “parallel system” providing education and health care for Kosovo Serbs in Serb concentrated areas mainly in the North (Zdravkovic-Zonta 2011: 173).
Table 2.1: Percentage of Russians in the Total Population of the Soviet Republics 1926-1989

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Table 2.2: Russians in the Soviet Republics, 1989

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<th>As Percentage of total Russians in FSU</th>
<th>Percentage of Republics Total Population</th>
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Table 2.3: European Union (EU) Membership Status

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<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>candidate country</td>
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<td>The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</td>
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<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
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<td>Kosovo</td>
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*expected to become member July 2013
*Serbia is also a candidate country
CHAPTER 3

A THEORY OF MINORITY PROTECTION AFTER SECESSION

After secession some ethnic kin remains in the seceded countries that have the same ethnicity as the parent state. For example, there were Russians left in Kazakhstan and Serbs were living in Croatia after the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia disintegrated. After secessions the parties bargained with one another and eventually reached a peace agreement. However, as is often the case the involved parties have difficulties keeping their promises. Governments frequently cannot credibly commit to what they have agreed upon and renege on the terms of the peace settlements. One important aspect of these agreements is the protection of the ethnic kin that remains in the country after secession. Even in cases when secession occurred peacefully governments do not always ensure that minorities are given adequate political and social rights. This is especially problematic if the kin that remains in the seceded countries was related to the former imperialist nation, such as the Russians and Serbs. In these cases the nationalizing new governments will try to retaliate against the former oppressor by excluding these groups from the new political community.

The political environment after secession is a unique one. And this is the case whether secession was accompanied by violence or was relatively peaceful. During this time new states embark upon creating or strengthening their national consciousness, establishing their political institutions, and creating the symbols and other psychological elements of a nation that ties people together. In other words, this is the time when a nation is born. Part of the process of nation-building is throwing off the old identity and often this involves punishing the remnants of the old regime, including the stranded ethnic groups left behind.
Nation-building is also a volatile time period in a new country’s history. The transition from being part of another country, or empire, to becoming an individual country with full international rights and opportunities can be a challenging one. During this time one cannot be fully sure whether the new state will survive in the international system. This aspect strongly influences new governments in making decisions about how to treat their stranded minorities.

Governments react differently in the volatile political environment of nation-building after secession because they face different threats from the ethnic minority and the parent state. Domestically the ethnic minority poses a threat of further secession which jeopardizes the territorial integrity of the state. The threat of further secession in an evolving nascent country is very often a possibility. Internationally, the mother country poses the threat of intervention in support of its kin and in some cases it can also reclaim parts of the territory. Therefore, the seceded states also face the threat of irredentism. However, it is not enough to understand either the domestic threat or the international threat because dynamics can change during nation-building and because the two are highly interrelated. As such, the two forms of threats need to be examined simultaneously. Underlying this argument is the balance of power between the parties. Power imbalance leads to better treatment, however power parity between the actors materializes in worse treatment of the minority by the seceded government.

This chapter examines why there is a difference in minority treatment in countries that seceded from the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia. The theory is meant to be an overarching theory of minority treatment after secession that is applicable for other cases as well. These two segments of countries were used because the majority of cases of secession
occurred here and because they provide a fitting laboratory for focused case comparison. There is a curvilinear relationship between minority treatment and domestic threat and the dynamics of this relationship is described in detail. Specific focus is given to the threat of further secession by the minority. Finally, the impact of international threat is analyzed in relation to minority rights accommodation. The relationship between the mother and the seceded states and potential for irredentism is highlighted.

3.1 Bargaining Literature

The aftermath of secessions depends largely on how the parties in conflict handle the credible commitment problem. One of the reasons why violence occurs or recurs after the states parted ways is because the dominant ethnic group is “unable to commit themselves not to exploit ethnic minorities in the new state” (Fearon 1998: 108). In other words, violence is a function of how the majority treats its ethnic minorities in the newly created states. In addition, other factors also affect the severity of the credible commitment, such as the relative strength and cultural preferences of the minority, whether the settlement patterns are intermixed or more homogenous, third party willingness to intervene, and the value of exit option for the minority (Fearon 1998).

While the problem of credible commitment gives an explanation for cases in which the minority is fearful of the government engaging in discrimination against them, or in other words the minority is facing the ethnic security dilemma (Posen 1993; Jervis 1978), the theory cannot sufficiently explain instances when the minority’s rights are protected (Jenne 2007). According to Jenne over half of secessionist movements fit such background where the government is
fairly liberal and ensures minority rights (Jenne 2007: 9). Her explanation for a complete picture of minority radicalization involves including the interaction between the external patron and the minority, essentially “when a minority’s external patron credibly signals interventionist intent, minority leaders are likely to radicalize their demands against the center, even when the government has committed itself to moderation” (Jenne 2007: 2).

Adding to the previous ethnic bargaining models, Jenne includes a third party into her model and concludes that if members of the minority can be reasonably confident that external support will follow, they will radicalize regardless of benign behavior on the side of the majority (Jenne 2007: 53). The model’s novelty is that it is an interaction between the domestic and the international levels and that it puts special emphasis on describing strategic actor considerations, as opposed to prior static models of minority radicalization behavior.

Other works evaluate the relations between the kin and the homeland state (Jenne, Saideman, and Lowe 2007; Saideman 2002; Van Evera 1994). In some cases the homeland is more likely to support its kin in order to weaken their adversaries (Saideman 2002). Cetinyan also includes a third party player into his model when investigating when bargaining breaks down and ethnic mobilization takes place. He finds that if the ethnic kin has a “powerful brethren abroad” it will be less discriminated against by the host state but at the same time the ethnic group is not more likely to mobilize violently against the host state (Cetinyan 2002: 648).

Whether the external patron, the mother state, is likely to support irredentism depends on the internal politics of the patron. Saideman argues that politicians will not always pursue the best interest of co-nationals abroad, instead they consider what their supporters want at home, the threats posed to them by their competitors, and their own interests to maintain
power (Saideman 2008; Chiozza and Goemans 2004). Also, if politicians depend on constituents who strongly identify with their kin abroad “but are relatively tolerant of heterogeneity, then they are more likely to support irredentism” (Saideman 2008: 35).

3.2 Secession and Irredentism Literature

Since secessions are both ethnic and territorial in nature, they are often violent during the process of territorial separation but also in the aftermath once the countries have already parted ways. However, peaceful secessions occur, and examples include the separation of Czechoslovakia and Macedonia. Overall, the international community has been reluctant to use secession as a form of conflict resolution because of fear of future violence after the countries have become part of the international system. The idea was that one secession could trigger another and lead to a domino effect that would result in mass chaos and violence. During the Cold War for instance, only one country, Bangladesh was “allowed” to secede by the international community. However, since the end of the Cold War secession became more frequent once Yugoslavia and the USSR broke up.

Many authors take a stance against secession as a policy tool because of fear of subsequent violence on the basis of further territorial disputes (Sambanis 2000; Kumar 1997; Kaldor 1996; Brown 1993; Posen 1993; McGary & O’Leary 1993; de Silva & May 1991; Horowitz 1985; Fraser 1984; Hachey 1972). Sambanis finds that “partition does not significantly prevent war recurrence,” and one of his main reasoning is that population movements are often necessary and are “coerced, painful, and costly, and they may sow the seeds of future conflict”
Horowitz states that the right to secede is not advisable because it is likely to make matters worse (Horowitz 2003: 5).

Secession is defined as “an internally motivated division of a country’s homeland (i.e. non-colonial) territory,” during which at least one new independent state is created “with full sovereign rights and legal recognition by the international community” (Tir 2006: 46). Based on this definition Eritrea would qualify as a secessionist case, however Germany and Korea’s division would not because neither of them was internally motivated. Although related to one another, partition and secession are not the same terms. In case of partitions, “separations are jointly decided upon by the responsible powers: either agreed between the two sides (and not under pressure of imminent military victory by one side), or imposed on both sides by a stronger third party...secessions as new states created by the unilateral action of a rebellious ethnic group” (Kaufmann 1998: 445). In addition for comparison purposes, Sambanis defines partition somewhat more broadly “as a war outcome that involves both border adjustment and demographic change” (Sambanis 2000: 445). According to this latter definition then, the case of partition in Cyprus would also be included in partition cases which based on Kaufmann’s assessment would not.

The likelihood of secession is related to the type of system ethnic groups reside in. Horowitz distinguishes between ranked (vertical) and unranked (horizontal) systems. In cases where social class coincides with ethnic divisions ranked system emerges and a higher status group and a lower status group evolves. Higher paying jobs are taken mostly by the dominant group and the subordinate group is relegated to work in low paying jobs. The set up differs in unranked systems since upward class mobility is possible to be achieved in both ethnic groups,
which is not the case in ranked systems where the dominant group prevents such mobility. For this reason especially, ethnic violence tends to be more intense in ranked systems than in unranked systems often taking the form of social revolutions. On the other hand secession will be a more common outcome of ethnic conflict in unranked systems. In a ranked system, members of different ethnic groups live intermixed with one another geographically and there is a high degree of interaction between them. Relations in this form of exchange are characterized by the cultural division of labor in which one group monopolizes high status and the subordinated group is relegated to low status.

In unranked systems ethnic groups live in geographically separate territorial enclaves parallel to one another and interactions between the groups resemble the character of international relations. If conflict occurs it will take on the form of secession because the group fears that the other group will gain control of them and changes the unranked system to a ranked system. This behavior is explained by Kaufman who argues that the security dilemma underlies group consciousness (Kaufmann 1998, 1996; Posen 1993). Based on the security dilemma ethnic groups experience the fear of the other and retrieve to a separate territorial enclave. Two groups that previously coexisted side by side are afraid of subordination, cultural annihilation, or even extermination by the other group. Therefore Kaufman argues that the only way to resolve the security dilemma is by secession or forming a separate state (Kaufmann 1998, 1996).

The possibility and frequency of secession and irredentism are also decided by the status of the groups based on whether the group is an advanced or a backward group in either an advanced or a backward region (Horowitz 1985). This approach emphasizes the economic
advantage advanced groups possess and tends to view geographic concentration or other aspects of advanced status, such as education for example as less important. Backward groups in backward regions are quick to secede, whereas advanced groups in backward regions will use secession as a last resort. Advanced groups in advanced regions rarely initiate either secession or irredentism although they must share their economic wealth with the poor in the region. Finally, similarly backward groups in advanced regions rarely secede since economic wealth reaches those more because of higher level of regional economic development.

Other authors are more in favor of secession, although neither fully embraces it as an easy and quick solution to stop the carnage. Also, when accepting this form of conflict resolution, they argue that secession needs to occur by fulfilling certain conditions. Kaufman argues that stable resolutions of ethnic civil wars are possible, but only when the groups in question are “demographically separated into defensible enclaves” (Kaufmann 1996: 137). Ethnic conflict is considered more intractable and especially when violence has been ongoing for a long time, the warring parties develop a stronger fear of the other, or they face the security dilemma (Posen 1993; Jervis 1978). Under conditions of anarchy as each side mobilizes, neither of them can be completely sure of the other group’s intent. Further, nationalist rhetoric exacerbates the security dilemma and heightens threat perception on both sides (Posen 1993). Rothchild cautions against secession as a solution to intrastate conflicts, but argues that if negotiations and the development of new institutions have been exhausted and fail, secession can be used as a last resort (Rothchild 1997).

Another set of authors within the secessionist literature concern themselves with aspects that lead to peaceful secessions. Pavkovic and Radan state that the following features
will lead to more peaceful secessionist outcomes. First, the principal actors of the conflict must show a willingness to engage in negotiation with one another. Second, if there is no organized violence prior to the emergence of the secessionist movement, the movement is less likely to be violent going further. Third, if there are democratically accountable parliamentary institutions and if there is an absence of outside involvement, a peaceful outcome is more likely to be forthcoming (Pavkovic and Radan 2007).

Young also looks at determinants of peaceful secessions and even though he describes the difficulty of generalizing across vastly different cases, he settles on some important characteristics that have differentiated peaceful secessions in the past from violent ones. The pattern described by him includes that after long disputes one party, the seceding actor, makes a declaration of intent to secede. The government, or the rump state, accepts that intent and negotiations follow, during which the parties are able to quickly reach an agreement on critical big ticket issues (Young 1994: 775). Finally, Jaroslav Tir shows that only 12% of secessions are not followed by territorial disputes; and that 76% of these disputes are not fatal territorial Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) (Tir 2006: 86).

With regards to the post-Soviet cases, more peaceful secessions were most likely to occur because many of the aspects Pavkovic and Radan describe were met. For instance, negotiations took place between Russia and the seceding states. Some countries, such as Kazakhstan for example, went along with the secession even though they would have not initiated it if it weren’t for a larger series of secessions that took place before. Besides some minor conflicts in the Baltic Republics, such as the atrocities in Vilnius, as well as problems in the Caucasus, for the most part no violence took place in the Soviet Union. Finally, the USSR
was already organized in administrative units of *oblasts* as well as separate union republics before independence. Essentially, secession occurred along the same lines of the fifteen union republics, therefore political organization was already established before. Considering the post-Yugoslav cases, we can say that almost the exact opposite happened. Violence almost immediately started after secession in many states and negotiations came very late. Even though the administrative units in Yugoslavia were clearly drawn prior to separation, Serbs in the union republics and autonomous provinces, such as Kosovo, contested their status.

### 3.3 Minority Rights Literature

While literature on minorities in general is abundant, little attention has been paid to understanding their role in post-conflict peace and nation-building. Few works tie the matter of minorities to these important issues and systematic focused comparison on multiple cases is rare about the Russian minority and virtually non-existent in the case of the Serb minority. Part of this is explained by the fact that after World War II the international community intended to move away to think through the paradigm of nationalism in politics. My focus is not to resurrect this kind of thinking but to call attention to the notion that the issue of minorities is an important one and it needs more elaboration and understanding both for the purpose of conflict prevention and nation-building.

The literature regarding minorities can be categorized as theoretical works on minority rights and the right of self-determination (Buchanan 1997; Kymlicka 1995), minority radicalization in relation to secession and irredentism (Welhengama 2000; Heraclides 1991; Hannum 1990; Horowitz 1985; Rothchild and Ororunsola 1983; Rothchild 1981), works covering

“Minority” is not defined in international law (Shlapentokh et al. 1994), although the United Nations adopted the Declaration on Rights of Minorities in 1992. Capotorti defines “minority” as a group of people “who form a numerical minority in a given state,” do not dominate politically, differ from the main population by their ethnic, linguistic, or religious characteristics, and finally a group of people that “express a feeling of intragroup solidarity in preserving their own culture, tradition, and language” (Capotorti cited in Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 22). For Brubaker, national minority is not merely a group that is defined by ethnic demography, it is rather a “political stance” that is dynamic and has three major characteristics such as “1) the public claim to membership of an ethnocultural nation [is] different from the numerically or politically dominant ethnocultural nation; 2) the demand for state recognition of this distinct ethno-cultural nationality; and 3) the assertion, on the basis of this ethnocultural nationality, of certain collective cultural or political rights” (Brubaker 1996: 60).

With respect to the discussion of minority rights, the international community has been reluctant to talk about this issue after World War II and during the Cold War since it invoked the
nationalistic flare of the war itself. During this time period it was left up to the individual
countries without much international interference to deal with the minority question
domestically. However once the Cold War ended, “minority questions were once again
legitimate subjects of international society.” As the Geneva Report states:

“issues concerning national minorities, as well as compliance with international
obligations and commitments, concerning the rights of persons belonging to them, are
matters of legitimate international concern and do not constitute exclusively an internal
affair of a respective state.” (Jackson Preece 1997: 17).

This “normative shift” has also been reconfirmed in the Helsinki Document, the Moscow

3.4 Domestic and International Threat: A Curvilinear Relationship

In cases of violent secessions, even though war is costly and there is always the
possibility of bargaining, if the minority group believes that there is likelihood that their rights
will not be protected after secession, they will choose to fight over agreeing to the terms of
negotiations. Further, one of the biggest obstacles to long lasting peace after secession is that
the majority is unable to commit themselves to ensuring minority rights (Fearon 1998).
However, this part of the bargaining literature does not give explanation for cases when
minority rights are protected by the government.

In addition to the credible commitment problem, post-conflict parties also face the
obstacle of issue indivisibility. One such issue that needs to be agreed upon is the division of
territory and sometimes dividing territory is the only way to bring the parties to the negotiation
table. The location and territorial concentration of the ethnic group are crucial determinants in this process and determine the capacity and legitimacy for violent action (Toft 2003; Horowitz 1985). Problematic in this relationship is that both Toft and Horowitz indicate a linear relationship and therefore over predict violence. They state that the higher the territorial concentration of the ethnic group the more likely that violence will occur.

Building on prior literature, I argue that there is a curvilinear relationship between how the government treats its minority after secession on one hand, and domestic and international threat on the other hand. On low levels of domestic and international threat, the minority will be treated in a more favorable manner because it is costless to grant them political rights and they are less likely to further secede. Similarly, on extreme levels of domestic and international threat, the government will be less likely to discriminate against the ethnic minority because government fear is highest that the parent state will intervene to protect its ethnic kin. Further, I argue that there is a dual threat at works in this context and therefore both domestic and international aspects need to be considered simultaneously. Without taking both aspects into consideration, only partial explanations can be given.

On the domestic level if the government perceives that the minority group poses a threat to its national authority, the government will use discriminatory measures to keep its national authority intact. Also, if the government views the minority as crucial in participating in the country’s political and economic life, better treatment will be forthcoming. Domestic need of the minority can also be an indication of threat, because the size of the group, for example, gives us a sense of threat and need at the same time. A large group of well educated minority
can be a threat to governmental authority but it can also be needed for its skills. Essentially, need is a dimension of threat and the two are closely interrelated.

Internationally, governments will treat their minorities according to how much of a threat the seceded state views the mother state to intervene in behalf of its minority in case of poor treatment by the government. For example, Ukraine will be less likely to discriminate against Russian minorities within the country if it is expecting Russian retribution as a result. Also, the overall treatment of minorities will be subject to how much the seceded state needs the rump state, which can manifest itself in economic interdependence, such as energy and trade interdependence.

Putting the two levels together I hypothesize that there is a curvilinear relationship between domestic threat on one hand and the treatment of minorities in the seceded state on the other hand. In countries where Russian minorities are not threatening at all, e.g. Azerbaijan or Kyrgyzstan, it is costless to grant them political rights. In this case, minority rights are protected, because the minority group does not pose a threat to the elite in the form of size or the possibility of further secession. In other cases, where the minority group is very threatening, e.g. the Ukraine or Bosnia, because of its large size or the country is closer to the rump state geographically, we can also see less discrimination because the fear is highest. I posit that most discrimination will take place in the middle cases, where the minority group and Russia or Serbia pose a moderate threat because in this case there is a power balance between the parties. Examples of such middle cases include Kazakhstan after independence, also Latvia and Estonia. In sum, as domestic and international threat increase, pressures to restrict
minority rights also increase, but if the minority becomes very threatening to stability, governments will be forced to make concessions.

This relationship is illustrated on Figure 1. On the left side of the graph discrimination and threat are both low. In this case it is costless to grant the minority political rights because the ethnic threat posed by them is negligible. A group that is small in size and territorially spread out has a lower possibility to gain enough political power or push for further secession. At the same time, intervention by the rump state is costly and therefore the mother country will be less willing to intervene in a country that has a small proportion of Russian or Serbian minority. In this case it is not worth to intervene and risk violence to help out the ethnic kin.

Low discrimination can also be observed on the right side of the graph, where the level of threat is high because the government is fearful of the minority and the rump state. Rights demanded by a large ethnic minority that is territorially concentrated cannot be ignored by the government as they have a better possibility to organize. In this case the fear of the government is so high that it will make an effort to accommodate the minority in order to avoid confrontation with the mother state. If the minority is large and more threatening the government expects the mother state to be more willing to intervene in case the minority is mistreated. Access to the seceded state is easier if the two countries share a border; and if the mother state is substantially more powerful, the seceded state will make an effort to ensure minority rights.

I argue that most discrimination of the ethnic minority will occur in the middle section of the graph; here the minority and the rump state pose a moderate threat because there is a balance of power between the parties. In this case, the parties are aware of the power
distribution and the seceded state is not affected by the threat coming from the rump state and the ethnic minority because there is a balance of power. Here, the government is confident that it can deal with its minority and it is not fearful of the rump state’s potential intervention since the power ratio is closer to even.

Further, I believe that the mere presence of threat is not enough to substantiate bad or good treatment of the minority. Instead of this static view, government reaction to ethnic threat, the behavior of the minority and the mother state must also be assessed. The presence of threat in itself is passive. Strategic interaction between the actors in the form of the actions of the government as well as the counter-reactions of other actors is just as important in this relationship as threat perception of the government.

With respect to the actors, both Horowitz and Toft define the mechanisms of secession in a dyadic way. Jenne, Saideman and Cetinyan model the third actor into their theories and point out its importance within the process. Brubaker envisions a “triadic nexus” to illustrate the relationship between the national minorities, the nationalizing states, and the external national homelands. He uses a relational approach, based on which this relationship does not necessarily have to be conflictual (Brubaker 1996). I argue that the relationship between the actors is determined by the level of threat and the power balance between the actors within this context. The power distribution needs to be looked at in a way that on one hand we have the seceded state and on the other hand there is the rump state and its minority living in the seceded state. In other words, the rump state and the stranded minority together make up one of the sides in the power balance set up and the seceded state makes up the other side.
Confounding this theory is the presence of other ethnic minorities in the seceded countries. In some cases Russians or Serbs are not the largest minority. In Uzbekistan for instance Tajiks are larger in size then Russians, in Lithuania the question of the Polish minority has been more important than the status of the Russian minority. Also, in Macedonia the government focused more on improving the status of the Albanian ethnic group, which had implication for the Serb minority as well. Results of this analysis must be looked at with these restrictions in mind. Consequently, I control for the presence of other minorities in the large-N analysis section.

This argument is grounded in the literature regarding the distribution of power. Some authors state that the balance of power leads to more peaceful outcomes (Moul 1989; Waltz 1979), while others posit that it is power preponderance that results in peaceful outcome in the context of conflict research (Lemke et al. 2000; Kugler and Organski 1989). This dissertation applies the theories of the distribution of power and argues that most discrimination of minority will take place in the middle cases, in which the two sides have a balance of power. Given that the parties have nearly equal power, the seceded state is not afraid of the retribution by the mother state and believes that it can resist the mother state, which translates to poor treatment of the minority. Again, in terms of the actors within the power distribution, the mother state and the minority comprise one side, and the seceded state makes up the other side of the balance. However, on the right side of the graph when the parties are aware of which side holds the most power, it is clear who is most likely to win in case of a confrontation, therefore the seceded state will impose and follow more favorable minority
rights. Again, the balance of power underlies government considerations when behaving towards its minority.

Classical realist theories of international relations argue that states’ interests are defined in terms of power and ultimately the goal of states is to gain as much power as possible (Morgenthau 1948). Essentially, there is no end to how much power states desire to achieve, and based on offensive realist theories the states’ hunger for power is limitless (Mearsheimer 2001). On the other hand, defensive realism sees security the main goal of states, and based on this view, the acquisition of power occurs for the purpose of security, and not necessarily for the purpose of gaining power for power’s sake (Waltz 1979).

Two major theories can be distinguished with respect to the distribution of power, such as the balance of power (Deutsch and Singer 1996; Waltz 1979; Morgenthau 1948) and power transition theories (Kim 2002; DiCicco and Levy 1999; Lemke and Werner 1996; Organski and Kugler 1981; Weede 1976). The idea of the balance of power stems from Morgenthau, who compared the human body as an organism to the international system as a similar organism, in a sense that both aim at constantly establishing equilibrium (Morgenthau 1948). If the balance within the system is offset, the system has a tendency to reestablish the original equilibrium or if it cannot do so, it will create a new equilibrium. In a political system, the goal of the organisms is to create a social equilibrium in which the whole aims at preventing any element from gaining ascendancy over another.

Based on power transition theories, conflict emerges when there is opportunity and willingness of the parties to initiate it. Power parity provides opportunity, since a strong hegemon acts as a deterrent of large scale conflict (Organski and Kugler 1980), whereas large
scale military buildup shows the willingness of the parties to fight (Lemke and Werner 1996). This theory describes the international system in a hierarchical manner and differentiates between dominant powers, major powers, countries in the middle, and minor powers. Within this setting the status quo is defined by the rules of the international system and it is the dominant power that sets those rules when it ascends to dominant status (Kugler and Lemke 2000). Change takes place during major wars when a new dominant power assumes its leadership position by winning the war.

In addition to the domestic curvilinear relations I posit another argument based on which there is a linear relationship between international threat and the treatment of minority in the seceded states. This relationship is illustrated on Figure 2. According to the international dimension, the more of a threat the mother state poses to the seceded state, the better the treatment of the minority will be. Based on this logic, external factors are able to force the government of the seceded state to moderate its treatment of minority. In this case fear of intervention by the mother state or the economic need to continue supply of energy resources work in a linear direction forcing the seceded state to treat its minority well. I argue that this relationship is linear because the mother state will always pose a certain level of threat to the seceded state since it can use the plight of the ethnic kin as motivation to intervene militarily. The rump state can use the status of the kin as an alibi in cases when in fact the actual aim of the mother state is to exert political or economic influence over the seceded country. In addition, instances when the mother state is in possession of economic advantage, for example natural resources, it can threaten the seceded country to cut off such supplies.
For the sake of simplicity domestic threat will be tested in the following chapter by applying the curvilinear hypothesis and international threat will be analyzed as having a linear relationship with respect to minority protection. However, in reality the two dimensions are not entirely separate because the minority is more likely to get help from the mother state if they are territorially concentrated. In other words, the domestic minority becomes a more credible secessionist threat if they have higher spatial concentration because in this case they can count on the mother state for support much more. In terms of international threat, this relationship is linear because in international politics there is always a certain level of threat and the threat level is never fully at a lowest level. Now, this dissertation will turn to explaining the domestic and international threat aspects of the theory in detail.

3.5 Domestic Threat

3.5.1 Threat of Further Secession

The impacts of geography on conflict have been widely analyzed in prior literature. Territory has the potential to become the “source of conflict” and the “facilitating condition” of conflict (Diehl 1991). Actors may fight over either the objective, strategic, or intrinsic value of territory (Hensel 2000). A piece of land has objective value to the state or a secessionist group because of the resources located on it, strategic value if it serves a country’s military advantage, and intrinsic value if there is a sense of identity attached to the land (Tir 2006). Further, territorial disputes tend to be more severe on average in a sense that they are more likely to lead to war (Hensel 2000; Holsti 1991), they are more likely to recur, and have the potential to result in enduring rivalries (Vasquez 1996). Further, territorial dyads are more likely to engage
in militarized interstate dispute (MID) onset and disagreements involving territory are more likely to escalate (Senese and Vasquez 2003).

Weidmann argues that geography can serve two roles in the onset of ethnic conflict, such as motivation and opportunity (Weidmann 2009). The motivation versus opportunity argument is part of a broader debate (Cederman and Girardin 2007; Fearon, Kasara, and Laitin 2007) and Weidmann’s analysis shows that actors fight over territory “because their spatial arrangement makes it possible for them to coordinate,” in other words because they have the opportunity to do so (Weidmann 2009: 527). Therefore, with new and sophisticated data he shows that geography is more importantly an opportunity for conflict occurrence, rather than motivation (Weidmann 2009).

Adding to prior theories assessing the role of geography and territory, I argue that in the post-secessionist context, geography is a threat to the newly formed governments. In the uncertain environment these states face, a highly concentrated minority group along the border is threatening to the new government’s survival. At this very early stage of state formation, right at the moment when a state is born, the new state cannot be sure whether it will survive in the international system. The mother state, such as Russia or Serbia, has been dominating politics for a long time and relinquishing power all of a sudden to the new states might be difficult. Having stranded Russian or Serbian minority beyond its new borders, the rump state will be more eager to use this opportunity and try to reassert its power. Now, the intention to do so may diminish over time, but at the early stage of state formation, right after independence, when the borders are still fluid the mother state has a better chance to regain some of its territory as opposed to later on when the borders have already solidified. The
presence of ethnic kin that is large and territorially concentrated therefore is threatening to the new government. In addition, a powerful rump state may choose the protection of its minority as a way to regain territory.

I argue that there are four major forms of domestic threat that governments face post-secession from rump diasporas, such as 1) the threat of further secession 2) irredentism 3) autonomy demands and 4) threat to the government’s national authority. In all, these scenarios can occur based on which the government of the seceded state views the ethnic minority, the mother state, or both, as a threat to the new country’s survival. I argue that as time progresses and political institutions slowly stabilize, minorities will be less likely to pose a threat to further secession, but instead they will be more of a threat to the government’s national authority.

Newly emerging states with sizeable ethnic minorities are fearful that such minorities may demand a territory of their own and further break up the country. Especially titular nationalists “view territorial control as a necessity for their nation’s survival” (Chinn and Kaiser 1996; italics added). On the other hand, in nation-states that have been functioning in the international environment for centuries, borders have solidified. Whether secession takes place accompanied by violence or without such atrocities, there is always a chance that ethnic groups living within the new borders want to gain territory for themselves. In the Ukraine’s Crimea region for example, in 1992 the Crimean Parliament, Verkhovna Rada, declared self-government and passed its first Crimean constitution (Wolczuk 2004; Wydra 2004). While shortly after the Crimean Parliament annulled its proclamation of self-government, the Crimean government demanded much stronger autonomy for the region. Further, Cossacks in Northern Kazakhstan have been advocating for secession in the region as a way to resolve the Russian
question in the country (Peyrouse 2007: 489). In addition, soon after the Republic of Moldova declared independence from the USSR, Transnistria separated from Moldova as a de facto state. Although Moscow used the protection of Russian minority rhetoric to intervene in the conflict, in reality Russia was encouraging separatist movements (King 1994-1995: 107). This separatist movement was not initiated by the Russian minority in Moldova as opposed to the prior example of Crimean independence or the idea of secession in Northern Kazakhstan. Therefore it is substantively different from those cases. However, the mother state did use the rhetoric of Russian minority protection to intervene in the conflict in Moldova.

Internally, the government of the seceded state may also feel threatened by the autonomy demands of a sizable minority as such demands take away from the overall power of the state. The government may view the available power over its population as a zero sum game and relinquishing power over a given part of the country to the minority is perceived as diminishing the government’s own power. In essence it is seen as losing control or having less power over part of the population and territory. While minorities would frequently prefer as much autonomy as possible, especially political autonomy, they often have to make do with cultural autonomy as the nationalizing new government asserts control. Autonomy demands have been expressed and pursued in Estonia’s Kohtla-Jaerve, Sillamæe, and Narva regions in the Northeast part of the country where a sizable Russian minority exists (Muenz 2003; Zevelev 2001; Kolstø 1993). Autonomy demands are especially threatening when the ethnic group was the former imperial power.

Feldman shows that initially both, officials of the European Union and Estonia framed the question of the Russian minority in Estonia as a security threat, although this gradually
changed to a softer cultural type of threat. Essentially the Russian minority was viewed as the
dangerous “other” that had to be integrated into the Estonian culture. This premise was based
on the idea that “individuals are essentially cultural beings naturally aligned with a particular
homeland” (Malkki 1992, cited in Feldman 2005: 234). Integrating the numerous Russians into
Estonian culture achieved various purposes, it catered to European conditionality to join the
European Union, it furthered cultural fundamentalism within the state, and finally, it was a
crucial part of the development the Estonian nation-state, asserting its ontological existence.
Framing the policy regarding the threat of the Russian minority in cultural terms therefore was
new and different from the earlier approach of security threat, or as a threat presented in
terms of the state’s national security.

The idea of threat is usually understood as military threat in the security literature.
However in this dissertation threat has a broader meaning. It can include the notion that the
mere presence of the minority is threatening to the state. Because the government views
politics as a zero-sum game, the minority always has the potential to take away from the
political power of the state when the state gives rights and concessions to the minority. This is
more pronounced during nation-building when the foundations of the nation are being
established and when it will be determined which ethnic group will have a say, and how much,
in political decisions going forward. Therefore, I conceptualize threat both ways, such as lower
level threat to the state’s national authority and higher levels of security threat via further
secession.
3.5.2 Territorial Concentration

This theory adds to earlier understanding of the effects of territorial concentration and applies it to the post-secessionist nation-building context. Two aspects are added to Toft’s theory on issue indivisibility, such as the curvilinear effect as well as taking into account the international aspect in addition to the domestic aspect. Toft argues that territorially concentrated majority is most likely to make demands to the government and it is most likely to engage in violence to achieve self-determination. Also, for Toft and Horowitz, this relationship is linear and the higher level territorial concentration is, the more likely that self-determination and violence will follow. I argue that territorial concentration is an important factor in explaining how minorities are treated in seceded states because further secession by the minority is always a possibility and such further territorial separation poses a threat to the newly seceded state’s stability. I think that this relationship is curvilinear, instead of linear because after a certain level of threat the government of the seceded state will treat the stranded minority better. In this case the government will be fearful of the possibility of further secession and mother state intervention. Therefore, not only the minority group but also the rump state can pose a threat to the mother state and both aspects need to be looked at simultaneously.

Overall, territorial concentration of ethnic groups has been shown to have a positive effect on violence (Toft 2003; Cornell 2002; Fearon 1998; Posen 1993; Horowitz 1985). For instance, more territorially concentrated groups are more likely to be secessionist or irredentist (Saideman and Ayres 2000). Toft (2003) provides a systematic analysis of how the government and the ethnic group become to view the same territory as indivisible and demonstrates the
mechanisms of how this leads to violence. On the side of the ethnic group, settlement patterns, such as the location and the concentration of the ethnic groups, determine the level of capacity and legitimacy of the group. If capacity and legitimacy are high, the group will view the territory as indivisible and demand sovereignty (Toft 2003: 2). On the state’s side, the government is afraid of precedent setting and therefore views the territory as indivisible, preventing secession of the ethnic group. Violence is a function of both sides clinging to the same territory and viewing it as equally indivisible (Toft 2003). Goddard argues that territory is indivisible if actors treat it that way and whether territory can be negotiated depends on what legitimation strategies actors use at the bargaining table (Goddard 2006). If the government and the warring factions are locked into a bargaining position in which both see territory as indivisible, it will be difficult to exit this cycle for both parties and war is more likely (Goddard 2006).

Structural theories of ethnic politics established the relationship between group size, settlement patterns, and violence. High degree of ethnic polarization and ethno-linguistic fractionalization increases the likelihood of civil conflict (Cederman and Girardin 2007; Garcia-Montalvo and Reynal-Querol 2004). Drawing on new trans-border ethnic kin (TEK) data, Salehyan and Cederman find that group size of the trans-border ethnic kin affects conflict onset in civil wars (Cederman et al. forthcoming). With regards to settlement patterns, concentrated groups are more likely to be irredentist or secessionist because it is easier to unite with its kin elsewhere (Saideman and Ayres 2000: 1128). Wood also maintains that one of the preconditions of secession is geographical, which is the “existence of separable territory which contains the bulk of the potentially secessionist population” (Wood 1981: 112).
Mechanisms that specifically and systematically explain how settlement patterns lead to violence are the dichotomy of ranked versus unranked groups (Horowitz 1985), capability and legitimacy with regards to issue indivisibility (Toft 2003), motivation and opportunity described earlier (Weidmann 2009), and the role of the local majority in bargaining (Cunningham and Weidmann 2010).

Toft differentiates between four groups with respect to their capability and legitimacy for independence. First, urban groups have the highest capability to demand sovereignty because they have access to dense networks of media and money. Second, concentrated majorities are the next group in the hierarchy of capacity for organized action, since they still have the capacity to mobilize because of dense networks (Toft 2003: 22). Third, the capabilities of concentrated minorities depend on the relative size of the group. Finally, dispersed groups have the lowest capacity to fight for independence given that groups live scattered, therefore mobilization is difficult to accomplish (Toft 2003: 22). In terms of legitimacy, it is the concentrated majority that has the highest legitimacy, since they are more likely to have occupied the same space the longest and have “the legitimacy of majority rule”. Urban groups on the other hand have weak legitimacy and dispersed groups are weak on both legitimacy and capability. Putting together the capability and legitimacy aspects, Toft concludes that concentrated majorities are the most likely to demand sovereignty and risk violence in the process (Toft 2003: 25).

The role of territorial concentration has also been linked to minority radicalization and violence as well (Jenne et al. 2007; Jenne 2007; Laitin 2004). If the group is territorially concentrated, it is more likely to “advance more extreme demands” towards the government
(Jenne et al. 2007). Going further, Laitin maintains that “regionally concentrated, autonomous minority regimes are more prone to insurgency against the state, ceteris paribus” (Latin 2004: 551). On the other hand, in the context of the Yugoslav Wars, Hayden argues that violence took place mainly in areas where ethnic groups were most mixed (Hayden 1996: 783) and violence occurred to push the other ethnic group out to establish territorial control.

3.5.3 Zero-Sum Game and Threat to National Authority

After gaining independence titulars want to promote their national identity and strengthen the local culture, especially revitalizing the indigenous language. During the effort of nation-building especially the nationalist segment of the elite sees the role of minority as potentially undermining their efforts. While the threat of further secession is a security threat, there is also a milder but distinct threat present to the national authority of the new governments. Nationalist elites are fearful of other ethnicities that can have a say in the politics of nation-building since minorities with political power have the possibility to undermine the state-building process. Rights and concessions gained by the minority are viewed by the nationalists as political advantages taken away from the majority that is on its way to reassert its power.

As new data becomes available, research is better able to show the local and regional effects of conflict. Cunningham and Weidmann argue that national-level analysis leaves out this crucial part of conflict that takes place at a local level and the mechanics that are associated with it (Cunningham and Weidmann 2010). They find that geographical units with multiple ethnic groups that have one dominant ethnic group in an area are more prone to conflict. There
are three major challenges the government faces in terms of minority accommodation. First, groups differ by the degree of costs they acquire and benefits they receive during the politics of bargaining. Groups that pay in more and receive less, will be more likely to go against accommodation of other ethnic groups by the government. Second, frequently ethnic groups view benefits as a zero-sum game, by which one group’s win occurs at another group’s expense. This can lead to certain groups opposing accommodation of other groups. And finally, when an ethnic community has acquired and maintained its “local majority” position, they have every incentive to maintain this position, even if it is at the expense of the accommodation of other groups within the local administrative unit (Cunningham and Weidmann 2010: 1039). This argument is somewhat related to ethnic competition theories that describe how ethnic competition takes place, although these theories focus more on how economic disruptions and political opportunities of industrialization and modernization lead to heightened identity (Belanger and Pinard 1991; Meadwell 1989; Rogowski 1985; Hechter 1976, 1978; Bonacich 1972, cited in Hodson et al. 1994).

Further, applying Cunningham and Weidmann’s theories, I argue that in the context of minority rights protection in newly consolidating regimes, titular groups are likely to view the benefits of minority accommodation as a zero-sum game. Therefore, if the government decides to accede rights to the ethnic kin, i.e. the Russian or the Serbian minority, it views these rights as advantages taken away from the titular group. Also, once the ruling group obtained power, it will try everything in its power to maintain majority position after secession. Consequently, a large ethnic minority, especially that is territorially concentrated, such as the Serbian minority in Bosnia or Russians in Estonia, will be seen as a threat to the government politically.
Finally, the government may also perceive the minority as a threat to its overall “national political authority” (Ivarsflaten 2005, italics added). Restrictive immigration policies have been enacted in Western European countries in order to protect the national community from decline. Although in her study this relates more to the context of globalization, Ivarsflaten shows that in the majority of the observed countries people prefer policy to be decided on the national or local level and that they favor a national assertion in policy areas. In the post-secessionist context the idea of “national political authority” is especially crucial, given that the new states are eager to establish or re-establish themselves as separate entities from the mother state. Hence the overly nationalistic initial tendencies of the Baltic States immediately after independence. The issue of national authority in the post-Soviet cases is unique in a sense that the titular governments aim at reversing the previous order in which the Russian minority frequently held influential political leadership positions under communism.

Titulairs in the new republics were also afraid about the future of their political power. As Mandelbaum states, “there was a belief that the ethnic survival of the majority itself was at risk” (Mandelbaum 2000: 118). In republics with Russian or Serbian minorities in high numbers, the titular groups viewed the respective minorities as threatening to their political and economic power, which in many cases corresponded to the double aim of retaliating to past oppression by the Russian minority or historical violence carried out by the Serbs. A large minority, if it was allowed to take part in political power would be able to impact decisions in favor of the minority and at the expense of the majority.

While the government may view the minority as threatening to its domestic order, at the same time the minority could also be needed for its skills in the economy, especially if the
national population does not possess those skills. If the government views the minority as crucial in participating in the country’s political and economic life, better treatment will be forthcoming. Economic need, in the form of skilled technicians will be more important in this regard than participating in political leadership since many states essentially aim at pushing out the minority from political power. In most of the Central Asian Republics for instance, heavy industry would have difficulty functioning without Russian minorities who provide the expertise. Very few titulars possess the skills needed to operate the industry; and on the long run, replacing minority specialists with nationals would take a long time (Mandelbaum 1994).

3.6 International Threat

In contrast to the domestic threat, the relationship between international threat and minority accommodation is linear. This means that the more threatening the parent state is the better the treatment of the minority is expected to be. The parent states of Russia and Serbia in this sense will never be inconsequential and will never pose a smaller threat. The seceded state is fearful of the rump state because the rump could intervene and pose a security threat to the seceded country. In addition, the parent state may also pose an economic threat by withholding energy supplies. After secession Russia used this leverage several times and cut off gas supplies to Belarus, Ukraine, and Lithuania for example. Russia was a deterrent threat after secession, a superpower in the possession of an arsenal of nuclear weapons. Russia’s dominance and hegemonic status in relation with its seceded states was clear to the new states. Relations between Serbia and the other former Yugoslav Republics on the other hand were different. Serbia’s dominance did not even approximate Russia’s hegemonic status.
At the time of independence the newly seceded states face a great deal of uncertainty about the survival of the new state in the international system. As a result, they view the mother state as threatening to their survival because the mother state could help its kin secede or become irredentist and attach part of the territory to the rump state. During this time the mother state can become supportive if it is fearful of the well-being of its kin or it can use the kin as a vehicle of reasserting prior influence in the country. During the transition period after independence the borders between Russia and its former republics were malleable to some extent. For instance, the Interfronts in Estonia initially pushed for the Northeastern parts of the country and Tallinn to be incorporated into the Russian Federation (Arter 1996). The Interfronts were pro-Russian political forces that cooperated with the communist party and contained much of the Russian minority under their umbrella. They have operated in all the Baltics states in opposition to the Popular Fronts which worked under the premise of glasnost and perestroika and exhibited strong anti-Russian sentiments. Another example of early irredentist tendencies pertains to the Crimea. In 1991, a referendum was held in the Crimea during which by an overwhelming majority, 93.3 percent the people of the region voted to stay within the USSR as opposed to being part of the newly established Ukraine (Kolstø 1993). In the case of Transnistria Russia posed a security threat to Moldova because it intervened in the separatist conflict in Transnistria under the motto of protecting its Russian minority.

The above examples demonstrate that the mother state poses a security threat to the new government given its potential for intervention and support of its ethnic kin to join the rump territory, thereby further breaking up the country. While fearful of subsequent border revisions, the seceded state also needs the rump state for economic purposes, for example
energy or trade relations. These dyads have already established economic connections prior to secession and keeping those connections is in the benefit of the state. In addition, infrastructure related to trade and economic activities already existed before secession. Further, threat and need are intertwined. How much the seceded state needs the mother state is also an indication of how threatening it might be. For instance, Ukraine needs Russia economically because of its reliance on energy, but at the same time Russia can also be a threat, when it threatens to shut off gas resources to the Ukraine. One such instance occurred in 2006 when Russia shut off gas supplies passing through the Ukraine.22

Also, the rump state intends to keep as much of its prior sphere of influence as possible. After the signature of the Dayton Accords and beyond that, Serbia was adamant to keep Kosovo. Russia has also been eager to keep and re-establish control over its former republics over the years following independence. Creating and strengthening economic alliances, delaying troop withdrawal, and withholding energy resources are some of the examples that served and still serve such purpose.

Underlying the relationship between the actors is the balance of power. As mentioned earlier, this relationship has to be observed in a way that on one hand we have the capability of the seceded state and on the other hand the power of the mother state together with the minority. The balance of power can change over time during the process of nation-building. The Russian and Serbian presidencies are examples of this change. At the time of Yeltsin’s presidency the foreign policy of Russia was characterized by less hawkish and fairly soft towards the protection of its ethnic kin. Yeltsin did not respond to the irredentist plans in Kazakhstan

and signed various border treaties of friendship with former Soviet states. However, Putin’s leadership shows a stronger nationalist stance. He actively supported the Russian minority abroad and provided funds for institutions related to this cause. Overall, Russia became stronger and more nationalistic over time. Interestingly, the opposite happened in Serbia where the highly nationalist President Slobodan Milošević was eventually replaced by a more accommodating Boris Tadić. The country became weaker as it was losing territory when Montenegro split from rump Serbia and the international community ostracized Serbia for its violent behavior.

Based on the above theoretical reasoning the following hypotheses will be tested in the upcoming analysis chapter:

**H1:** There is an inverse U-shaped relationship between the treatment of politically relevant minority on one hand and domestic threat on the other hand.

**H2:** There is a linear positive relationship between the treatment of politically relevant minority and international threat.

### 3.7 Methodology

This dissertation uses a multi-method approach to research design and employs both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The research design therefore is comprised of two major parts, one overarching quantitative chapter systematically testing the cases and three
qualitative case study chapters illuminating the nuances of the proposed research question. The advantages of using both methods are that both goals of social science can be achieved at the same time, such as better generalizability in the form of statistical analysis and higher internal validity via case studies.

This dissertation employs a large-N study and uses time-series-cross-sectional (TSCS) multivariate ordered logit regression analysis for the purpose of testing all cases. In addition, most similar systems (MSS) research design, as well as most different systems design (MDS) methodologies are used to carry out the detailed focused case study analysis. Within each case study chapter the MSS method is used, whereas across cases I use the MDS research method. This work systematically tests the treatment of relevant minority in the post-Soviet republics and in the post-Yugoslav states between the years of 1991-2006, i.e. after independence.

Focusing on the post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav sets of cases allows for the control of a number of characteristics, such as the date of independence, communist past, same rump state, and same ethnic group. Yet, at the same time, there is considerable variation in the independent variables, for instance the size of minorities, geographic concentration of minorities, geographic location of secessionist state, and capability differences between the rump and the seceded states. Based on data availability, the following countries were included in the quantitative models: Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Macedonia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.23

The two main independent variables I am focusing on are the threat of further secession by the minority on the domestic side and the threat coming from the mother state which is the

23 Note that the remaining cases could not be included in the overall large-N analysis because of data limitations.
international dimension of the theoretical argument. In addition, a lower level threat, specifically the threat to the national authority of the seceded states by the minority, will also be assessed subsequently.

The unit of analysis of this study is the group-country-year and politically relevant minority groups are observed each year, specifically the Russian and Serbian minorities. The dependent variable is the “treatment of minority” and the independent variables are group size, territorial concentration, the proximity to the mother state, and national material capabilities. Results confirm the curvilinear hypothesis based on which territorial concentration and relations with the rump state are significant in determining political and economic discrimination of the Russian and Serb minorities.
Figure 3.1: Curvilinear Relationship between Domestic Threat and Need and Treatment of Minority Group
Figure 3.2: Linear Relationship between International Threat and Need and Treatment of Minority Group
Table 3.1: Overview of Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Democratic</th>
<th>EU Member</th>
<th>NATO Member</th>
<th>Cultural Tradition</th>
<th>Territorial Concentration</th>
<th>Political Discrimination</th>
<th>Economic Discrimination</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>High/Low</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>Western/Slavic</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High/Low/High</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4
EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

In the previous chapter I argued that the relationship between the treatment of the politically relevant minority group in post-secessionist states and domestic threat is curvilinear. In other words, if there is minimal domestic threat present there will be less political and economic discrimination and therefore the minorities will be treated in a more favorable manner. The same outcome is predicted if the minority is very threatening to the survival of the state. However, if the minority is moderately threatening to the nationalizing new state, the minority will receive the worse treatment by the government because of the balance of power. In particular, I emphasize the threat of further secession by the minority and territorial concentration as key determinants of domestic threat.

I also argued that there is a linear relationship between the treatment of politically relevant minority group and international threat by the rump states. It is expected that as international threat posed by the mother state increases, the government will treat its minority better. With respect to international threat, I will focus on the differences in national capabilities between the mother and the seceded states. Therefore the following hypotheses will be tested in this section, which are graphically illustrated on Figures 1 and 2.

H1: There is an inverse U-shaped relationship between the treatment of politically relevant minority on one hand and domestic threat on the other hand.
H2: There is a linear positive relationship between the treatment of politically relevant minority and international threat.

The unit of analysis of this study is the group-country-year and the politically relevant minority groups are observed each year. The politically relevant minority groups are determined by the “most salient line of ethnic cleavage” within the state (Cederman and Wimmer 2009). Specifically, in the post-Soviet cases the treatment of Russian minority will be examined and in the post-Yugoslav cluster the treatment of the Serbian Minority will be assessed. Russians in the former Soviet Republics constituted the imperial diaspora during communist times and often held advantageous positions in the government and the economy. After independence, this group was feared the most to exhibit irredentist tendencies. Serbs in the former Yugoslavia on the other hand are chosen because they were often the dominant minority and because a great deal of violence has occurred on the grounds of defending the status of the Serbs during the time of the post-secessionist wars. Further, recent developments in Kosovo for instance also highlight the relevance of this issue.24

4.1 Research Strategy and Justification

This dissertation employs a time-series-cross-sectional (TSCS) multivariate ordered logit regression analysis, as well as most similar systems (MSS), and most different systems (MDS) research design methodologies and systematically tests the treatment of relevant minority in

24http://rt.com/politics/russia-pledges-kosovo-citizenship-767/ Please note that for the most part the Russian and the Serb minority constitutes the largest ethnic group in the observed countries, however in some states other minorities are larger in number than the Russian or Serb Minority; such as in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Macedonia, and Slovenia (Fearon 2003).
the post-Soviet republics and in the post-Yugoslav states between the years of 1991-2006, i.e. after independence. Focusing on the post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav sets of cases is interesting because it is possible to control for a good deal of aspects, such as the date of independence, communist past, same rump state, and same ethnic group. Yet, at the same time, there is a lot of variation in the independent variables, for instance the size of minorities, geographic concentration of minorities and so on. Based on data availability, the following countries were included in the models: Azerbaijan, Bosnia, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Macedonia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.25 Because of data limitations some countries had could not be included in the analysis.

This dissertation uses a multi-method approach to research design and employs both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The research design therefore is comprised of two major parts, one overarching quantitative chapter systematically testing the cases and three qualitative case study chapters illuminating the nuances of the proposed research question. The advantages of using both methods are that both goals of social science can be achieved at the same time, such as better generalizability in the form of statistical analysis and higher internal validity via case studies.

The time-series-cross-sectional method has been used for its advantages to test phenomena simultaneously across time and space, and also for solving the small-N problem by including more observations, and finally because its ability to add more variance than using the time series or cross sectional method alone (Podesta 2007). As the popularity of the method

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25 Note that this analysis includes the status of Russian and Serbian minority after secession. While all the post-Soviet states seceded in 1991, the post-Yugoslav countries seceded over time, Croatia, Macedonia, and Slovenia in 1991, Bosnia in 1994, Montenegro in 2006, and Kosovo in 2008. Therefore, the threat of further secession refers to the period after independence in all cases.
grew, recent works have raised methodological issues associated with this technique (Hicks 1994; Beck and Katz 1995, 1996; Beck, Katz, and Tucker 1998; Beck et al. 2001).

4.2 Measuring the Concepts

4.2.1 Dependent Variable

The dependent variable of this dissertation is the treatment of politically relevant minority, or “Treatment of Minority”. As stated earlier, there is wide variation in terms of how the Russian and Serb minorities have been treated post-secession in the republics. While some states have ensured the protection of minorities and discrimination is limited or nearly non-existent, such as Belarus, others have discriminated against ethnic minorities on a regular basis, for example Estonia and Latvia. This chapter takes an account of the overall political and economic discrimination of Russian and Serb minorities in the observed countries. In order to carry out the empirical testing, I will use The Minorities at Risk Project (MAR) discrimination dataset as a measure of treatment of minority (http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/).26

Political and Economic Discrimination. The Minorities at Risk Project (MAR) discrimination dataset shows the overall levels of political and economic discrimination of ethnic minorities from 1991-2006 within the observed countries. This time period includes Phases II-V in the MAR project. Political and economic discrimination scores in MAR are given based on the following criteria:

26The treatment of minority as a variable differs from general human rights variables in a sense that it includes rights related to minority protection as well as assessment of political and economic discrimination. In addition, while minority rights are only extended to a specific group of the population, human rights are provided to every member of the country.
0 – no discrimination
1 – neglect and remedial policies
2 – neglect and no remedial policies
3 – social exclusion and neutral policy
4 – exclusion and repressive policy

Please note that Phase V in MAR, which covers the years of 2004-2006, uses a different coding scheme than Phase VI for the purpose of addressing the selection bias the dataset was previously criticized for. I am including the political and economic discrimination scores from the fifth phase as well because neither one of these variables change with respect to the variable name, variable levels, and specification of levels from Phase IV to Phase V in MAR.\(^{27}\)

In addition, with respect to political discrimination, the five point scale above was re-coded to a four point scale because none of the observed countries received a value of 2 for political discrimination (Table 3.1). Therefore the scale for political discrimination instead of 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 is a four point scale of 0, 1, 2, and 3 (Table 3.3). However, changing the scale does not affect my results. Similarly, in terms of economic discrimination, I also adjusted the categories from a five point scale (Table 3.2) to four points for the sake of consistency (Table 3.4). In this case, categories 1 and 2 were combined into one category given that only three observations were present in the second category. Again, adjusting the scale did not alter my results (Tables 1, 2 and 3).

\(^{27}\) [http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/ - MAR Codebook p. 3.]
4.2.2 Independent Variables

4.2.2.1 Domestic Threat

Hypothesis 1 states that there is a curvilinear relationship between the treatment of minority and domestic threat. Both, the size of the ethnic minority and its territorial concentration pose a domestic threat to the new governments. A large, territorially concentrated minority not only has the potential to shape the evolving political landscape of the country but also has the possibility to threaten the regime by further secession or irredentism. The vulnerability of the new state is exacerbated by fear of further breakup of the country. Therefore, I argue that domestic threat is manifested by a large minority that is concentrated geographically (Table 4.4).

Group Size. This variable indicates the proportion of the ethnic group’s population compared with the country’s overall population size and the main source of this variable is the Minorities at Risk Project (MAR) (http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/). Missing values were included from James Fearon’s “Ethnicity and Insurgency Dataset” (Fearon 2003).28

Territorial Concentration. In order to measure the curvilinear effect between domestic threat and the treatment of minority, Nils Weidmann’s territorial concentration measure will be used as the main indicator of domestic threat. This index ranges from 0.01 to 1, where 1 represents “perfectly concentrated groups with only one territorial cluster” (Weidmann 2009: 536). The data is based on the Atlas Narodov Mira (ANM) that was redrawn using GIS. Weidmann’s data is an improvement on MAR’s territorial concentration index (Phase I-IV) because it provides information about the location of the groups in question and each group is

28 Please note that for the group size variable in Azerbaijan Fearon’s values were used instead of MAR and a correction was made from 25% to 3%.
“digitally represented by a set of one or more polygons” (Weidmann 2009: 534). It is expected that if a group is highly concentrated or if concentration is low, the minority will be treated relatively well. However, based on the curvilinear argument, if territorial concentration is in the mid-range, political and economic discrimination will be the highest.

Figure 1, in Chapter 1 shows the size and territorial concentration of the Russian minority in the independent republics. On this map red color marks the areas where Russians are concentrated geographically. Northern Kazakhstan, Crimea and Southern Latvia are areas where the Russian minority are numerous and territorially concentrated. Figure 4, in Chapter 6 provides the percentage of territorial concentration of Russians in Kazakhstan. Again, the highest number and territorial concentration can be observed in Kazakhstan’s Northern region.

One possible limitation of the data being used is that Atlas Narodov Mira (ANM) includes the spatial map of ethnic groups in the 1960s, therefore it is criticized of potentially being outdated. For the purpose of this dissertation general geographic concentration values are being used which remain relatively stable over time.

4.2.2.2 International Threat

After secession, the government of the seceded state may perceive the rump state as threatening to its survival in the international system. Since threat by the parent state is always present, I expect a linear relationship between discrimination against the minority and international threat. The more threatening the mother state is to the government, the better the Russian or Serb minority will be treated by the new state. Fear of intervention by Russia or

29 This dataset includes observations of politically marginalized ethnic groups on a yearly basis until 2003. Given that concentration values do not change over time within countries, I interpolated values between 2003 and 2006.
Serbia acts as a powerful force towards the government to abstain from or clamp down on discrimination. The purpose of testing this argument is to determine whether international determinants alone explain differences in minority treatment. The following indicators will be used to operationalize the second independent variable, “International Threat:” 1) Proximity and 2) National Capabilities.

**Proximity to the Mother State.** Geography shapes civil wars and international conflict and it is found that the scope of the conflict is altered by the geographic location of the parties, specifically whether the states share a common border or not (Buhaug and Gates 2002). Further, with respect to the literature on interstate conflict, Starr and Most (1978) argue that “immediate neighbors are more likely to be perceived as a threat to a state because there is greater uncertainty in the relations to these neighbors” (Starr and Most 1978, cited in Weidmann 2009: 529). Further, I believe that countries that are adjacent to one another can potentially have an easier access to the neighbor state, making intervention more straightforward. Proximity enables the state to move military equipment and personnel faster to the target sites and neighbor states can be perceived by the country as more threatening than other countries. This variable is a dummy variable and coded 1 if the two states share a border, and coded 0 if they do not.

**National Material Capabilities.** This variable measures the ratio of national material capabilities between the mother and the seceded dyads and it comes from the Correlates of War (COW) national capabilities dataset, version 4.0 (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972). The Correlates of War Project National Material Capabilities dataset’s cinc scores are used in this chapter, which is made up of six parts, such as number of military personnel, the amount of
military expenditure, the level of energy production, the extent of iron and steel production, nominal urban population, and finally the nominal total population. The cinc ratio is calculated by dividing the seceded state’s cinc score by the mother state’s cinc values for each country-year.

4.2.3 Control Variables

In order to detect whether there is a spurious relationship between the dependent variable and factors other than the main explanatory variables, I will employ three control variables in this analysis. First, it will be evaluated whether the draw of becoming a member in international organizations leads to better treatment by the government. Also, democracies tend to use less repression towards the population and it may serve as a concomitant factor here. Finally, in some countries there are multiple minority groups which strive for engaging in politics within the observed countries, therefore their effects need to be evaluated as well.

EU Membership. NATO Membership. Acquiring membership in international organizations, such as the European Union (EU) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), may act as incentive for governments to treat its minority well as membership is conditional (Galbreath 2005; Kelley 2004; Linden 2000). This variable is a dummy variable and it is coded as one if the country is a member of the organization and coded zero if it is not. Note that these are two separate variables, however organizations in this dataset that are members of the European Union are also members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Therefore, in the results table only the variable “EU Membership” is indicated. The source of the data is 

the official website of each organization, such as http://europa.eu/index_en.htm and http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/nato_countries.htm. Also see Table 2.3.31

**Democracy.** According to the domestic democratic peace proposition, democratic institutions are more conducive to more peaceful behavior because public opinion and the checks inherent in the institutional design place important constraints on the leadership (Cramner 2005). Therefore when a democratic leader is faced with the decision to repress, he or she will observe the voice of the public more than an autocratic leader would. Also, democracies in general have mechanisms inherent in the system that will prevent repression or more violent means of action against dissent and will instead employ non-violent methods of conflict resolution within the country (Hegre et al. 2001; Muller and Weede 1990).

One of the main arguments of this dissertation is that democracy alone does not explain why there is a marked difference between the treatment of minorities post-secession. All of the Baltic States are democratic for example, yet Latvia and Estonia has pursued heavy discriminatory measures in the form of exclusive language and citizenship laws but Lithuania did not. Similarly, the Central Asian Republics by in large are autocratic, yet treatment of the minority differs from country to country. Therefore it is essential to include a control variable of democracy in the model to detect spuriousness. The extent of democracy in a given country comes from the Polity IV Project (Marshall and Jaggers 2002). Based on the Polity IV Project, the democracy-autocracy score of a county is evaluated on a 21 point scale, most autocratic states receiving -10, and most democratic states are given +10.

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31 At present EU members include: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Slovenia. In addition, candidates of the EU are: Croatia (expected 2013), Macedonia, and Montenegro. The following countries are members of NATO: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Croatia, and Slovenia as of 2011.
Largest Minority. While the Russian minority is not necessarily the largest ethnic group in terms of absolute numbers, it is a politically significant minority in every post-Soviet state, with the exception of Armenia (Chinn and Kaiser 1996). The Serb minority is the largest ethnic minority group in all post-Yugoslav state, except for Macedonia and Slovenia (Fearon 2003). Since other ethnic groups outnumber the Russian or the Serb minority in some cases, their influence has to be accounted for. For example, 24% Uzbeks live in Tajikistan, while the Russian minority accounts only for 8% of the population. Similarly, Armenians in Georgia are the more sizable minority comprising 9% of the total population, whereas Russians are 5 percent (Twining 1993). A dummy variable is used to account for the influence of other minorities in the model. The source of the data is Fearon’s Ethnicity and Insurgency Dataset (Fearon 2003) and the country is coded as 1 if Russians or Serbs constitute the largest minority in the country, and zero otherwise (Table 4.5).

4.3 Quantitative Results

Table 4.6 reports the results for the ordered logit models of political and economic discrimination. Hypothesis 1 posits that there is an inverted U-shape relationship between domestic threat and minority treatment. According to this view, a minority group that does not pose a threat to the new administration in the form of size and additional secessionist claims, will be treated in a more favorable manner. Also, when the ethnic minority is large in size and highly territorially concentrated, better treatment will be forthcoming. I argue that most discrimination will take place in the middle range of the spectrum because here we see a balance of power between the actors. Based on this argument it is predicted that the
relationship between spatial concentration and domestic threat will be inverted, which means that the spatial concentration variable’s coefficient is expected to be positive and its square term’s coefficient to be negative (Table 4.6).

The model presented in Table 4.6 shows coefficient results estimated by ordered logit. Standard errors are clustered by nations to account for heteroskedasticity and autocorrelation. I have included two dummy variables in the models, one for Russia and another for Serbia, in order to detect whether either sets of countries may be driving the results. Also, I added another dummy variable to see if there are differentials between Phase VI and V in the MAR dataset since the coding criteria changed after 2004.

According to Table 4.6, the curvilinear hypothesis of this theory is confirmed and values of spatial concentration are statistically significant. In addition, given that the squared term’s coefficient is negative, while the original spatial concentration variable’s coefficient is positive, we can conclude that the shape of this relationship is an inverted U as expected. In other words, if a minority is territorially concentrated, most discrimination will take place in the middle range, where the minority and the mother state pose a medium threat to the government. This relationship holds for both political and economic discrimination, where Model 1 assesses political discrimination and Model 2 shows the relationship with respect to economic discrimination. Further, the capability ratio between the rump and the seceded state is also highly significant, meaning that if the mother state is highly threatening because it is more powerful, we will see better treatment of the minority; again both in terms of political and economic discrimination. Note that the capability ratio, or cinc ratio, is computed by the
capacity of the new state divided by the capacity of the rump state, therefore higher values indicate that the new state is stronger relative to Russia or Serbia.

The above results are graphically presented on Figures 1 and 2 and demonstrate the estimated relationship between spatial concentration and political as well as economic discrimination. Figure 1 represents the predicted probability that political discrimination, $poldis=3$ if spatial concentration changes from 0 to 1. Further, figure 2 shows the predicted probability of economic discrimination, $ecdis=1$ if spatial concentration changes from 0 to 1. Additional figures for political and economic discrimination show similar results.

In interpreting the graphical results, we can see that the probability of no discrimination ($y=0$) is lowest when the level of spatial concentration approaches the middle. Further, the probability of discrimination is higher as the level of concentration approaches the middle, and the probability of discrimination becomes lower as the level of concentration increases. The above results are consistent with the theory described earlier (Figures 1 and 2).

Hypothesis 2 claimed that international determinants thump domestic aspects and minority discrimination is only the function of the relationship between the seceded country and the rump state. This relationship was assumed to be linear, meaning that if the mother state is a neighbor and more powerful than the seceded state, more favorable minority treatment will be forthcoming. Based on results in Table 4.6, we can conclude that being a neighbor state does not have an impact on treatment ceteris paribus. However, if the mother state is more powerful than the seceded state, minority in the country will be treated better by the government. Therefore hypothesis is partially confirmed, since there is a highly significant positive relationship between power ratio and the treatment of minority.
Control variables in the models for the most part do not influence the results, although the largest minority variable is significant at the lowest, 0.10 alpha level. Therefore we can conclude that membership in the EU and NATO as well democracy do not influence our results and the presence of another minority has some influence. If another minority in a country is larger in size than the Russian or the Serbian minority, it will have a small effect on the results of the models.

While overall robust, the models have some limitations. First, some countries that seceded from the former Yugoslavia enter the dataset later than 1991 because they were established and became part of the state system much later. As a result these cases produce many missing values for some of the observations. Further, the number of observations in this analysis is 176, which is due to having too many missing variables in the dataset. I have tried to accommodate and include as many observations as possible given the data limitations, however because some of these states are relatively new, data is simply not available on some aspects yet.

In addition to the above models, I analyzed the impacts of group ratio and group ratio squared separately from territorial concentration and its square term. This was done to account for potential correlation between the two variables. Results of this analysis indicate that group ratio does not have a significant impact even if it is analyzed separately from the impact of territorial concentration. This implies that the threat of further secession seems to have a strong impact on minority treatment by the government. Results were similar for both political and economic discrimination.
Two additional ordered logit regression models were also used in this analysis as robustness checks. First, I have estimated this model with year dummy variables for each year to account for global shocks in the economy during the 1990s. Models with the year dummy variables are comparable to the main models reported in Table 4.1; therefore we can say that the economic recession of the time of the collapsing main states did not skew the above results. Second, I included a lag dependent variable to detect serial autocorrelation and based on results of this model, there are no major differences between the original models and the models with the lag dependent variables.

In conclusion, evidence shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between domestic threat and political as well as economic discrimination of the Russian and Serb minority and that this relationship has an inverse U-shape form. Results confirm the high impact of spatial concentration and capability ratio between the mother and the seceded states. Further, the relationship between international threat and the treatment of minority is confirmed to be linear, especially with respect to the power ratio of the parties. However, whether the countries are neighbors does not appear to be significant in the models.

This chapter provided a large-N study and an overview of the majority of the cases. As stated above, in addition to the quantitative section, this dissertation also analyzes three sets of cases in detail. Recent works on research methodology emphasize the use of a mixed-method strategy (Lieberman 2010 and 2005; Gerring 2007; Atkeson et al. 2011), rather than “emphasizing the common inferential logic of qualitative and quantitative research strategies” which is the main argument of King, Keohane, and Verba’s influential book (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994). When using a combined approach, or nested methodology, statistical analysis can
guide case study selection, it has the ability to focus comparative research, while at the same time having an overarching theoretical framework for the entire scope of the project (Lieberman 2005).

The advantages of using case studies are that the research has the possibility to highlight important aspects large-N studies are not able to and to achieve higher internal validity. The upcoming chapter assesses the status of the Russian minority in the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and draws attention to the threat of further secession. The two major hypotheses will be assessed with respect to these cases. For these purpose the most similar systems (MSS) case study design is being used within the cases and the most different systems (MDS) method is used across clusters.
Table 4.1: Distribution of the Dependent Variable by Country, Treatment of Minority - Political Discrimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
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Table 4.2: Distribution of the Dependent Variable by Country, Treatment of Minority - Economic Discrimination

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Table 4.3: Discrimination Variables

Table 3.1: Political Discrimination Variable

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Table 3.2: Economic Discrimination Variable

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Table 3.3: Political Discrimination Variable with Combined Values

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Table 3.4: Economic Discrimination Variable with Combined Values

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4: Territorial Concentration and Discrimination of Russian and Serbian Minority by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Territorial Concentration Ranking</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Territorial Concentration: WEIDMANN (Ranges between 0.01-1)</th>
<th>Territorial Concentration: MAR</th>
<th>Political Discrimination</th>
<th>Economic Discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>Moldova</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>Belarus</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5 (1,4)*</td>
<td>3.5 (3,4)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>0.506</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>0.509</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.5 (3,4)*</td>
<td>2.33 (0,3,4)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>0.517</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.66 (0,1,4)*</td>
<td>2.66 (1,3,4)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>0.554</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.66 (1,3,4)*</td>
<td>3.5 (3,4)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>0.843</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>0.888</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>Bosnia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (0,2)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For political and economic discrimination where changes occur the average is indicated. Values for that country are shown in parentheses.
Note that for Kosovo, Montenegro, and Slovenia territorial concentration values were not available in either the Weidmann or MAR databases.
Table 4.5: Summary Statistics of the Independent and Control Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Size</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0.492</td>
<td>0.280</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor State</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0.636</td>
<td>0.482</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of National Capability</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.142</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.665</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU/NATO Membership</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity IV</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>-0.443</td>
<td>6.568</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Largest Minority</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>0.556</td>
<td>0.498</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.6 Regression Results: Curvilinear Effect of Domestic and International Threat on Minority Treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1 Ordered Logit</th>
<th>Model 2 Ordered Logit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political Discrimination</td>
<td>Economic Discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient (Standard Error)</td>
<td>P-Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domestic Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group size</td>
<td>-3.715 (6.872)</td>
<td>0.589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial concentration β&gt;0</td>
<td>25.158 (11.021)</td>
<td>0.022**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial concentration squared β&lt;0</td>
<td>-20.851 (9.770)</td>
<td>0.033**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor state</td>
<td>-0.272 (1.440)</td>
<td>0.850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of national capabilities</td>
<td>9.398 (3.270)</td>
<td>0.004***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU membership&lt;sup&gt;32&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1.674 (2.165)</td>
<td>0.439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polity IV</td>
<td>-0.038 (0.108)</td>
<td>0.726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Largest Minority</td>
<td>2.798 (1.732)</td>
<td>0.106*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>5.537 (1.977)</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year dummy</td>
<td>-0.071 (0.657)</td>
<td>0.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>176</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wald Chi squared</td>
<td>67.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>32</sup> Note that only the variable EU membership was used in this table because countries which are members of the EU are also members of NATO.
Figure 4.1: Estimated Inverted U-Shape Relationship between Spatial Concentration and Political Discrimination

Showing the predicted probability that political discrimination, poldis=3 if spatial concentration changes from 0 to 1.
Figure 4.2: Estimated Inverted U-Shape Relationship between Spatial Concentration and Economic Discrimination

Showing the predicted probability that economic discrimination, ecdis=1 if spatial concentration changes from 0 to 1
CHAPTER 5
THE RUSSIAN MINORITY IN THE BALTIC STATES

5.1 Introduction

In 2007 the Estonian government decided to relocate the statue of the “Bronze Soldier,” a World War II memorial, from downtown Tallinn to its war cemetery into the outskirts of the city. The country has over twenty-five percent Russian speakers who remained in Estonia after the secession from the Soviet Union. This group vehemently protested in Tallinn against the move of the statue since the “Bronze Soldier” was a tribute to the Red Army soldiers who gave their lives fighting Nazi Germany. Since Russia suffered immensely during the war and Estonian Russians wanted to show respect and commemorate this part of their history by keeping the monument in the center of the city. At the same time, to Estonians the statue symbolizes the long Soviet occupation and the pains of their communist past they wanted to forget. After independence in 1991, the country had strived to embrace the West. The result of this opening was Estonia’s admittance to the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 2004. In 2007 when the government decided to remove the statue, the protests escalated to a point, where the police fired rubber bullets and a water cannon at Russophone protesters. As a result, over 300 people were taken into custody, “one man was stabbed to death and dozens were injured, including 12 police officers” (Tanner 2007). Russian president Vladimir Putin called the decision to remove the statue “a very dangerous and shortsighted step” and Moscow gave warning that the incident will have “serious consequences” (The Times 2007). Given that the removal of the statue was accompanied by the

relocation of the soldiers’ ashes who were buried under the memorial, Dimitry Rogozin, a member of the Russian Duma Lower House of Parliament went as far as saying that “insulting of ashes is sufficient grounds for war” (Baltic News Service 2007).

Both Estonian Russians and Russia itself were viewed as a threat to Estonian sovereignty during the time of the “Bronze Soldier” incident (Melchior and Visser 2011). Fears and problematic relations, which were highly visible after Estonia’s independence from the Soviet Union, resurfaced. Allowing the Russian speakers to continue their historical memory posed a threat to the sovereignty of the Estonian nation. Keeping the statue in its original location would have shown that the Russian minority was capable of asserting its power in Estonia. As a result, the government proceeded with the relocation plan and emphasized the idea of threat and fear in public discourse and urged all citizens to stay home during the Bronze Soldier riots via sending out text messages (Melchior and Visser 2011: 43). Not only was the Russian minority presented as a threat by the Estonian government at this time but rump state Russia was also perceived as a threat to Estonians. As one Estonian stated it “We have this smaller country next to a giant Russia. That is why we have a bigger sense of danger.” Russia has taken steps to show its power towards Estonia before. For instance, it has restricted “cross-border trade, attacked Estonian websites, and stopped Russian trains from crossing the Russian-Estonian border” (Brüggemann and Kasekamp 2008; Kattago 2009; both cited in Melchior and Visser 2011: 43).

Relations between Estonia and Russia as well as the stranded Russian minority have calmed down since the incident, although tension remains between Russian and Estonia over the incident. In a recent interview with Russkaya Estonya (Russian Estonia) Russia’s
Ambassador, Yuri Merzlyakov, commented on the problems regarding Russian-Estonian relations. He said that Russia “finds unacceptable the situation with the observance in Estonia of the fundamental political and socioeconomic rights of the Russian-speaking minority, including the Estonian authorities’ forcible policy toward narrowing the Russian cultural environment through doing away with the Russian-language education system” (Baltic News Service 2012). Similarly, the Russians in Estonia continue to believe that they are victims of discrimination. In a recent poll “nearly 60 percent of Estonia’s Russian-speakers find that discrimination due to ethnicity is widespread” (Baltic News Service 2012).

In this chapter I address two main questions. First, how has the Russian minority been treated in the Baltic Republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania after secession? Second, why have there been marked differences in the treatment of this minority in the above countries. The plan of this chapter is as follows. First, I provide a brief historical background on the Russian diaspora in the Baltic States. Second, I present an account of the treatment of the Russian minority in these states, such as political and economic discrimination. Third, two forms of domestic threat are assessed, such as the Russian minority’s threat to these states’ national authority and territorial concentration. Within this section I also evaluate the potential of two regions, such as Ida-Virumaa in Estonia and Latgale in Latvia, for territorial threat and the further breakup of these states. Fourth, relations between the mother state of Russia and the Baltic nations are reviewed. Finally, I close with concluding remarks.

This chapter employs the most similar systems design methodology. The most similar systems research design is a form of comparative method which minimizes the experimental variables by using a sample that is most similar (Przeworski and Teune 1970). The aim is to
control for concomitant variation via taking a range of countries that appear to be similar in as many was as possible (Wickham-Crowley 1991: II). Focusing on the Baltic cases is interesting because it is possible to control for a good deal of aspects, such as the date of independence, communist past, same rump state, and same ethnic group. Yet, at the same time, there is a lot of variation in the independent variables, such as the size and territorial concentration of Russian minorities. Further, all Baltic countries have been democratic prior Soviet occupation and resumed democracy after independence, all joined the European Union and NATO, neither of them has become part of the CIS, and all have a European leaning cultural heritage. Let us start with some background information to set the stage for the argument.

5.2 Historical Background

The Baltic States have always constituted a unique cluster among the former Soviet Republics, historically, politically, linguistically, and culturally also. As Nazpari notes the Baltics were so different from the rest of the republics that one may wonder if they were ever truly part of the Russian empire (Nazpari 2002). Prior to the influence of the Russian Slavic-Orthodox culture, the Baltics states were heavily influenced by Swedish, Danish, Polish and German cultures. In fact, during the 18th century Russia ruled these states through the German nobility. In the nineteenth century the Baltic people in general learned Russian and converted to the Russian Orthodox Church in order to displace “their German overlords in service to the tsar” (Laitin 1998: 66). Essentially, each state “developed parallel sets of institutions for indigenous and Russian speakers with little communication across the language divide. It was fully possible for Balts to experience a complete cultural, professional, and social life without entering into
the Russian (or Soviet) world” (Laitin 1998: 67). Consequently, for the Russophones to enter the unified communication line after the fall of the Soviet Union was difficult, because now the parallel institutions ceased to exist and collapsed into the titular unified state institutions of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as Russia ceased to exist.

The Baltic Republics enjoyed a brief period of independence from Russia between 1918 and 1940, during the interwar period. Upon signing the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty on March 3, 1918 with Soviet Russia, the Baltics became independent, although fighting between German, Soviet, and other remaining forces continued until 1920. By 1921 however the Baltic States were recognized by most Western European states. The Baltics remained independent between 1918 and 1939 when World War II started.34

During the interwar period the Baltic States enacted their independent constitutions and began developing their distinct national identities and maintained their cultural heritage. After they gained their independence in 1991, all Baltic countries returned to the collection of laws which were enacted during this time period. In that sense after secession, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania could not be viewed as new states, but rather as “restored states” (Chinn and Kaiser 1996). In Estonia for instance, the 1992 Citizenship Law was crafted after the 1938 Citizenship Law (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998). As Kolstø puts it “in Latvia, for example, the inter-war constitution has been resuscitated but not the inter-war law on citizenship, while in Estonia the opposite has been done: a new constitution has been written, while the 1938 Citizenship Law has been re-enacted” (Kolstø 1995: 111).

After World War II the Soviet Union re-annexed the Baltic States in accordance with the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The pact was originally signed in 1939 by the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany and it was a non-aggression pact that assigned the Baltics to the Soviet Union. Most of the international community, including the United States, never recognized the annexation of the Baltic States and when those states seceded, they simply reverted back to their interwar system and legal institutions. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania argued that their annexation into the Soviet Union was illegal in the first place. This has been widely disputed by Russia. Not even Gorbachev has acknowledged that the takeover of the Baltic States in 1939 was illegal.

Russians for the most part are a “new minority” in the Baltic States (Kolstø 1993), since the majority of them migrated to the region after World War II in the promise of better economic opportunities. As such, most of these Soviet era migrants are blue collar workers or military personnel. Armstrong terms these workers a “proletarian diaspora” given that part of the mission of resettling people from Russia proper was to achieve the goals of communism (Armstrong 1976, cited in Kolstø 1995). Some Russophones arrived to the region earlier, such as the “Old Believers” who aimed at achieving religious freedom away from the Tsar’s watchful eyes. The “Old Believers” separated from the Russian Orthodox Church when the clergy was putting reforms into place with respect to rituals and practices. Essentially the church wanted to create practices that were more in sync with the Greek Orthodox system. The Old Believers vehemently opposed this change broke off from the mainstream church during Patriarch Nikon in 1666 (Cherniavsky 1955). Later on, other Russians who migrated to the Baltics were escaping the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 (Kolstø 1995). It is important to note that in Lithuania more Russians arrived earlier, starting the 17th century than in Estonia and Latvia for example.
Therefore, Lithuania is different in this regard. As a result, Russians there are better integrated into society then in Latvia and Estonia given a longer time period spent in the country.

The distinction between the Baltics and their Slavic neighbors is also visible linguistically and culturally. The Estonian language for instance does not belong to the Slavic language group at all and it is closer to the Finnish-Ugoric languages. Estonia’s tribes descended from the Ural Mountains, and these Finnish-Ugoric tribes moved towards Estonia, Finland and Hungary (Smith et al. 2002). In that way, Estonia is just as much of an outlier in a Slavic linguistic neighborhood as Hungary. Neither country’s language is Slavic in origin. Further, both the Latvian and the Lithuanian languages are considered Eastern Baltic languages, similarly to Old Prussian. The above two languages are part of the Indo-European language family’s Balto-Slavic group; and recent efforts have been made to separate the Baltic languages from their Slavic counterparts.

5.3 The Treatment of the Russian Minority in the Baltic States

5.3.1 Political Discrimination

5.3.1.1 Citizenship and Language Laws

Following independence both Estonia and Latvia passed restrictive citizenship and language laws regarding minorities living in these countries. Lithuania ratified more liberal citizenship laws already before sovereignty in 1989 and given its sizable Polish minority these legislative measures were meant to be liberal in the first place to solve previous minority problems (Kolstø 1995: 139). Initially the 1991 Citizenship Law stipulated that applicants had to prove ten years of lawful residence and take a language test. However, all Russophones were given citizenship without such restrictions and overall Lithuania’s citizenship laws were praised
internationally (Jeffries 2004). In all, in Latvia problems associated with these legislatures took longer to iron out than in Estonia, which is explained mostly by Latvia’s initial stronger nationalistic tendencies. In both cases, the result was much more limited possibilities in employment and education opportunities for Russophones especially because minority legislation restrained them to acquire automatic citizenship.

5.3.1.2 Estonian Citizenship and Language Laws

Estonia’s citizenship legislation can be broken down into three major time periods, the initial nationalist phase between 1991 and 1994, the dampening effect of working towards membership into the European Union and the implementation of the amended language law between 1995 and 2003, and finally the resurfacing of difficult relationship between the Russophones and the Estonian state after 2004.

In the first stage, the Estonian government had three options in resolving the citizenship issue of Russophones. First, some argued that Estonian Russians should be given automatic citizenship, since most Russian migrants have stayed within the territory of the newly formed country since 1940 and that at the time of their relocation they were merely moving within a country, the Soviet Union and weren’t necessarily migrating to an entirely different state. In other words, it was the borders that changed while the Russians remained in the same country after independence. This idea was supported by the Russian minority in Narva and Sillamäe, the North-Eastern part of Estonia where the territorial concentration of Russians is high.

The second option was to hinder citizenship for the Russophones entirely, which was the idea of the radical nationalists, such as ENIP and later Isamaa. The Estonian National
Independence Party (ENIP), or Eesti Rahvusliku Sõltumatuse Partei (ERSP) in Estonian, was one of the first anti-communist parties in the former Soviet States (Mudde 2000). Father Land Union, Isamaa or Isamaaliit in Estonian, was a merger of ENIP and the National Coalition Party Pro Patria. Its platform included the continuation of nationalism and Mart Laar, Prime Minister of Estonia between 1992 and 1994, served as party chairman.

Both ENIP and Isamaa argued that since the state was reconstructed from the time of the 1940s, Russians, as the imperialists who have occupied the illegally annexed Estonia for decades, do not have the right to citizenship and only those who resided in the country prior to Soviet occupation after World War II should be granted automatic citizenship. However, the majority of Russophones arrived after that time as workers to carry out the Soviet industrialization plans.

The third option at the time was to let the Russians decide which citizenship they prefer, Estonian or Russian. This idea was promoted by the Popular Front but was thrown away fairly soon since Russia was not interested in admitting a large number of reverse migrants, especially in a time of economic downturn (Galbreath 2005: 159).

In the end, the second, highly nationalist option was carried out in Estonia between 1991 and 1994, which marks the first phase of Estonia’s citizenship legislation. In 1992 the Estonian government reaffirmed the 1938 Law on Citizenship, based on which citizenship was only granted for Russian minorities who were in the country prior 1940. Those who wanted to become citizens were required to pass a language and history test, which had a relatively high failure rate as many Russophones never learned the titular language because there wasn’t any need for that in the past. Later, the 1993 Law on Aliens deepened the minority crisis by stating
that “those who held Soviet passports had to submit new applications for residency within one year” (Galbreath 2005: 161). This rule opened up the possibility that Russophones who did not submit applications could be considered illegal immigrants and could be deported from the country, even though they may have lived most or all of their lives in Estonia. Also, the government did not differentiate between short and long term residents and only temporary five-year permits were granted, which had to be renewed and again, this opened up the possibility of deportation (Galbreath 2005: 161).

Further, the 1994 New Citizenship Law replaced the 1992 amendment to the 1938 law. Based on this legislation applicants who wanted to acquire citizenship had to live in Estonia for six years. The new law completely ruled out the possibility of a dual citizenship as an option. Part of it also contained references regarding the language exams needed to be passed (Galbreath 2005). Overall, this initial phase of minority legislative development is characterized by a highly nationalist political environment reflected in the citizenship and language laws, all of these based on the titular’s fear that the Russophones will have to share from the political and economic power.35

The second stage resulted from international pressures. Estonia, along with Latvia and Lithuania, sought membership in the European Union early on. Between 1995-2003 Estonia’s minority laws began to take on a less nationalistic form and overall the language and citizenship laws were substantially amended (Jeffries 2004). During this second phase of citizenship legislation, in 1995 President Lennart Meri signed a decree enforcing the New Citizenship Law. The decree stated that those who intended to gain citizenship had to live in the country for five

35 On a discussion about the Alien Law of 1993 also see the “Ida-Virumaa in Estonia” section.
years and must pass the Estonian language test as well as a test on the constitution and other basic laws. The new law was later on amended and it allowed children of non-Estonians born after 1992 to become citizens. This was a considerably more liberal clause when compared with earlier citizenship legislation that did not allow automatic citizenship for children of Russophones. Further, restrictions were eased on Russian-speakers acquiring a job in the public sector at this time as well (Galbreath 2005). An additional positive development was that in 1997 the Ministry of Culture agreed to grant broadcasting license to Russian language television channels. Finally, in 1998 the Estonian Defense Forces Project furthered language educational opportunities for Russophones. Overall, this phase of minority legislature has shown substantial improvement and a break with radical nationalistic tendencies by the government. As Estonia was applying for membership in the European Union and NATO it made more effort to abide by the requirements of these organizations. In 1999 the amended language law was implemented, which was the last step in minority legislation that separated the country from now fully corresponding to organizational entry rules (MAR).

Membership in the European Union did not bring a complete resolution to the minority problem. The third period of citizenship policy is characterized by declining relations between Estonians and Russians. In 2005 for instance Russian-speakers organized a protest against planned changes in the language law, with respect to the revocation of language proficiency certificates issued earlier (Baltic News Service 4/6/2005). Also, relationships between the Estonian government and the Russian minority became strained again as a result of the 2007 Bronze Soldier incident, described in the introduction above. During this period not only the Russian minority but also Russia itself was viewed as threatening to the titular group.
5.3.1.3 Latvian Citizenship and Language Laws

The developments of citizenship and language laws were fairly similar in Latvia when compared to Estonia, although with some exceptions. On the one hand, as in Estonia, all pre-war citizens and their descendants automatically became citizens (Smith et al. 2002). On the other hand, Latvia surpassed Estonia in the extent of discrimination against the Russian minority. As competing parties were preparing for the 1995 elections solutions to the citizenship issue were pushed off the agenda until the elections were over (Galbreath 2005). However, moderate parties, such as the Democratic Party Saimnieks, Latvia’s Way and the Popular Movement for Latvia, had to make sure that they catered enough to Latvian nationalists in order to gain enough power in the administration. This resulted in a much more nationalistic outcome than what otherwise might have been the case (Galbreath 2005; Kolstø 1995).

Three major laws on citizenship were in the works in Latvia after independence, the 1991 Citizenship Law, the 1994 Citizenship Law, and a series of amendments to the latter legislation passed in 1998. The initial 1991 Citizenship Law would have granted citizenship to those who could prove that “at least one of their parents had been a citizen of Latvia prior to Latvia’s occupation in 1940.” All other applicants would have needed to fulfill the following three requirements: 1) demonstrate proficiency in the Latvian language, 2) proven continuous residence in Latvia for at least sixteen years, and 3) renouncing all other previous citizenships. The 1991 Citizenship Law was debated but not passed and therefore it was never ratified (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998; Smith et al. 2002).
The 1994 Citizenship Law set strict quotas as to how many people were able to be naturalized in any given year. Some of it had to do with the idea that having too many people apply for citizenship at the same time would overwhelm the administrative system. When the United States pressured for the elimination of quotas and President Guntis Ulmanis returned the law to the Saeima, the Latvian Parliament, for revisions, the Saeima passed the law without quotas. The 1994 law required the following. First, in order to become citizens, the applicant had to reside in the country for at least five years. Second, he or she needed to demonstrate a command of the Latvian language. Finally, the applicant was also required to renounce any previous citizenship (Galbreath 2005; Smith et al. 2002; Ishiyama and Breuning 1998).

In addition to the above requirements, so-called “naturalization windows” were considered, which was a controversial passage in the bill, since different segments of the population had a specific time period in which to register for citizenship and some Russian minorities had to wait years before they could become naturalized. The purpose of the window system was to be a compromise between the quota system and the open application system. In essence the window system highlighted the idea that naturalization would work in stages (Galbreath 2005: 175).

Similarly to Estonia, Latvia also started to make efforts to abide by European laws regarding democracy and minority rights (Jeffries 2004). Consequently in 1998 the Latvian Parliament adopted sixteen amendments to the 1994 Law on Citizenship. One of the major accomplishments of the 1998 legislature was that it lifted the window system described above and removed restrictions associated with it. As a result, the amendments permitted every resident to apply for citizenship without restrictions (Smith et al. 2002: 74).
A referendum was organized in Latvia and over half of citizens supported the liberalization of the citizenship law. Therefore, this marks the beginnings of liberalization and an improvement in ethnic relations since 1991 (Smith et al. 2002).

Despite these improvements the latest citizenship law was unable to offset the underrepresentation of Russians in Latvia. Over half of Russians still do not have citizenship and as such they cannot vote, cannot run for political office or hold public sector jobs; as a comparison - all of the above rights are granted to citizens of EU countries who live in Latvia (MAR). Overall, while Latvia has made considerable improvements regarding minority legislation, especially when compared to the initial period right after independence, however there is plenty of work left to improve the situation of the Russian minority going forward.

5.3.1.4 Lithuanian Citizenship and Language Laws

Lithuania’s citizenship and language legislation is the most liberal among the Baltic republics. In 1990 over 90 percent of Lithuanian Russians became citizens of the country (MAR). The Citizenship Law of Lithuania was created in 1989 and was revised in 1991. The initial law gave two years for those who settled during Lithuania’s Soviet annexation to decide whether they wanted to become Lithuanian or Russian citizens. However, later on this was changed to naturalization procedures. Russians argue that there is a need for educational reforms to promote the Russian language in Lithuanian schools. However, besides the lack of educational reforms and funding for Russian secondary schools the Russian minority is comfortable in the country. None of the restrictive citizenship and language legislation was created that were

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36 http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=4988
implemented in Latvia and Estonia. Although public sector employees are formally required to have a functional knowledge of the Lithuanian language, there was no documented evidence of job dismissals based on the language law (State Department Country Reports 2006). Again, note that the number of Russians in Lithuania is significantly lower than in Estonia and Latvia. Also, the Polish minority in the county is larger in size than the Russian ethnic group. Both of these aspects impact the degree of discrimination towards Russians in Lithuania when it is compared to the other two Baltic States.

5.4 Domestic Threat

5.4.1 Threat of Further Secession

The Russian minority, combined with potential help from the mother state of Russia, posed a security threat to the emerging Baltic States in the form of possible secessionist, irredentist, and autonomy movements. This section will analyze territorially concentrated regions in Estonia and Latvia with Russian minorities and the threat of further secession. It will examine the question of what way have the Estonian and Latvian governments viewed the Russian minority as threatening, and how these regions have struggled with preserving some of their autonomy post-independence.

The majority of Russian-speakers in the Baltic Republics, but also in most other post-Soviet states, live in major cities spread out around the country. In addition, there are two territorially concentrated areas where mostly Russian minorities live, 1) the region of Ida-Virumaa in Northern-Estonia, which includes the cities of Narva, Sillamäe, and 2) Kohtla-Järve, and the rural Latgale region in Latvia (Van Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 198). Based on
Kolstø’s terminology, the North-East Estonian towns of Kohtla-Järve and Narva fulfill the compactness and contiguity criteria and therefore constitute a higher threat of further secession (Kolstø 1995). Compactness refers to how close various minority communities live to one another and contiguity means that the actors’ territories share a common border with the rump state.

One important difference between Estonia and Latvia with respect to geographical concentration is that Estonia’s Ida-Virumaa region fulfills both the compactness and contiguity criteria, whereas Latgale in Latvia is territorially compact but not contiguous, or in other words, the region itself does not share a border with Russia.37 Therefore, while both regions contain a large number of Russian-speakers who live on fairly well distinguishable separate geographic areas, North-Eastern Estonia poses a larger threat to the Estonian nation in the form of further secession, irredentism, and autonomy demands than Latgale in Latvia. Consequently, Latgale has not experienced the same degree of tensions as Ida-Virumaa has, in fact cultural autonomy was “not an issue in Latgale” (Van Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 200) (Figures 1-4).

As the Baltic States were advancing membership in the European Union and NATO, their relationship with Russia as a protector and trade partner gradually changed. For a few years after independence the Russian Federation served as a protector to the Baltic countries and expressed its interests in protecting its kin on many occasions (Kolstø 1995; Galbreath 2005; Baltic News Service). One could argue that these diplomatic arguments did not have much effect, since Russia was unable to exert significant change in the citizenship and language laws

37 To clarify, Russia itself does share a border with all three Baltic States given that Kaliningrad (which is situated on the shore of the Baltic Sea and belongs to Russia) is located next to Lithuania. Also, while Latvia itself does share a border with the Russian Federation, the Latgale region is located in the South of Latvia, closer to the Lithuanian and Belarus borders (see Figure 2).
in Estonia and Latvia. Nevertheless Russia’s role as a protector was present up until membership in the EU. Once these countries joined the European Union and NATO, they switched diplomatic and military protectors and Russia’s role has diminished as a result. Similarly, as trade of the Baltic States with Russia was replaced with trade with European countries over the years, their need for Russia as a trading partner was also reduced drastically. Estonia had one of the best performing economies among the former communist countries in the 1990s and early 21st century. It has gradually reoriented its trade towards the EU and the majority of its exports are now going to Sweden and Finland, among other European countries. At the same time, “exports to Russia declined to 13 percent of the total” (Political Handbook of the World, Estonia). While Latvia is one of the poorest nations within the EU, it also increased trade with European countries and after 2004 “more than 60 percent of Latvia’s trade was conducted with EU members” (Political Handbook of the World, Latvia).

5.4.1.1 Ida-Virumaa in Estonia

At the time when empires divide, territories are malleable and it is not clear whether new countries, or in the case of the Baltic States re-established states, could fall further apart. Secession has the same dynamics irrespective of whether the rump state was an empire or merely an individual country. The possibility of further division is always present. The process of secession itself highlights just how homogenous and stable previous federal or regional boundaries have been ethnically before the country fell into pieces. The North-Eastern region of Estonia is one case where the government interpreted the intent of a minority group as further secession or irredentism, however in the end even minor autonomy demands that were
followed through were not successful. In all, the possibility of further secession, irredentism, and autonomy posed a threat to the survival of the Estonian state within the international system.

Russian-speakers in the Ida-Virumaa region, that is in the major cities of Narva, Sillamäe, and Kohtla-Järve, are mostly industrial workers who migrated to the region after World War II, and as such they constitute a “proletarian diaspora” (Kolstø 1995; Münz and Ohliger 2003). However, Narva is an exception. Russians in Narva have lived in the city for much longer than elsewhere, and “in Narva 69% of the population is either born in Estonia or has lived there for more than thirty years” (Kirch, 1992, cited in Kolstø 1995: 133). They are also more segregated from Estonian culture and economy (Kirch 1997:11, cited in Münz and Ohliger 2003: 200). The percentage of the Russophone population compared to Estonians in Kohtla-Järve, Sillamäe and Narva are 77%, 97%, and 96% respectively (Kolstø 1995: 133). In comparison in Tallinn 46 percent of the population is Russian.

The case of Ida-Virumaa is quite complex because it has been intertwined with socio-economic problems, minority legislation, and regional politics; therefore it is difficult to define what terminology we are speaking of. Was this a case of a potential secession, irredentism, or autonomy? It appears that the literature is rather divided on drawing a conclusion to this question and conflicting findings and analytical lenses exacerbate this problem. Going further, another important question arises. Even if we are able to determine whether the conflict was an attempt to secession, irredentism, or autonomy, can we conclude that the territorial crisis of North-East Estonia was primarily an ethnic, regional, or a socio-economic issue? Or was it
perhaps a political crisis for the Maart Laars government at the time, as Galbreath argues (Galbreath 2005)?

The crisis started after the 1991 August coup in Russia, which took place in opposition to Gorbachev’s liberalization plans of glasnost and perestroika. Boris Yeltsin, who had just been elected as president of the Russian Republic, successfully resisted those who wanted to reinstate the old order. After the failed coup Yeltsin was free to move forward with stronger privatization plans in the economy. In addition, the coup set off a chain reaction, where the secession of the union republics became inevitable.

In Estonia, after the coup in Russia the city councils of Kohtla-Järve, Sillamaä and Narva were dissolved by local authorities because they had supported the putschists (Kolsto 1995: 133).38 However, later on when new elections took place, the population voted much of the city counselors back into office in Narva. Afterward, as minority laws began to change, the Russophones were excluded from voting in 1993 and the composition of the city councils changed dramatically (Kolsto 1995: 134).

The enactment of the 1993 Law on Aliens was the next major event in the course of developments. The Law on Aliens followed and exacerbated the highly nationalistic initial 1992 law, and thereby created a crisis in minority politics. As stated above, the legislation required Soviet passport holders to submit new applications for residency within one year which increased the possibility of these individuals becoming illegal residents and or being deported. Laitin states that the Aliens Law made becoming an Estonian citizen intentionally difficult (Laitin 1998: 7). It is likely that the government aimed at achieving that the Russophones migrated

38 The same fate happened to the city councils of Daugavpils and Rezekne in Latgale.
back to the mother state. The Russian minority went as far as viewing this “attempt to codify
the status of noncitizens as “ethnic cleansing”” (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 102). Therefore, Chinn
and Kaiser argue that because of the highly restrictive citizenship legislature “Russians in the
northeastern cities threatened to secede” (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 102, italics added). This
analysis sees the crisis in an ethno-political context and argues that there was a threat of
secession present coming from the minority group itself.

Van Meurs on the other hand posits that the conflict was much more socio-economic in
nature and ethnicity served a less important role. The North-Eastern region of Estonia has been
historically closely tied to the Soviet Union with respect to its economic opportunities and
markets. Moscow within the framework of the socialist command economy has directed the
economy of this heavy industrial area until 1991 (Van Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 200)
and economic development would have needed continued close economic ties to the
neighboring Russian economy to further function sufficiently (Kolstø 1995: 118-120). However,
as Estonia entered the global economy, this criterion could not be ensured for the future. High
level of unemployment upon such transition exacerbated the people’s reaction to government
action. Specifically the unemployment rate in the region was estimated to be 25 percent (Van
Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 201). When minority legislation on citizenship and
language limited the rights of the Russian minority, the idea of a special economic zone in Ida-
Virumaa was brought up by the Russophones as a result (Dunlop 1993: 137). This was intended
to give the North-East a certain kind of economic autonomy. The feasibility of this idea was
supported by the fact that the region is located directly at the border with Russia. In addition,
the area is the tangential point to CIS markets and routes. Finally, without access to the
established Russian market and economy the region seemed to have very limited if any opportunities for development in the Western economy.

Van Meurs states that the “Narva proposal to give the region more autonomy because of its special economic character was interpreted by Tallinn as a secessionist attack” (Van Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 201, italics added). So, in this sense what seemingly started out as an aspiration by the Russian minority as a drive for autonomy, more specifically a claim for economic autonomy, was viewed by the Estonian government as a potential secessionist demand.

Surveys carried out in 1993 lead to the result that the population did not wish to secede in the North-East after all, but instead was more interested in “economic autonomy, in contrast to lukewarm support for cultural autonomy” (Van Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 201). Further, following the enactment of the 1993 Aliens Law, Russophones organized a referendum for the purpose of gaining autonomy for the region (Smith et al. 2002: 89; Galbreath 2005: 122). With this step the secessionist crisis was warded off and instead became a less tense albeit prolonged autonomy demand. Nevertheless, the Estonian government was not receptive of North-Eastern autonomy, especially since Tallinn would have still been located outside of the autonomous area and also because “greater autonomy in the North-East would challenge Estonia’s level of national integrity” (Galbreath 2005: 162). This latter argument resembles Ivarsflaten’s idea of a group being a threat to the state’s national integrity, as discussed in the theory section (Ivarsflaten 2005).

There was also a potential that the crisis would develop into an irredentist conflict, which would have been the most severe outcome and would have most likely turned violent if
it had occurred. Earlier on in Estonia the Inter Front expressed interest in North-East Estonia as well as Tallinn to be incorporated into the Russian Federation (Arter 1996)\(^\text{39}\). Also, Russian Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky in a speech stated that he intended to annex the North-East Russophone areas into the Pskov and Smolensk regions of Russia. He also mentioned that it would be even better if the Baltic States would be completely returned to ‘Moscow’s jurisdiction’ (Galbreath 2005: 209). Zhirinovsky’s populist controversial statements and intentions remained in the opposition and never materialized. Instead, the Russian government took an entirely different approach.

Russia’s reaction to the conflict was cautious. Moscow has earlier on expressed that if it comes to difficulties between the Estonian government and the Russian minority, it will not claim the North-Eastern territory and as an external power will stay out of the conflict. As Batt and Wolczuk maintain, Russia made it clear that “should the population of Narva and Sillamäe vote for territorial autonomy, the possibility of union from Russia was excluded” (Batt and Wolczuk 2002: 98). Therefore, while factions on both the minority and Russia’s side have indicated their interest in irredentism, in the end this option did not take place and autonomy prevailed instead.

In the end the crisis of North-Eastern Estonia was an autonomy crisis, which at some point escalated to the point of secession and there were some allusions to irredentism, however neither of those intentions and claims materialized. The Estonian government did perceive the events and developments occurring in the region as a secessionist threat to their

\(^{39}\) Note that Tallinn is located farther removed from the compact Ida-Virumaa region.
nation’s survival but the lack of force and willingness on the side of the Russian minority and the Russian Federation prevented secession or irredentism to occur.

To determine whether this low level conflict is mainly regional, socio-economic, or ethnic in nature or a governmental crisis is more difficult. The government’s minority politics happened to coincide with changes in the economy; therefore it makes sense to see this as a regional socio-economic problem (Kolstø 1995, Münz and Ohliger 2003). Also, clearly the Laar government was hardly pressed on both fronts, to manage a minority crisis embedded in economic problems stemming from economic restructuring, while at the same time juggling nationalist demands from within the administration. However, there were clear indications that ethnicity did play a crucial role in the developments, and had Russia and the Russian-speakers in Estonia were willing to use force, this conflict would have turned into another Bosnia or Kosovo.

5.4.1.2 Latgale in Latvia

Similarly to Estonia, the Russian minority was viewed as a threat to the survival of the Latvian state after 1991. The higher number of Russophones altered the ethnic balance of the Latvian nation the most in the Baltics and political representation, citizenship and language laws point to a much harsher discrimination of the Russians when compared to Estonia. Yet, interestingly the Latgale region, which is the only area in the country where Russians live concentrated, did not pursue either secession, nor irredentism, and not even cultural autonomy (Van Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 200). The complete lack of demand is surprising, given that the area was just as affected by high rates of unemployment and economic
restructuring as Ida-Virumaa in Estonia. More specifically, Latgale’s unemployment rate reached three times the national average of 6.4 percent during the economic crisis. In 1996 Rezekne province, which is part of Latgale, had an unemployment rate of 21.6 percent (Van Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 200).

Historically, Russians have lived in Latgale well before World War II and most came as Old Believers in the eighteenth century. The area of Latgale was part of Polish-Lithuania before Russia annexed it in 1772 (O’Connor 2006:14). Colonization by the Tsar was most successful only in Latgale among the Baltic States, however Russia’s plan was interrupted by World War I. The Russian minority was well treated in Latgale prior 1940, since as Old Believers they were not sympathetic to the Tsar and Latvia was also counting on them to remove the dominant German nobility.

Latgale’s non-existent inclination to become autonomous might be explained by the fact that Russians in Riga, the capital of Latvia, felt more disadvantaged than those in Latgale, who “share[d] the fate of the Latvian population in the slow decline of Daugavpils as an industrial centre under privatization” (Van Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 200). In other words their outlook was that the economic crisis affected both Latvians and non-Latvians equally. Another reason why the Russian-speakers in Riga saw their chances as less fair may be that Latgale is a rural area and therefore differences in treatment may be less visible there as opposed to the more cut throat competitive urban economic environment of Riga. Also, prior to 1991 “demographic and cultural Russification was much heavier in Riga than in Latgale” for example and the nationalist citizenship and language laws may have affected those living in a populated area more (Van Meurs, eds. Münz and Ohliger 2003: 200). Russians, the prior imperialists, in
Latvia held on to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union longer, therefore the backlash in the urban areas, where much of this political activity took place, was stronger.

5.4.2 Threat to National Authority

After secession the titular government can experience domestic threat from the minority and international threat from the mother state. Threat can take on the form of threat to national authority, further a secession, irredentism, or autonomy demand, each of which takes away from either the political power of the state or curbs the state’s control over its territory. This section will describe in detail how the Baltic States perceived the stranded Russian minority as a threat to their national authority. As stated in the theoretical chapter, threat is understood both as lower level threat by the mere presence and concentration of the minority or as higher level geographical or military threat. This section will focus on lower level threat.

Of all the Soviet republics, it is Latvia (along with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) that experienced the most extreme demographic changes upon the Russian migration (Minorities at Risk Narratives on Latvia). Tables 5.1 and 5.2 reveal how drastically these countries’ ethnic makeup has changed over time. In terms of population size, at present the largest percentage of Russophones live in Latvia, they are about 27% of the total population, up from 10 percent in 1920. Currently, in Estonia the size of the Russian minority is about 25% of the total population, and in Lithuania it is six percent. Given the relatively large number of Russian minorities in Latvia and Estonia, after 1991 the titular nationals expressed concern about becoming a minority in their own country over time if population increase of the Russians
continued. This however didn’t take place as the proportion of Russian minority dropped in both countries by 2011 (Tables 5.1-3).

The Baltic republics were the first counties to split from the Soviet Union, which is explained in part by their geographic location, since they were closest to Europe physically but also had a similar cultural heritage. In addition, these states’ political culture has enabled them to mobilize their population. A more liberal political culture was a development that could be traced back to the countries’ democratic history during the interwar period (Kolstø 1995) and was allowed to flourish again as a result of Gorbachev’s Glasnost and Perestroika Reforms.40

At the time of nation-building in the early period, the Baltic Republics faced a threat to the new government’s national authority coming from the Russian minority, albeit to a differing degree. Latvia viewed the Russian minority as most threatening and Lithuania saw minimal, if any, threat coming from the Russophones. In Estonia the degree of threat was closer to Latvia’s and in many ways the two countries handled the minority issue fairly similarly. The Latvian and Estonian governments reacted in a more restrictive way as opposed to Lithuania. Also, the Latvian government became more nationalistic than Estonia and enacted even harsher measures then Estonia. Finally, Lithuania followed a much more liberal path towards minority protection then the other two states. The question then arises, what explains these differences?

Both the Latvian and the Estonian governments aimed at eliminating the Russian minority from nation-building via restrictive citizenship and language laws because in both

40 Glasnost and perestroika were two major reforms of the Gorbachev era in the final years of the USSR. Glasnost refers to increased openness and transparency in politics of the Soviet Union, whereas perestroika means restructuring in the economy and politics.
cases the “ethnic survival of the majority itself was at risk” (Madelbaum 2000: 118). Chinn and Kaiser note that restraining citizenship and language legislation towards Russians served a purpose in nation building, such that “from a nationalist perspective, this hegemonic political action program [was] vital for the survival of the Latvian nation” (italics added; Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 115). Latvia and Estonia viewed the Russian minority as potential political forces that could have influence over the future of the country, something neither were willing to allow.

For example, Latvian President Guntis Ulmanis at the time specifically stated that Latvia needed the citizenship law “to enable the Latvian nation to survive” (Morris 2004: 544). He justified his claim on the grounds that during the Soviet period, between 1939 and 1944, severe executions and deportations took place. Many Latvians had to flee and become refugees. Ulmanis himself spent six years in exile in Siberia.41 Ulmanis also argued that the restrictive citizenship law is justified on demographic grounds. At the United Nations he said that “the law was needed because [...] the share of the ethnic Latvian population had fallen from 75% in 1940 to the current 52%. In view of this situation, Ulmanis did not see why the Latvians should give concessions to the Soviet occupiers” (Morris 2004: 544). The Latvian government therefore made sure that it created a reverse affirmative action for the prior suffering of the Latvian people.

In addition to the ethnic survival argument, party politics also contributed to Latvia’s more nationalistic treatment of the Russian minority internally. Ishiyama and Breuning come to the conclusion that the difference between Latvia’s and Estonia’s actions is explained by party fragmentation. Essentially, in Latvia the communist party split along ethnic lines and most non-

41 Similar developments took place in Estonia as well, where the nation lost eighteen percent of its population during that time due to deportations and executions (Smith et al 2002).
Latvians remained in the loyalist Communist Party of Latvia (CPL), whereas in Estonia not all party organizations representing the Russophones joined the loyalist party. This way the pro-independence and anti-independence forces did not align along ethnic lines in Estonia, and much more political activity was allowed here by Russians as opposed to Latvia (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998). In addition, in Latvia extreme radicals split from the radical nationalist groups and the parliament became to be dominated by extreme radicals by 1991-1992 (Arter 1996: 57). Therefore the difference between Latvia’s and Estonia’s level of nationalism is explained by the fact that most Russophones aligned behind the Communist Party of Latvia, whereas in Estonia the Russian minority was much more fragmented in its political orientation and supported other parties besides giving nearly exclusive support to the communists.

Based on statistical data and narratives the treatment of Russians in the Baltics has changed over time, with the exception of Lithuania, where discrimination has remained non-existent or very minimal (Table 3.1). During the time of communism Russians in the Baltic Republics enjoyed privileges in political appointments but also in housing and education (Brubaker 1993, cited in Kolstø 1995: 71). While this position is accepted by the majority of scholarship, some authors, Voslenskii and Kolstø among them, debate and question this conclusion and argue that it is mainly members of the nomenklatura who were able to gain privileged positions in the Baltics and not necessarily all Russians regardless of their position (Kolstø 1995). Nevertheless the Russian minority overall has been viewed as extensions of the oppressor Soviet Union and discrimination didn’t shun either level of Russian minority later on.

In Estonia, the initial difficult period represented by high threat was followed by EU and NATO aspirations and as a result, better treatment of the Russians. Pressures coming from the
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) contributed to raising the status of the Russian minority (Mandelbaum 2000; Galbreath 2005). At this point threat became less important and as time elapsed the country could be more of assurance that it will survive in the international system. Indeed, becoming members of these organizations fulfilled exactly this role as well. After 2004 after admittance however, problems that were thought to have been buried with respect to Russians have resurfaced again and their treatment became worse. The Bronze Soldier incident described in the introduction is a sign of renewed tensions and problems between the titulars and the Russophones. By this time, it was clear that those Russians who have stayed in Estonia will not leave the country because the economy in the Baltic States is in a better shape than in Russia, the mother state.

Political discrimination of Russians in Latvia was very high initially, however after the passage of the amendments of the original citizenship law in 1998, political discrimination became fairly minimal and a number of political parties representing the Russophones were allowed to operate in the country. Overall, it is possible to argue that in Latvia the political status of Russians has gotten better and remained at that level with no major atrocities since the 1990s.

In Lithuania the Russian minority posed a low threat to the newly evolving Lithuanian state for a number of reasons. First, as stated above only six percent of Lithuania’s population is Russophone as opposed to 25 and 27% in Estonia and Latvia respectively. Even if this group was allowed to participate in decision making, they would have had much less influence politically. Further, since much of Lithuania’s Russian-speakers have already lived in the country for a longer time and were better integrated, no radical measures were necessary. Based on the
Rose and Maley Survey most Russian minority are long-term residents, 81% are over 21 years old and there is a “lack of residential segregation,” especially in the capital, Vilnius (Chinn and Kaiser 1996). Also, long term problems preceding the fall of communism associated with the Polish minority were more pronounced than those related to the Russian minority (Kolstø 1995) and at that time Lithuania has still not fulfilled their requests (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 119). In addition, even though Russian minority parties were unable to reach the 2 percent threshold to enter the parliament, “it appears that the Russian population largely came down on the side of the overwhelming winner, Brazauskas’ [Democratic Labour Party of Lithuania] LDDP” (Arter 1996: 53).42 Finally, in Lithuania there was an absence of extremist parties and “in Sartori’s terms Lithuania emerged as a “moderate multi-party system”” right after secession (Arter 1996: 54).

Two major political parties could be distinguished in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania at the time of independence, such as the Inter Fronts and the Popular Fronts. Essentially, the Popular Fronts were the driving force behind pushing for secession. They ran on an anti-Russian platform and intended to break with the imperialists once and for all. Supporting Gorbachev’s efforts of glasnost and perestroika was some of their methods to achieve this goal, although Gorbachev never intended to give up the Baltics, and similarly he made every effort to keep the entire union intact (Smith et al. 2002: 42). It was glasnost that “paved the way for more radical expression of nationalism by independence-minded activists” (Smith et al. 2002: 44). At the end, many Russians in the Baltics supported the Popular Fronts and were fully behind

42 Algirdas Brazauskas was the leader of the moderate leaning Democratic Labour Party of Lithuania (LDDP) and later became the first president of the country.
independence. However, the soon to become Russian minority were completely divided between those who sided with the Popular Front and those who supported the Inter Fronts.

On the other side, the Inter Fronts intended to keep communism and its institutions. Russians in the Baltics were often behind this political force that was hanging on to the remnants of the socialist system, even when the main machinery slowly started to crumble. Demonstrations in Tallinn in 1989 were organized in favor of upholding the status quo, during which between 30,000 – 50,000 people took to the streets, among them many Russians (Smith et al. 2002).

After independence political parties and organizations representing the Russian minority developed differently in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In Lithuania given the small size of Russian-speakers, the near absence of discrimination, and the moderate political environment, organization was mainly cultural in nature (MAR; Kolstø 1995: 142). On the other hand, Estonia and Latvia instituted heavily nationalistic measures coupled with high levels of political and economic discrimination. In Latvia for example, non-citizens were not allowed to vote in either local or national elections. In Estonia, non-citizens were eventually able to vote in local elections starting in 1993 and Russophone parties were allowed to participate in national elections starting in 1995. While party activity representing the Russian minority was functioning in Estonia, in Latvia party development at the time of independence “was still in its infancy” and Russophone political organization took on the form of associations, if at all (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998: 97).

The years following 1990 in Estonia the Russian Democratic Movement, the Coordinating Committee, the Interregional Council, as well as the Russian Party of Estonia were
the representative organizations of the Russophones. The Russian Democratic Movement was founded in 1991 and had ties to the Prime Minister, Edgar Savisaar. Initially, the party supported Estonia’s independence; however in 1992 it switched to radically opposing independence. Eventually, it entered into an alliance with United Council of Labor Collectives (OSTK) and the Coordinating Committee was formed (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998: 98). The Coordinating Committee (CC) took on the representation of Russophones in Northern-Estonia and later on under the name of the Committee for the Autonomy of Northern-Estonia advocated for the territorial autonomy of the area (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998: 99).

The Interregional Council, established in 1992, promoted moderate demands and “wanted to work within the constitutional framework” of the country and intended to protect the human rights of Estonia’s Russian minority. After the 1993 election the Russian Party of Estonia was formally established (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998: 99). In 1995 another Russophone party “Our Home Estonia,” an alliance, was able to gain 6 percent of the vote and secured representation in the parliament (Arter 1996: 58).

At the present time, the Constitution Party (Konstitutsioonierakond; KK) is seen as the most active political faction for minority ethnic Russian concerns in Estonia. At the time of its foundation in 1994 the party was named the Estonian United People’s Party (EUPP). Its platform included extending citizenship to Russians in Estonia and wanted to normalize relations with Russia (Bugajski 2002: 77). KK essentially was part of the alliance of Our Home Estonia in the 1995 election, along with the Russian Party of Estonia (VEE), and the Russian People’s Party of Estonia (EVRP). While EUPP won 6.1 % of the popular vote in the 1999 general elections, the Russian Party of Estonia in 2007 was only able to gain 0.2 percent of the vote and
therefore was unable to gain political representation in the parliament (Political Handbook of
the World) (Table 5.4).

The political representation of Russophones has been less successful in Latvia after
independence, although in recent years there are several parties that operate in the republic
which are supported by the Russian minority and were able to obtain seats in the Saeima. In
2011 Harmony Centre won 29% of all votes in the country and was able to secure 31 seats in
the parliament. Harmony Centre (Saskaņas Centrs, SC) is an alliance between the Social
Democratic Party “Harmony,” and the Socialist Party of Latvia. However, because the
opposition united in a coalition against Harmony Centre, despite gaining the majority of votes
the party was not allowed into the ruling coalition. Harmony Centre’s platform indicates that
they intend to transcend ethnic relations and cooperate with Russia (Schwirtz, New York Times

After independence only two parties represented the Russian Minority in Latvia,
“Harmony for Latvia” and the “Latvian Socialist Party,” albeit indirectly. Neither of them fully
claimed the exclusive representation of the group. Also, even though the nationalists were
much stronger in suppressing the Russophones in Latvia, this minority has not organized
strongly to counter those tendencies and the question of why this was the case is one of the
outstanding questions from that time. Dreifelds argues that essentially the reason why the
Russian Minority in Estonia could not secure adequate representation in the early years is
because they had stronger ties with Russia proper but not so much a strong cohesion amongst
themselves (Dreifelds, cited in Ishiyama and Breuning 1998: 106).
Arter states that Latvia was the last one of the Baltic States to break with the communist party which was closely tied to Russia proper (Arter 1996: 55). He says that “while in December 1989 and March 1990, respectively, the Lithuanian and Estonian Communist Parties voted to break with the CPSU [Communist Party of the Soviet Union], a majority of the Latvian party in April 1990 remained loyal to Moscow” (Arter 1996: 55). In other words, the difficulty of political organization of the Russophones is explained partially by the fact that the Latvian communist party remained loyal to Moscow for a longer time than elsewhere in the Baltics. Therefore, once the separation took place they found themselves in a less trusting, more nationalistic political environment. Since they aligned with the CPSU loyalists, the Russophones were viewed as opposed to independence. Essentially, the higher level of suspicion of the Latvian government regarding the Russophones can be explained by a much stronger hold of the Soviet Union on Latvia’s politics at the time of independence.

At the present time there are two parties that specifically represent the Russian minority, such as Harmony Center (SC) and For Human Rights in United Latvia (PCTVL) (Political Handbook of the World).\footnote{However it is important to note that they do not claim to represent only Russians.} Harmony Center was formed in 2005 and it is an alliance between New Center (JC), Popular Harmony Party (TSP), and the Latvian Socialist Party (LSP). The Latvian Socialist Party pursues the goal that the Russian language becomes the second official language in the country. The party, “For Human Rights in United Latvia,” on the other hand is campaigning for the “liberalization of the citizenship and language laws so as to better serve the interests of the Russian-speaking population” (Political Handbook of the World).
5.5 International Threat

5.5.1 Relations with Russia

The Baltic States were the first countries to secede from the Soviet Union. Gorbachev’s glasnost and perestroika opened up the way of democratic exchange and enabled a more vibrant civic culture (Smith et al. 2002). It is essentially these new methods of political interaction that helped bring about full secession, even though Gorbachev’s intentions were of different nature. Lithuania was the first country to secede within the Soviet Union. Russia’s initial reactions to it resembled the revolutions of 1956 in Hungary and that of the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia in 1968, when Soviet troops and tanks have occupied media buildings and besieged both capitals. Events in Lithuania’s capital, Vilnius occurred at the TV-tower where 15 people died as Russian soldiers opened fire. Similar attacks took place in Latvia at the same time and the only Baltic State which came out of the conflict without violence was Estonia (Smith et al. 2002: 58). At the same time, it must be added that the level of violence in the Baltics and overall in the Soviet Union at the time of secession was very low compared to the former Yugoslavia for example and the process of secession was fast and relatively painless.

Gorbachev initially tried to halt Lithuania’s secession by imposing an economic embargo and began to cut supplies of oil and gas to the country, which was the first time a Russian leader used this technique to force the former republics to abide by Moscow’s command (Olcott and Olcott 1990, cited in Smith et al. 2002). Subsequently, other Russian leaders intended to exert influence onto these states with energy embargos, such as President Putin
onto the Ukraine and Belarus for example. However, Gorbachev’s energy embargo at the time was not able to prevent the Baltic States from seceding from the Union.

The Soviet Union, and later on the Russian Federation, used other methods besides economic leverage to exert its influence onto the Baltic States. Diplomatic speeches about protecting the human rights of the Russian minority functioned as a way of using political power over the republics. In addition, Russia tried to make the issue of troop withdrawal conditional on how the three states were treating their Russian minorities but this measure’s success was minimal (Saideman 2008).

Russian troop withdrawal from the Baltics was tied to the fate of the Russian diaspora because at the time Russia was concerned about losing control over its military (Simonsen 2001). It is not uncommon that at times of major upheavals, the military takes on a life of its own and serves a very important role in the transition process, essentially contributing to its success or failure. The role of the military junta in Latin America’s democratization process (Huntington 1991) and Egypt’s military during the Arab Spring at the present time are just a few examples. Further, in the conflicts of Transnistria, Abkhazia, and Tajikistan a divide existed between the central command and the local military leadership in terms of the focus of the operations. Pavel Baev states that “the threat of disintegration of the Russian forces in the FSU was in fact the major reason why the diaspora issue became so important in state policy from 1992 onwards” (cited in Simonsen 2001: 772). In essence, because of the existing issue linkage, troop withdrawal in the Baltics served as a bargaining chip to gain better rights for the Russophones (Smith et al. 2002: 91; Morris 2004; Galbreath 2005).
Another issue of contention between the Russian Federation and the Baltic States was the handling of borders after 1991. Similarly to the issue of troop withdrawals, the border question was also used as a bargaining tool between the parties. In 1920 the Treaty of Tartu drew the borders between Russia and Estonia. The significance of the treaty was that it recognized the independence of Estonia from Communist Russia, which was in effect during the interwar period. After World War II however, when the Soviet Union annexed the Baltic States:

“the Estonian and Latvian Soviet Republics both lost a considerable amount of land contiguous to the RSFSR in 1944. At the same time, Lithuania actually gained land during the Soviet occupation (the Vilnius region). In Estonia, the disputed land was the Petseri region (Pechora) in the southeast corner. Latvia’s disputed land was the Abrene region (Pytalovo) in the northeast corner, which was the southern half of the former Estonian Petseri region” (Galbreath 2005: 202).

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Latvia requested the return of the Abrene region which belonged to Latvia during the interwar period (Kolstø 1995). Estonia on the other hand intended to move its border eastward, in approximation of the territory that the country lost to the Soviets in 1945. In the end, both Estonia and Latvia conceded the disputed territories by 1999, yet Russia failed to ratify either border treaties (Galbreath 2005).

Relations between the Baltic States and the Russian Federation can be seen as developing in various stages. Morris (2004), for instance, unpacks the domestic black box interacted with foreign relations between Latvia and Russia as well as the international

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44 See Estonia’s citizenship and language laws in the previous sections.
community.\textsuperscript{45} The three stages of minority policy in Latvia are 1) the initial phase between 1991-1993, 2) the second phase between 1993-1997, and 3) the third phase between 1997-1999. (Morris 2004). An additional fourth phase also needs to be added that took place after 1999. During each phase each segments of the administration are motivated by different (although sometimes coinciding) goals which reflects on the overall political outcome with respect to “Latvian nationality policy” (Morris 2004).

During the first stage of Latvian nationality policy, President Guntis Ulmanis faced a dual pull. First, he had to take into consideration international pressures to liberalize nationally. However, he also had to keep in mind the domestic pressures form nationalist parties to support a restrictive approach to minorities (Morris 2004: 544). During this period Latvia’s relations with Russia were focused on restoration and retaliation for the wrongs that were suffered by Latvians during Soviet times, such as mass deportations, etc. Reversing the effects of imperialism was carried out by Latvia via restrictive citizenship and language laws toward the Russophones and curtailment of access to public sector jobs. On the side of the government and political parties, nationality issues dominated political discussion and the foreign policy goal was laid out to “strengthen the country’s independence” and to ensure the survival of the state (Morris 2004: 553).

Between 1993-1997, Latvian and Russian relations continued to be strained due to issue linkages between troop withdrawal and the treatment of the Russian minority in the country. President Ulmanis at one point suggested the return of Russians to the Russian Federation.

\textsuperscript{45} Anne-Marie Slaughter also uses a similar approach in “A New World Order” Princeton University Press 2004, although applied differently.
Finally, Russian troops withdrew from the country in 1994 after long, drawn out disputes (Morris 2004).

The president promoted improved relations between Russia and Latvia and improved rights towards the Russophones during the time of 1997-1999. This was mainly the result of Latvia’s inability to partake in the 1997 admission to the European Union. A subsequent step coming from the president was also to invite representatives of the OSCE and HCNM during the crafting of the language laws (Morris 2004: 546). As Latvia failed to enter the EU ascension talks, the government itself also began to reevaluate the minority question and began to moderate the deteriorated Russian-Latvian relations and to take into account how the West viewed the country’s human rights stance (Morris 2004: 558).

In 2004 all Baltic Republics became members of the European Union and NATO. Membership in these organizations reduced the Russian threat because now these countries could turn to different sources for military protection and economic relations. The previously near exclusive economic trade with the Soviet Union stopped and the Baltic countries have intensified trade with the West, especially Northern Europe. Even though the conditionality literature asserts that change in minority policy is related to membership in organizations, such as the EU and NATO, these developments did not lead to improved treatment for the Russian minority in Estonia for instance. Evidence of protests against the 2005 Language Law and the 2007 Bronze Soldier incident attest to that.
5.6 Discussion

Based on the theoretical section presented earlier, states in which the minority and the mother state pose a lower as well as a higher threat will treat their minority better, whereas states where there is a balance of power between the mother state and the titular nation will be more likely to discriminate against the minority group (Figure 1, from Chapter 3). Essentially, three major parts make up the curvilinear argument, such as domestic threat, territorial concentration, and relations with the rump state. The Russian minority in the Baltic States posed a threat to the new states’ national authority. In Lithuania this threat was lower since Russophones have resided in the country longer and have been more integrated into society. In addition, their number is much lower than the Russian minority in Estonia and Latvia and they have a relatively low level of territorial concentration. Also, titular groups view minority accommodation as a zero-sum game, therefore majority groups are reluctant to enact favorable legislation and relinquish political power to the minority because they believe that it occurs at the expense of the majority (Cunningham and Weidmann 2010). Both unfavorable citizenship and language laws in Latvia and Estonia, as well as allowing very limited political activity in forms of political parties in these states demonstrate that.

Two territorially concentrated regions posed a threat to the government, such as Ida-Virumaa in Estonia and Latgale in Latvia. The government perceived the Russian Minority in the North-East of Estonia as a secessionist threat and there were talks of possible irredentism, especially early on. In other words, this region had the likelihood of further secession which threatened the new state’s survival in the international system. Lack of interest by the Russian minority to secede and the lack of willingness of Russia to intervene militarily led to the
minority settling for autonomy demands. This decision averted full scale secession and irredentism. While the Inter Front expressed interest in North-East Estonia and Tallinn to be incorporated into the Russian Federation, this did not take place (Arter 1996). The region of Latgale in Latvia could have faced similar destiny given its compactness and presence of Russians, however neither the idea of secession, irredentism, and not even autonomy was brought up as a solution to domestic problems. Part of the explanation is that the residents of Latgale are mainly Old Believers who are more integrated but also more removed from the highly impulsive center of Riga, which served as a hotbed of minority problems. In essence, in Latgale the Russian minority perceived their lives as an outcome of the economic crisis that affected everyone in the region and led to difficulties dealing with economic restructuring. Essentially, Russians believed that the impacts of the economy did not spare the non-Russian population either.

After independence the relationship between Russia and the individual Baltic States changed and Russia as a deterrent gradually became less important. Even though periodic diplomatic statements arguing for better human rights of the Russian minority are still visible today, Russia as the diplomatic protector for these states ceased to exist and this role was taken over by the European Union and NATO. Further, trade relations also shifted to Europe, especially Northern Europe, and trade with Russia decreased substantially. The Baltic States were a “showcase for Soviet reform” in both, entering the market economy and mass movements based on civic participation (Smith et al. 2002: 43). Linking the minority problem with troop withdrawal and border issues did not turn out to be successful. President Yeltsin tried to pressure Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania by indicating that he will refuse to withdraw
Soviet troops as long as there wasn’t an improvement in citizenship laws and better access to jobs for the Russian speakers, but in the end he did remove the troops nevertheless, even though at that time no significant changes were on the horizon to better the plight of the Russophones. Border issues, typically a catalyst of major conflicts, between Russia and the Baltics yielded similar results and fortunately never became a cause for violent action.

How much threat did the Russian minority and Russia pose to the Baltic governments? Where are these states on the curve of the curvilinear hypothesis? Putting all three parts together we can say that both Estonia and Latvia are placed on the top of the inverted U-shape curve, which means that dire treatment of the Russian minority is a function of medium to high domestic and international threat. In these two cases the balance of power between the actors leads to more nationalistic governmental measures applied towards the minority. At the same time, Lithuania is placed in the lower left corner because good relations with Russia and a more integrated, less populous Russophone group is less threatening, and therefore will be minimally discriminated against.
Table 5.1: Ethnic Composition of Latvia, 1920-1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>1920 (%)</th>
<th>1939 (%)</th>
<th>1959 (%)</th>
<th>1989 (%)</th>
<th>1995 (%)</th>
<th>2011* (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latvians</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>98.25</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>37.75</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germans</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>25.68</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>44.67</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poles</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>60.82</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainians/Byelorusians</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>5.99/19.22</td>
<td>2.2/3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanians</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>20.31</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minorities

Source: Ishiyama and Breuning, Ethnopolitics in the New Europe, 1998, page 81

*Source: Latvian Population Census 2011
Table 5.2: Ethnic Composition of Estonia, 1934-1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>1934 (%)</th>
<th>1959 (%)</th>
<th>1970 (%)</th>
<th>1989 (%)</th>
<th>2011* (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estonians</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germans</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainians/</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1.7/1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byelorussians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minorities

Source: Ishiyama and Breuning, Ethnopolitics in the New Europe, 1998, page 81

Table 5.3: National Composition of the Lithuanian Population

Population census data in percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanians</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>79.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poles</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainians</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>99.6</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>98.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Shlapentokh et al., The New Russian Diaspora, 1994, page 92
Table 5.4: Russophone Political Parties and Organizations

**Estonia**

*Russian Democratic Movement*
- Established in 1991; initially supported independence, then it opposed it

*Coordinating Committee (CC)*
- Russian Democratic Movement entered into alliance with United Council of Labor and Collectives (OSTK) and formed the CC
- Later under the name of the Committee for the Autonomy of Northeastern Estonia advocated territorial autonomy

*Interregional Council*
- Established in 1992; promoted to protect the human rights of Estonian Russians

*Russian Party of Estonia*
- Established in 1993

*Our Home Estonia (OHE)*
- In 1995 this coalition gained 5.7% of the national vote and six parliamentary seats
- In 1996 they began to splinter between the pragmatic and nationalist factions

*Constitution Party (KK)*
- Most active political faction for minority ethnic Russian concerns
- Successor of Estonian United People’s Russian Party (EÜVRP)

**Latvia**

*Harmony Centre (SC)*

*For Human Rights in United Latvia (PCTVL)*
- Advocates the liberalization of citizenship and language laws for Russophones
Figure 5.1: Map of Estonia

Source: University of Texas Libraries online, [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/estonia.html](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/estonia.html)

(Accessed 7-18-2012)
Figure 5.2: Map of Latvia


(Accessed 7-18-2012)

Note that the Latgale region is centered on the city of Daugavpils in the South
Figure 5.3: Map of the Baltic States


(Accessed 7-18-2012)
Figure 5.4: Russophone Population in Estonia

Data for this map was used from the 2000 Estonian Census
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CHAPTER 6

THE RUSSIAN MINORITY IN CENTRAL ASIA

6.1 Introduction

In 1999 the Kazakh authorities arrested 22 people in Ust’-Kamenogorsk on charges of attempting to “violently overthrow local organs of government [...] in order to create an autonomous Russian Altai Republic in the East Kazakhstan oblast” (Commercio 2004:87). The city is mainly home to Russians who were stranded in Kazakhstan after the Soviet Union fell apart and it is located in close proximity to Russia. The developments leading up to the arrests are called the “Pugachev Rebellion,” which was followed by the amount of secrecy and mystery usually characteristics of a detective novel. Did these individuals actually want to create a separate country or was their act merely motivated by the idea of calling attention to the treatment of Russians in East-Kazakhstan? Was the Pugachev Rebellion nothing but a set up by the Kazakh government to create an example of what could happen to any group that is trying to attempt secession in the Russian minority dominated North-East of Kazakhstan? Either one of these options is plausible and could have been the incentive behind the Pugachev Rebellion. In the end, the Russian Altai Republic was never established because it lacked enough support from the Russian minority and the Russian state.

Emelian Pugachev was originally a Don Cossack who orchestrated a rebellion against the Tsar, Peter III, to end serfdom in 1774. This is not the Pugachev who is serving his sentence in a Kazakhstani prison today. Victor Vladimirovich Kazimirchuk, the founder of Rus’, an extremist group established in Russia in 1991, also calls himself “Pugachev” (Commercio 2004:89). The
contemporary Pugachev is a Russian national, actually of Polish descent, who was concerned about his fellow Russians in Kazakhstan. He was dissatisfied with how Russians were treated in the country and his most important aspect of concern was the status of the Russian language in Kazakhstan. He viewed language legislation towards the Russian minority as most discriminatory, which led to plans of violent separatist action against the Kazakh government (Commercio 2004: 90). Interestingly, however, the broader Russian minority community did not support the secessionist attempt because they were afraid that they will be mistreated by the government if the attempt failed. In fact, the Akim (or governor) of East Kazakhstan, Vitaly Mette, congratulated the people of Ust'-Kamenogorsk and stated that they had the wisdom “to not allow a small group of provocateurs from bringing discord to our many centuries of friendship between the Russian and Kazakh people, or to the relationship between the friendly states of Russia and Kazakhstan” (Commercio 2004: 91).

At first sight, these developments appear to paint a picture of the Russian minority as disinterested in any form of separatism or autonomy from the Kazakh state. However, this issue is more complex. In December of 2000 BRIF conducted a public opinion poll in the city of Ust’-Kamenogorsk and asked the residents about what they thought should be the status of East Kazakhstan. Eleven percent supported the idea that East-Kazakhstan should be an autonomous part of Kazakhstan - however, over fifty percent of residents agreed that this region should be part of Russia, if Russia would approve of such action (Commercio 2004: 102). Another survey on the same topic conducted by Vesti the same year also showed similar results (Commercio 2004: 103). Commercio argues that there are two reasons for this sentiment. First, Russians in Kazakhstan believe that if the North-East would become autonomous, their conditions would
worsen. Second, if the region would join with Russia, conditions would improve (Commercio 2004: 103).

Pugachev received 15 years in prison after a reduced sentence. He and his accomplices were accused of attempting to seize power and with “the violent violation of the unity of the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan” (Commercio 2004: 92). Commercio argues that the sentence received by members of the group was disproportionate with their actions, especially since none of these acts were actually carried out, but instead were only attempted. The extremists were caught with maps while they were creating plans for the violent overthrow of the government. In addition, they possessed minimal weapons for a plan of such magnitude. Leaders of Russian minority groups, such as the Lad and Russian Community in Kazakhstan also say that the threat the group posed were minimal and that they did not have the means to carry out the operation (Commercio 2004: 103). Based on this evidence then, it is possible that the Kazakh government at the end intended to provide an example and may have set up the incident to ward off future attempts of territorial separation by Russians in the North-East region of the country. However, the exact motivation of this incident remains unclear.

The Pugachev Rebellion symbolizes how ambiguous and complicated the relations are between Kazakh authorities and the Russian minority. It also shows how much of a powder keg this region could have been had it ignited after the country parted from the Soviet Union. Fortunately no violent action took place and secession was prevented. However, the Russian minority in Kazakhstan is numerous and territorially concentrated, thereby posing a considerable threat to the nationalizing country, especially given the proximity of a powerful mother state. After independence, Russians in Kazakhstan have been treated badly and political
discrimination after the Pugachev Rebellion increased. Much of this discrimination however is tacit; concrete actions against Russians cannot be pinpointed easily. For instance, the Kazakh state forbids dual citizenship for Russians thereby putting them at a disadvantage, especially since they live close to Russia, and historically there has been a lot of economic connection between Russians on both sides of the border. Further, Kazakh language policy towards Russians has become less accommodating based on the second and third versions of the constitution, which no longer designates Russian as “a language of interethnic communication” (Commercio 2004: 96). The move of the capital to the North, personnel policy, territorial gerrymandering, and other governmental policies all point into the direction that the status of the Russian minority in Kazakhstan has worsened.46

I find that political and economic discrimination of Russophones is explained by the level of domestic and international threat and the interaction between them. After independence, the Russian minority and Russia posed a higher level threat to the Kazakh government and discrimination was lower. However after 1999 the level of threat by the Russian minority and the mother state decreased overtime and as a result we find more discrimination towards Russians in Kazakhstan today. This change in discrimination is due to several factors. First, Kazakhstan, as well as the rest of Central Asia, experienced a very high level of Russian emigration to Russia and other states; and as the number of Russians decreased they constituted less of a threat than before. Emigration also included some of the technical professionals who were needed for their expertise earlier. As time progressed, titulars were able to gain more technical knowledge to replace Russians in these professions. Second, after

46 For a more detailed discussion on these topics see the upcoming section of this chapter.
1999 the Russian minority had abandoned virtually any form of political organization and the Cossacks ceased their claim to territorial secession entirely. And finally, Russia and Kazakhstan need each other more in economic relations as natural resources are more sought after from this region especially given the recent conflict in the Middle East.

This chapter assesses how the Russian minority has been treated in the five Central Asian Republics of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. I also attempt to provide explanations for why political discrimination occurred in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, when it was fairly absent in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan First, this chapter explains the historical background of the Russian migration, including the time when these countries were incorporated into Russia, the Soviet period and independence. Second, I describe political and economic discrimination towards Russophones in the Central Asian Republics and their current status. Third, analysis is given regarding domestic threat of the Russian minority, specifically focusing on the threat to the various states’ national authority as well as on geography as a threat. Fourth, I provide an assessment of the relations between the Central Asian countries and Russia, which comprises the international threat part of my argument.

6.2 Historical Background

The first Russians who arrived in Central Asia were the Cossacks who settled in the Kazakh steppe during the early 16th century as military warriors to defend the rapidly expanding Russian Empire. Although little is known of their exact origin, most Cossacks are mentioned with Russian and Ukrainian last names in historical records after the mid 15th century.
(Longworth 1970). Their main purpose in Kazakhstan was to defend the newly accumulated territory of the Tsar from outside invasion and to crush internal rebellion directed against imperialist aims. The Cossacks were mainly a military group; however they were also part of economic imperialist plans of Russia since they were granted considerable amount of land in exchange for their services (Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 6). Therefore the Cossacks were soldiers in the first place but they were also peasants tilling land on the frontiers. After the Cossack settlement, the widespread colonization of the Russian Empire into Central Asia occurred in Kazakhstan starting in the early 18th century and was later expanded to the four other republics during the second half of the 19th century (Rywkin 1998).

Given the Cossacks’ distinct folklore, the question presents itself whether we can consider the Cossacks as part of the Russian population. The Cossacks are part of the Russian minority for three reasons. First, even though historically they came from various ethnic backgrounds, most Cossacks are mentioned with Russian and Ukrainian last names in historical records after the mid 15th century (Longworth 1970). Second, the leader of the Semirechie Cossack Community, Belyakov, who created the Russian Party in 2002, presented himself as the defender of not only Cossacks, but also the right of Russians (Peyrouse 2007). Third, the Semirechie Cossacks do not have specific collective memory and consider themselves as part of the Russian community (Peyrouse 2007: 491). However, this conclusion might be different for Cossacks living in other new republics that broke off the Soviet Union, such as those in the Ukraine for example. Also, Cossacks are considered a separate ethnicity in the Russian Federation.
Economic colonialization during the time of Tsarist Russia occurred in several stages. During the first stage of early colonialization in the 15th century Russian peasants were resettled from more densely populated parts of European Russia and pushed the indigenous population off their land. According to the Imperial Inspection Commission “the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz had been banished from their lands en masse and their settlements and mosques [were] razed” (Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 6). The second stage of expansion occurred during the 19th and early 20th centuries when traders and handicraftsmen were sent to the region, however migration with this purpose was more pronounced to the Volga region than elsewhere. Third, skilled workers started to arrive in the late 1890s, who worked on the Baku oil fields as highly skilled repairmen and experienced machine operators. Finally, Russian intellectuals, such as teachers, doctors and engineers moved to the territories as well (Shlapentokh et al. 1994: 6-7). Imperial Russia was not interested in Russifying these regions, only to dominate them politically, economically and militarily (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 213; Melvin 2000: 7).

Two important waves of migration can be distinguished during the Soviet period. First, the massive industrialization carried out between the 1920s and 1970s, and second, Nikita Khrushchev’s Virgin Land Program starting in 1954 (Hiro 2009: 234; Melvin 2000; Kolstø 1999: 158). Each of these developments had a number of consequences for Central. Especially during Stalin’s time hundreds of new factories opened and many were moved eastward into Central Asia in order to achieve the high production goals of the planned economy. The result of this change was the migration of highly skilled Russians to Central Asia and beyond. The Soviet Union’s goal was to achieve self-sufficiency not only in the industry but also in agriculture. Shortly after World War II Khrushchev initiated the Virgin Lands program which transformed
the Kazakh steppe into an agricultural land which produced food for the Soviet Union. This program was accompanied by widespread resistance by Kazakhs, whose population had dropped from 57% to 34% after the European settlers, such as Russians, Ukrainians and Germans migrated to the region. A total of about 2 million settlers came to cultivate the land (Zardykhan 2004). The new arrivals became active members of the Communist Party in Kazakhstan, which was not viewed positively by the Kazakhs (Hiro 2009: 234-235).

The politics of nation-building was very different from the process in the Baltic States. Unlike the Baltic states, where there was a desire to return to the pre Soviet period of independence, there was not much to return to the concept of the nation because these countries never existed as nations in the Westphalian sense before. For instance prior to 1924 the borders of the Kazakh steppe were entirely “fluid.” They were demarcated by the Soviet Union in 1924 and Kazakhstan became a “union republic” for the next sixty-seven years until the Soviet Union imploded. As McLaren-Miller words it “there was, in essence, no Kazakhstan and there were no Kazakhs until the Soviet Union created them” (McLaren-Miller, in Münz and Ohliger 2003: 251). However, the creation and the development of ethnicities within the empire was contrary to the formal ideology of the communist state. The main idea was to develop a Soviet identity, underlined by economic equality for all, which would serve as the basis of the community. However, the federalist organizational structure “reinforced rather than undermined ethnic difference” (Verdery 1993: 182, cited in Münz and Ohliger 2003). Preceded by a Soviet created communist identity, when Kazakhstan became an independent republic in 1991, it did so for the first time in its history.
Nowhere in the Central Asian republics can we see strong and lasting nationalist movements. None of these states had separatist movements that strived for secession from the Soviet Union. Also, unlike the Baltic States, the Central Asian republics did not have to fight for independence (McLaren-Miller, in Münz and Ohliger 2003: 250); independence was thrust upon them (Smith 1999: 89). Also, it was extremely difficult to create a post-secessionist national identity in Central Asia, for this national identity, “of what it means to be Tajik, Turkmen, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, or Uzbek - was created and developed during the Soviet period” (Smith 1999: 90).

Kazakhstan was the last union republic to secede and it did not harbor any nationalist independence movements. As the Soviet Union fell apart Kazakhstan found itself a sovereign nation. In this sense Kazakhstan is an “accidental” country (Cummings 2000: 3). The new government had to create justification for its independence and it had to be extremely cautious of how they formulated their explanation for their newly found existence especially because the indigenous Kazakh population was a minority at the time, whereas Russians were a majority now cut off from mainland Russia (Kolstø 1999: 163).

In Tajikistan, independence and nation-building was accompanied by a bloody civil war, and although the Russian minority was not directly involved in the atrocities, Russia itself intervened to help the government win and it probably would have put pressure on Tajikistan had it discriminated against their kin (Akbarzadeh 1996). The Tajik civil war took place between October 1992 and June 1997 and involved fighting between the United Tajik Opposition (UTO) and the government. The crisis occurred over ideological differences. The government was defended the status quo and the preservation of the privileges of Soviet era elite, while the
opposition used nationalist proclamations (and Islam) to overcome the collective action problem and mobilize the population against this elite (Akbarzadeh 1996). In Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan, the national consciousness was not well developed because of the strong ties between the clans, which overrode nationalism as an organizational source (Collins 2006; Chinn and Kaiser 1996: Karklins 1986). In addition, in contrast to Kazakhstan, which is “superficially Islamicized” and much more secular, Uzbekistan has a much higher rate of Muslims who practice their religion more frequently (Rywkin 1998). Islam was heavily suppressed during communism in Central Asia, but independence led to religious revival (Smith 1999: 92), therefore religion also served as a competing structure against nationalism to unite behind.

6.3 The Treatment of the Russian Minority in Central Asia

6.3.1 Political Discrimination

6.3.1.1 Citizenship Policy

In contrast to the Baltic Republics which carried out restrictive citizenship policies against Russians, all Central Asian Republics granted automatic citizenship for the resident Russian minority after independence (Bohr 1998; Bremmer 1997: 567; Smith 1990: 90). Giving automatic citizenship was termed as the “zero option” which meant that all permanent residents were eligible for citizenship without the required citizenship and language tests common in the Baltic Republics (Kolstø 1999; Chinn and Kaiser 1996). Much of this measure had to do with keeping the Russian technical experts from leaving these countries since the indigenous population rarely possessed the skills to keep the economy producing further
Mandelbaum 1994). Tajikistan went further and actually encouraged Russians to stay when the 1996 citizenship law was passed which allowed for dual citizenship for Russian speakers. Later in 2002, an agreement was signed between Russia and Tajikistan to help curb out-migration from the country. However emigration trends have not slowed much as a result especially since Russia has made it more difficult for Russians to return to their homeland (MRGI 2008). A similar agreement was signed between Turkmenistan and Russia in 1993, which allowed dual citizenship of Russians in the republic, even though for a long time this was mainly a symbolic act (Saideman 2004: 176; Bremmer 1997; MAR). However, this ruling was revoked in 2003 when then President Saparmurat Niyazov and Vladimir Putin made a gas deal in exchange for terminating the dual citizenship law. For about ten years the measure was not enforced and when authorities have all of a sudden started enforcing the law in 2010, it caused a lot of problems at border crossings for those wishing to travel abroad. Uzbekistan refused to show intention on extending dual citizenship to Russian minority populations (Bohr 1998). Kazakhstan’s citizenship law passed in 1991 and it similarly granted automatic citizenship to Russians residing in the country (Tables 6.2 and 6.4).

As it is visible from the above measures, the Central Asian states have ensured the most basic rights for the Russian minority in the form of providing citizenship; however dual citizenship has not been extended to Russians, only with the exception of Tajikistan and for some time in Turkmenistan where the measure was eventually revoked. This is seemingly a positive picture from the outside; however Russians in Kazakhstan, who are the most numerous in the region, view it differently. For them the fact that Kazakhs who returned to the country

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from abroad were given dual citizenship right away is discriminatory, especially when it is compared with Russians who remained in Kazakhstan after independence and are not able to obtain dual citizenship.

6.3.1.2 Language Policy

Language in Central Asia has been a contentious issue and it has been highly debated in the legislatures since independence. Language is a possible way of discrimination against the Russian minority but it is also a way to establish control of the state in the process of nation-building (Dave 2004). Very often this form of discrimination is tacit as regulations are often unclear about the exact use of Russian in public life. However in each case language has far reaching consequences, as without speaking the titular language, Russians have difficulty finding employment in the public and private sectors and having access to educational opportunities. What adds to this complexity is that many of the indigenous languages, such as Uzbek or Kazakh for example, have not been developed well for many years, especially in official and literally circles since Russian fulfilled that function. For decades Russian was used as the lingua franca in politics, culture, education and other aspects of social life. Parting with this language all of a sudden and changing to a different one that has not been used in official spheres for a long time is difficult.

In some cases, getting used to the historic language is difficult not only for Russians in the republics, but also for the titulars, such as native Kazakhs or Uzbeks. And this is valid not only for the public but also for the titular elite. Many Kazakh officials do not have a sufficient enough command of Kazakh. When President Nazarbayev gave his New Year’s Eve speech in
1996 for example, a Russian man said that “He will speak only five minutes in Kazakh, then he will speak half an hour in Russian” (Nazpary 2002: 157). Chinaliev, a Kyrgyz official, in fact didn’t speak Kyrgyz at all and had to address the audience in Russian during his entire speech he gave in 1991 (Huskey 1997: 665, in Bremmer 1997). Initial language laws designated Russian as the language of “interethnic communication” in all five countries. However since that time discrimination through language legislation in Kazakhstan has become worse towards the Russian minority, whereas in Uzbekistan minority language regulation improved (Spechler 2007; Commercio 2004; Chinn and Kaiser 1996). See Tables 6.3 and 6.5 for an overview on language laws in Central Asia (Tables 6.3 and 6.5).

After independence the republics of Central Asia declared their titular languages as the “official language” of their countries, such as the 1989 Uzbek and Kyrgyz Language Laws. In all cases at this time Russian was designated as the “language of interethnic communication” (Bremmer 1997; Chinn and Kaiser 1996). While this is still the case in Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have altered this provision and changed Russian to become the “official language,” although in Kazakhstan Kazakh is designated as the sole “state language” (Münz and Ohliger 2003: 253). In Uzbekistan the Uzbek language is also considered the only “state language” (Bohr 1998: 33). The terminology in these cases is vague and confusing but the aim of differentiation is to indicate that Russian is meant to be other than the national titular language.

Evidence shows that there is widespread tacit discrimination of the Russian minority through language legislature in Kazakhstan and that this has gotten worse over time (Commercio 2004; Kolstø 1999; Chinn and Kaiser 1996). Commercio analyzes the official
documents related to the use of language in Kazakhstan and finds that between the period of 1989 and 1998 language policy negatively impacted the use of the Russian language. While the 1989 Law on Languages designated Russian as the language of interethnic communication and the 1993 Kazakh Constitution confirmed it, the subsequent two Constitutions, signed in 1995 and 1998, failed to reconfirm Russian as the language of interethnic communication (Commercio 2004: 95). Adding to this, Peyrouse also argues that the “disuse of Russian” has been ongoing since independence (Peyrouse 2007: 484). Finally, tacit language discrimination also highlights the prominence of the Kazakh language (MRG 2005).

Language policy is significant with regards to its impact on discrimination, in areas such as educational opportunities and access to jobs in the public sector. For instance, restriction on educational opportunities is a policy in Kazakhstan, which has led to the “deterioration of the quality of education for Russian minority pupils” (Peyrouse 2007: 485). Language requirements have also led to the “exclusion of the Russians from the public sector” (Peyrouse 2007: 485), which in turn led to the gradual dominance of ethnic Kazakhs in the government bureaucracy. In 2000 for example only about eight percent of Russians held civil service jobs, which is much lower than prior numbers (MRG 2005). Discrimination also took place against Russians in senior level positions as well (MAR). These trends, such as the deterioration of quality in Russian speaking schools, restriction on public sector employment, and the Kazakh dominance of the economy led to decreased social and economic promotion of the Russian minority in the country (MAR).

The Russian minority has organized protests to address the problems associated with the language laws. Russian and Slavic organizations, such as “Lad” and “Russian Community” in
Kazakhstan called attention to the plight of Russians and have brought up the issue of language legislation (Kolstø 1999: 175). Protesters in Ust-Kamenogorsk, North Kazakhstan, called for “the need to establish two state languages,” however these efforts were ignored by Kazakh authorities. As one of articles of the Current Digest of the Post Soviet Press Archives concludes “today, it is clear to everyone that language has become a political instrument used to select personnel to weed out people belonging to a ‘nontitular’ nation from administrative and government structures” (CDPSP 1993). Yet, Russian organizations have not been able to achieve changes in this regard.

According to Kolstø, opponents of the 1989 Language Policy viewed that language was “used tacitly to oust non-Kazakhs from their posts.” At the same time however, those who were in favor of Kazakhization argued that Kazakh was “still a minority language [and] only a small part of the citizenry is able to use Kazakh as a working language” (Kolstø 1999: 178). Interestingly, survey results showed that Kazakhs had problems with Kazakh language regulations sometimes more so than Russians (Kolstø 1999: 180-189). This idea is supported by Cummings who argues that Kazakh will be highly unlikely to become the language of communication in Kazakhstan, given that only 40% Kazakhs speak it. She sees that in the future Russian will retain this role and will keep uniting the many ethnic groups present in the country (Cummings 2000: 46).

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48 Russian Community was the first organization of the Russian minority in Kazakhstan and was registered in 1992. Lad is a Slavic Movement that aims “to strengthen the Slavic Social position” including pushing for dual citizenship as well as Russian to become an official language (Babak et al 2004: 127). More information on Russian minority organizations will be provided in subsequent sections of this paper.
While Kazakh is spoken much more in the rural areas of Kazakhstan, Russian is in fact still widespread in Almaty, the former capital. Nazpary describes the situation in the city the following way:

The main language of communication at home and at work is Russian, even for the overwhelming majority of Kazakhs. Kazakh is taught as a second language with the help of Russian [!]. There are no good books, good dictionaries or trained teachers for this purpose. (Nazpary 2002: 153, exclamation mark added)

Further, young people in Almaty are fearful to speak Kazakh because they are “afraid of being called luzhanin (Southerner),“ which is related to the Russian cultural hegemony still widely visible in Almaty (Nazpary 2002: 155).

The pace of carrying out the Language Laws differed by countries. Overall, Uzbekistan has been faster in returning to Uzbek than other states. While initially equally cumbersome and slow, the shift to the titular language in Uzbekistan has been “faster and fuller” than any other nation in the region (Bohr 1998). This is interesting given that the Uzbek language does not seem to be very cohesive. As Gleason puts it “the Uzbek language is not one language but a family of related languages [and in fact literal Uzbek] is not comprehensible to all Uzbeks” (Gleason 1997: 583, in Bremmer 1997).

Uzbekistan has been probably the vaguest about the Russian language in its basic laws, since neither the constitution nor the new language law, which was enacted in 1995, “makes any special provision for the Russian language whatsoever, either as an official language or as the language of interethnic communication” (Bohr 1998).

Unlike some of its regional neighbors, Uzbekistan has been able to improve upon the possibilities of employment for the Russian minority. Spechler points out that Uzbekistan’s Language Laws of 1992 and 1995 “have been fairly tolerant of non-Uzbek languages. Official
documents can be in Russian and unlike Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, no tests in Uzbek are required for official appointments.” Also, while managers are required to learn Uzbek to be able to speak with their employees, actually accomplishing this are allowed to take up to eight years (Spechler 2007: 190). Earlier Uzbek language tests were required of non-Uzbeks, and the provision was originally included in the 1989 Language Law, however it was discarded after the 1995 law was put into place (Bohr 1998: 34).

In Turkmenistan debates about the language issue were drawn out and included the role of Russian language in the country. The result of these discussions was that the 1990 Language Law placed Turkmen on equal par with Russian, and Russian has remained the “language of interethnic communication” since then (Nissman 1997: 644, in Bremmer 1997). Yet, the Russian language is losing ground in Turkmenistan. According to Nabi Abdullaev, former president Niyazov in 1995 banned the teaching of Russian in almost all universities and schools. Also, he no longer allowed for books, streets signs, posters and advertisements to be printed in Russian.49

Similarly to other Central Asian states, the 1989 Kyrgyz Language Law required management and professional personnel to be able to speak Kyrgyz to their workers and clients. Russian managers “criticized the law as divisive” (Nissman 1997: 664). Also, signs that were in Russian before were removed and replaced with signs printed in Kyrgyz. However, the status of the Russian language did improve in Kyrgyzstan because the amendment to the 2001 constitution makes Russian an “official state language” (MAR). Finally, in Tajikistan the 1989

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Language Law gave Tajik primacy over Russian “although it did not exclude the use of Russian” (Atkin 1997: 606, in Bremmer 1997).

6.3.1.3 Discrimination against the Russian Minority

The Kazakh state has taken many different measures to keep the Russian minority out of political power. One such measure was to curtail the operation of Russian political parties and organizations. Russian organizations constitute a threat to the Kazakh government. To this extent Russian political parties have been shut down and the establishment and operation of Russian organizations have been hindered to a great deal since 1991. By 2004 about twenty Russian organizations and fourteen cultural centers remained in Kazakhstan and no more Russian political parties operated (Peyrouse 2007: 489). Some of these occurrences have to do with the country’s highly authoritarian rule, which applies to other ethnic groups as well. In addition, the Kazakh constitution “prohibits the formation of associations or political parties that have ethnic, religious or nationalist identities.”

The first established Russian organization was the “Russian Community” which registered in 1992 in Kazakhstan. It was followed by the founding of “Lad” in 1993, an overarching Slavic movement in Kazakhstan which eventually became more popular than “Russian Community” and was the most active in 1994 (Babak et al. 2004:127; Cummings 2000: 32). Lad was a merger of many smaller Slavic organizations and it grew to such a large extent that later on “its committees were located throughout the entire territory of the republic, with

50 http://www.minorityrights.org/
offices both in regional administrative centers and small towns” (Babak et al. 2004: 127). The movement published a newspaper, called “Lad” and was able to obtain eight seats in the parliament in the 1994 parliamentary elections. The organization’s major goal was to “strengthen the Slav’s social position.” In addition, they also issued an appeal to President Nazarbayev to initiate agreements on dual citizenship which remained unmet by the Kazakh government (Kolstø 1999). Lad also pushed for Russian to become an official language in Kazakhstan, which was granted with the 1995 Constitution; however Russian did not become state language (Babak et al. 2004: 127).

Lad entered the state administration in 1994 as part of the opposition group “Progress,” however ethnic issues were secondary for Progress which rather aimed at “strengthening the social network for the general population.” Ethnic Russians and supporters of Lad were also active in two additional opposition groups, such as “Yevraziia” and “Region.” “Yevraziia” was in favor of establishing a Eurasian union and advocated more contact with CIS members (Cummings 2000: 33).

Organizational activity of Cossacks and the general Russian minority has been severely hindered by the Kazakh government. At the early years after independence for instance The Ministry of Justice refused to register the movement of “Edinstvo” because “of its demand that Russian be recognized as state language” however “Russian Community” and “Lad” outgrew from “Edinstvo” and were for the most part able to operate later on defending the rights of Russians. Although in 1990 the Ministry of Justice “regularly refused re-registration to Lad” and

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51 In 1993 Lad had 9,360 members and had branches in Aktiubinsk, Almaty, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Zhambyl, Karaganda, Kokchetav and Kustanai, and in the Akmolinsk and Pavlodar oblasts. The headquarter was located in Akmola, which is now Astana (Babak et al 2004: 127).
branches of Lad were charged with the possession of weapons and drug trafficking to hinder operations (Peyrouse 2007: 487). Lad was finally able to register in 1993. Also, “Bitter Line” a Cossack group of Siberian Cossacks, “was refused registration by the Supreme Court several times” (Peyrouse 2007: 491).

The Kazakh government arrested and imprisoned several leaders of the Russian and the Cossack community. First, the Pugachev Rebellion, described in the introduction, led to the imprisonment of fourteen individuals. In 2000 Kazimirchuk was sentenced to 17 years of imprisonment, while the other members received sentences between four to seventeen years (Commercio 2004: 92; Zardykhan 2004: 72). The leader of the rebellion, Victor Vladimirovich Kazimirchuk received the longest sentence, which was later on reduced. The arrest of other Cossack activists, such as V.I. Achkasov, N.V. Gunkin, V.V. Mikheyev, N.I., Shibanov, has been strongly criticized by the Russian Duma (Zadykhan 2004: 71; cited in Peyrouse 2007). Further, "several Russian politicians were arrested and four of Lad's main leaders were mugged": including A.V. Dokuchayeva in 1993, M.N. Golovkov in 1995, V.M. Mikhaylov in 1998 and A.P. Shushannikov in 2001 (Peyrouse 2007: 487).

The development of Russian cultural identity has also been restricted in Kazakhstan. For example, G.F. Belyakov, the leader of the Semirech’e Cossack Community, was arrested in 1996 for appearing in public in a traditional Cossack costume (www.minorityrights.org; Peyrouse 2007: 490). Restrictions in the media are also widespread. Lad’s publication was put onto the government’s watch list (Bakat et al. 2004) and the government banned the local Cossack newspaper “Kazchii Vestnik” in 1992 (Peyrouse 2007: 490). Kazakh legislation also requires that “at least fifty percent of all media broadcasts, including independent private media, to be in
Kazakh,” even in heavily Russian areas, which resulted in hefty fines and sometimes media being shut down for non-compliance. Further, state authorities provide subsidies to media, but this excludes Russian language media and is confined only to Kazakh-language media (www.minorityrights.org). Dismantling of the sculpture of the Cossack Ermak is also an example of cultural discrimination by the government (Peyrouse 2007). Ermac Timofeyevich was a Cossack in the mid sixteenth century who was influential in the Russian conquest of Siberia during the reign of Ivan the Terrible.

Besides Kazakhstan, most of the remaining Central Asian republics do not have a large percentage of Russian minority.52 Only Kyrgyzstan’s Russophone population exceeds ten percent and Tajikistan’s Russian minority is below one percent. Nationalization programs in all five countries, regardless of size, resulted in Russians being pushed out of top level positions and from middle and bottom level administrative functions as well. Access to educational opportunities has been restrictive in Uzbekistan where Russians have experienced difficulties entering universities (Anonymous 1993: 53), and in Turkmenistan where Russian has been nearly outlawed in the educational system (MAR).

Russians in Uzbekistan were considered part of the Soviet leadership, the extension of imperialism and occupied an elite level in society. “C” argues that “anti-Russian feelings have never been strong in Uzbekistan” (Anonymous 1993: 53). “C” is a high ranking official in Uzbekistan whose article “One Man Rule in Uzbekistan” appeared in Demokratizatsija under anonymity. In his opinion, no discriminatory laws exist in the country on citizenship, language

52 The percentage of Russians in Uzbekistan today is 5.5% (down from 7% in 1991); in Tajikistan 0.9% (which was 4% at the time of independence); Kyrgyzstan has a 12.5% Russian minority in the country today (this number was 22% in 1991); and finally Turkmenistan’s Russian population numbers 4% (down from 9% in 1991). Source: Fearon’s Ethnicity and Insurgency Dataset.
and education. He also adds that if Russians with skills in the aviation plants of Ulyanovsk, Samara and Voronezh could leave, they would have left the country by now. But since Russia has not been very inviting to them and made their return more complicated, skilled Russians stay in Uzbekistan.

No serious discrimination can be detected in Kyrgyzstan towards the Russian minority (MAR). In fact, Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan are considered more of a threat to the nationals than Russians as they are larger in numbers and have voiced autonomy demands in the past. Language legislation is perhaps even worse towards the Uzbeks, since Russian is at least given official language status. At the time of transition in 1990, Uzbeks in Osh rioted against Kyrgyz officials and measures. Several houses were destroyed and over 200 people died as a result. Soviet troops moved in to restore order (Huskey 1997: 677, in Bremmer 1997). In 2010 during the Kyrgyz Revolution riots resurfaced again between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks and over 2000 people died. Even though governmental discrimination towards Russians is minimal or non-existent, societal level discrimination exists towards them (MAR).

MAR results show no economic discrimination towards Russian speakers in Kyrgyzstan. Yet, formal governmental accommodating policies in both the political and the economic fields do not give us a complete representation of discrimination in society because of the widespread informal economy in the region; and indeed in a great number of post-Soviet states. Michelle Commercio is very much on point when she focuses on the role and importance of informal networks in the Kyrgyz economy and how it relates to the status of the Russian minority in the country (Commercio 2004). Because of the Kyrgyz clan system, Russians are practically unable to enter the informal economy and cannot participate in economic
networks successfully. Since the formal economy is weak and Russians’ access is virtually non-existent in the informal economy, despite Kyrgyzstan’s accommodating policies, the Russian minority remains dissatisfied in the country (Commercio 2004). In other countries most tacit discrimination exists politically, however Kyrgyzstan is one of those instances where tacit discrimination against Russians exists in the economy as well.

The proportion of the Russian minority is very small in Tajikistan; of the seven million total population, less than one percent is Russian. No official discrimination exists against this ethnic group (MAR). Finally, discrimination towards Russian speakers in Turkmenistan is one of the highest in Central Asia and this trend has increased in the past (MAR). Literature is scarce about the status of this group in the country. In 1994 two Russians were elected to the fifty-seat Kahlk Maslakhaty, the Turkmen Parliament, however Russian minorities have been underrepresented in administrative and civil service positions (MAR). When President Saparmurat Niyazov came to power in 1991, he established a Soviet style dictatorship or rather continued the previous style of rule. His death in 2006 was followed by the presidency of Gurbanguly Mälikgulyýewiç Berdimuhamedow, who continues the authoritarian style policy of his predecessor.53 Another potential explanation for the increased discrimination against Russians could be Turkmenistan’s high energy resource wealth and therefore this country could be a case of the “resource curse” (Ross 1999).54

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53 [http://psephos.adam-carr.net](http://psephos.adam-carr.net)
54 Resource availability enables the state to use cooption without even resorting to repression to counter reform pressures from either level of society, a phenomenon that is defined as the resource curse (Ross 2001).
6.4 Domestic Threat

There are more than one hundred ethnic groups within the borders of Kazakhstan today (Oka 2004; Nazpary 2002; Melvin 2000). Because the country historically served as a gateway between the West and the Orient, and was located on the Silk Road, a great number of groups passed through it and many of them remained. One such ethnic group is the Russian-speakers, who originally came as soldiers of the Tsar and they are the largest ethnicity there after the titular Kazakhs. In fact, the group is so large in number that at the time of independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 the proportion of Russians compared to the titular Kazakh ethnic group was larger, about 38%, and Russians were the majority at the time.

Today, based on the 2009 census, around 24% Russians live in the country, and Kazakhs are now a majority ethnic group in their own country again (Flynn 1994; 2009 Kazakh Census). Figure 2 shows the change between the ratios of the Russian minority in Kazakhstan in 1989 compared to 2009. From the pie charts we can see that there has been about a 14 percent decrease in the number of Russians, whereas the population of Kazakhs has increased by 24%. The vast drop in numbers in recent years is mostly due to out-migration of Russian speakers to Russia and other places. Some authors argue that Russians left mainly because of economic problems after independence during transition to the market economy (Kolstø 1999: 161) or for fear of a potential international conflict (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 190). At the same time, this drastic change in numbers is not only due to Russian out-migration, but also to differences in birthrates and death rates. In addition, Kazakhstan has been advocating active repatriation policies that aim at the return of Kazakh nationals from abroad (Figure 2).
Overall, the number and proportion of Russian speakers compared to the indigenous population is much lower in the other four Central Asian Republics of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Given their lower numbers, they pose a lower demographic threat in these cases. There has been substantial change in the proportion of the number of Russian-speakers overtime, since they have migrated back to Russia in large numbers after the fall of communism. In Uzbekistan for example Russophones accounted for over 12 percent of the indigenous population in 1989 and this number dropped to over 5 percent by 2000, which cut the remaining Russians in Uzbekistan to half of their previous number (Uzbek Census 2000). Similar developments can be observed in Kyrgyzstan where there was a decrease of the Russian minority from about 21 percent in 1989 to over 6 percent (Kyrgyz Census 1999-2007). Turkmenistan’s Russian population dropped from about 9 percent in 1989 (Flynn 1994) to below 4 percent (MAR) by 2006. Finally, the Russian minority in Tajikistan numbered over 7 percent of the total population in 1989 and this number dropped to below 1 percent by 2006. Migration trends in Tajikistan are mainly due to the violent civil war which occurred between 1992-1997 (Flynn 1991; MAR). Again, in some cases the change in the proportion of Russians compared to the titulars can also be due to changes in increasing or decreasing birth rates and death rates in the individual countries (Table 6.1).

A few words on the location and territorial concentration of Russians in Kazakhstan. Russians are a majority in the following northern oblasts: East Kazakhstan, Karaganda, and North Kazakhstan. They have plurality status in Akmola, Kokchetav, Kustanay, and Pavlodar oblasts, or provinces. All but Karaganda and Akmola share a border with Russia, however these two provinces are located next to Russian-dominated oblasts (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 185). For
the territorial concentration of Russians and location of Kazakhstan’s provinces please see Figures 1 and 3 (Figures 1 and 3).

6.4.1 Threat of Further Secession

The threat of further secession from the Russian-speakers was only present in Kazakhstan after independence in Central Asia (Twining 1993), even though the Russian minority has a high territorial concentration in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and medium concentration in Turkmenistan as well. Tajikistan’s civil war was not territorially motivated and did not involve the Russian minority (Lynch 2002). Kyrgyzstan also experienced autonomy demands; however it came from the Uzbek minority in the Osh region (Huskey 1997, in Bremmer 1997). In this section I intend to examine the following aspects of territorial threat focusing on Kazakhstan. First I will assess the imminent geographical threat the Russian minority, including the Cossacks, posed to the Kazakh government since the inception of the Kazakh state. Second, I will provide an evaluation of tacit government policies that use geography as a means to dilute the ethnic makeup of the North and thereby weaken the power of the Russian minority. Finally, I will briefly describe the issue of territorial concentration with respect to the remaining republics.

The Kazakh case is essentially an example of all three types of domestic threat, such as irredentism, secession, and autonomy. Yet, none of these demands became reality; and ultimately the Russian minority was unable to accomplish even political autonomy. Russians in Kazakhstan lacked both the capacity and the willingness to secede from Kazakhstan. While Russia, the mother state, possessed the capacity to overtake the North of Kazakhstan, besides
some initial rhetoric coming from intellectuals, such as Solzhenitsyn and Kozlov, its willingness was absent. Ultimately, the Russian minority gave up even the pursuit of autonomy for fear of worsening their situation in an increasingly authoritarian country.

Russian separatist movements posed a threat to Kazakhstan’s integrity (Peyrouse 2007: 71; Zardykhan 2004: 71; Cutler 1999: 178). The Pugachev Rebellion which aimed at establishing the “Russian Altai Republic” in Kazakhstan is one indication of this threat.\(^5^5\) The 1992 rally in Ust-Kamenogorsk demanding the right of self-government and the 1994 meeting by Lad, a Russian minority organization in Northern-Kazakhstan, insisting on autonomy and talking about the creation of the “Republic of Southern Siberia” are other evidence that the Kazakh state could have very much viewed its Northern territory to be in jeopardy.

In addition, the Russian minority in Kazakhstan posed a threat to the newly established Kazakh state because Russia could have intervened to retake the Northern regions, where the two countries share a border. Also, Russians in Kazakhstan are territorially concentrated and were a majority at the time of the country’s secession from the Soviet Union. Concentration and close proximity to the rump state provided the prerequisites for irredentism. In other words, the Russian minority posed a threat to the new Kazakh state’s integrity and survival in the international system because they could have joined with the mother state territorially. In this regard then the Russian minority was viewed as an obstacle to the new nation’s development.

Perhaps Russian separatism started with the 1992 rally in Ust-Kamenogorsk (Oskemen), in the capital of East Kazakhstan Province (Figure 2). About 15,000 Russians took to the streets

\(^5^5\) Details of the Pugachev Rebellion are described in the introduction. Also see Commercio 2004.
on this occasion and demanded “a right to self-government in the spheres of language, culture and exploitation of natural resources,” the adoption of Russian as an official language, the possibility to acquire dual citizenship and overall greater autonomy of Eastern-Kazakhstan (Oka 2004; Olcott 1997: 567).

While various grievances have been expressed at the rally, only a small group of people of the Russian minority supported outright separation in Ust-Kamenogorsk. Oka argues that the idea of separation was more pronounced coming from Russian intellectuals, such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Victor Kozlov, than from the Russian minority itself (Oka 2004). In fact both Solzhenitsyn and Kozlov were vocal about advocating a proactive stance of Russia in this matter (Olcott 1997, in Bremmer 1997).

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s essay “How are we to build up Russia,” was published in 1990 and created controversy at a delicate time in Russia’s history (Olcott 1997, in Bremmer 1997). Solzhenitsyn was concerned about the 25 million Russians now living abroad and expressed contempt about the idea of abandoning them (Peyrouse 2007). In his essay he argued that Northeast Kazakhstan was part of historic Russia and “it should be returned” (Olcott 1997: 555, in Bremmer 1997). Similarly, Victor Kozlov, a historian at the Institute of Ethnography in Moscow, advocated Russian’s historic right to Eastern Kazakhstan, and even though he later “disavowed the implications of his work,” Cossacks began to organize for greater autonomy and separation (Olcott 1997: 554, in Bremmer 1997).

56 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn is a Nobel Prize winning Russian author who provided an account of Stalin era gulags, or Soviet forced labor camps and documented the Russian Revolution. His two most famous works are “One Day in the Life of Denisovich” and “The Gulag Archipelago.”
Russian claims to autonomy, dual citizenship, and the use of Russian language did not end at the 1992 rally. In 1994 Lad, the Slavic Movement representing Russians went a step further than merely asking for autonomy from the Kazakh government. At the 1994 meeting members of Lad began to talk about creating a “Republic of Southern Siberia” and supported Solzhenitsyn’s proposal to transfer parts of Northern Kazakhstan to Russia (The Globe and Mail, October 29, 1994; Cummings 2000: 32). This is the point in the flow of developments when autonomy demands turn into irredentist aspirations. Although again, this is only a demand and intent, attempts at actually carrying out the plan were visible during the Pugachev incident in 1999. Also, while the Russian community first brings up the idea of irredentism in 1994, the Cossacks already talk about this openly in 1991 (Cummings 2000: 32).

The idea of dual-citizenship and the Kazakh government’s refusal to extend it has a close connection to the autonomy demands of Russian minority organizations. Between 1992 and 1994 debates on dual-citizenship occurred at the time of establishing the Kazakh nation. The Kazakh government refused to provide dual-citizenship to the Russian minority because they “equated [it] with dual loyalty and a possible north-south split” (Cummings 2000: 4; Kolstø 1999). As a result, the Kazakh government moved to create a much more centralized governmental structure and moved the capital to the North (Cummings 2000).

The next event of Russian minority engagement occurs much later in 1999. The Pugachev Rebellion, despite of its controversy and secrecy, was an attempt to establish the separate “Russian Altai Republic” in the East-Kazakhstan oblast. Even though this separatism was attempted by the leader of the Russian extreme-radical group “Rus,” operating mainly in Russia, and was not supported by most Russians in Kazakhstan, had Russia been involved and
willing, this incident would have had a different ending. Also, as stated in the introduction, polls show that a large portion of Russians in the country would support it if the Northern area would become Russian territory, given Russia would be on board with such a change. When answering the question of what the status of East Kazakhstan should be, 39 percent of Russians in Ust-Kamenogorsk said that they would like to be “constituent part of Russia” and 13 percent answered that they want to be “autonomous part of Russia.” The rest of the interviewed people indicated that they wanted to remain either constituent or autonomous part of Kazakhstan (BRIF public opinion poll 2000, cited in Commercio 2004).

The most substantial territorial threat to the Kazakh government came from the Cossacks (Cummings 2000). The Cossacks publicly demanded reunification with Russia and appealed for a referendum on reunification with Russia (Hanks 1998; www.minorityrighst.org). The Cossacks in Kazakhstan never fully acknowledged the disintegration of the Soviet Union and had ethnic kin on the Russian side of the border. The Cossack leadership in Russia in fact stated that the Russian Federation “does not, in reality, have any borders” and that “the Cossacks will have respect only for that regime which...will respect the interests of the Cossacks” (Hanks 1998: 152).

The Cossack minority posed a bigger challenge to the Kazakh government then the Russian minority as a whole because of their kinship with Cossacks in the South of Russia on the other side of the border (Hanks 1998) and also because of their rhetoric indicating violence (Olcott 1997, in Bremmer 1997). Especially the Siberian Cossack organizations instigated Cossack extremist tendencies (Peyrouse 2007: 71). Historically titular Kazakhs and Cossacks have had widespread animosity between them because of past historical grievances of ethnic
Kazakhs upon Russian occupation (Hanks 1998: 152). After independence, Cossacks were the only groups “inclined to become violent about the issue of Russian separatism.” They spoke of being the “Serbs” of Kazakhstan, who will not “withstand” (cited in Olcott 1997: 560).

There are three Cossack Communities in Kazakhstan; the “Uralsk” in the Northwestern region, “Siberian” in the North-central part of the country, and the “Semirech’e” Cossacks in the Southeast. They have been re-registered since 1991 under the following organizational names: the Uralsk Historical-Cultural Cossack movement, the Union of Cossacks of the Steppe Region, and the Union of Semirech’e Cossacks (Cummings 2000: 32).

The Uralsk Cossacks were the first group to re-establish themselves during independence and the Perestroika. The group consists of about 15,000 families who asked for fertile lands along the Ural River (Peyrouse 2007). In 1991 they celebrated the 400th anniversary of their settlement in the West-Kazakhstan oblast and threatened this “province’s identity as part of Kazakhstan” (Cummings 2000: 32). The anniversary was accompanied by large demonstrations during which the Russian flag was waved. As a result the government banned the Cossack newspaper, *Kazachii vestnik* (Peyrouse 2007). In 1996 the new ataman, S. Irtikeev depoliticized the Uralsk Cossack organization and this group largely functions as a cultural organization today (Peyrouse 2007).

The Semirechie Cossack Community considers itself part of the Russian community. It began its operation in 1990 with about 30,000 people but remained unregistered for a long time because of its political activism and its leader, N.V. Gunkin’s militant approach (Peyrouse 2007: 490). Gunkin never accepted that the Soviet Union was dissolved (Kolstø 1999: 174). Its new leader, G.F. Belyakov appeared in a traditional Cossack costume and was arrested in 1996.
This group is divided between two Semirechie Cossack organizations, the Semirechie Cossack Community and the Semirechie Cossack Union. Due to its openness to Nazarbayev, the Semirechie Cossacks are the only Cossack association that is represented in the Assembly of Peoples, which is a national organization representing various ethnic groups (Peyrouse 2007). The Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan (APK) was established in 1995 with the goal to “strengthen public stability and interethnic accord.” It is more or less a collection of representatives of pro-regime ethnic movements (Oka 2004: 367). Besides the Semirechie Cossacks, Russian minorities are not represented in the APK.

The Siberia Cossacks are essentially cut in half, some live in Russia and some in Kazakhstan. Two main organizations were active after independence, Bitter Line and the Siberia Cossacks in Ust-Kamenogorsk. The former was refused registration by the government and the latter operated an “overtly secessionist” organization with “strong feeling of the original ‘Russianness’ of the Altai region (Peyrouse 2007: 491). They have indicated their intention to reunite their province with Russia (Cummings 2000:32). Another organization, the First Union of Eastern Kazakhstan Cossacks was founded in 1992 and ataman F. Cherapov, “openly demanded either autonomy or unification with Russia.” In 1994 after disagreements over autonomy, the ataman fled to Russia and this ended the “militant period of the Altai Cossack movement.” V. Sharonov, the new ataman has been loyal to the Kazakh state after that (Peyrouse 2007: 491).

The three Cossack groups differed with respect to their preferences on the question of territorial and political arrangements. According to Peyrouse:

The Uralsk Cossacks consisted of renouncing all political activity in exchange for a kind of unofficial but real autonomy. Siberian Cossacks have on the contrary opted for
irredentism. Feeling cut off from their historic centres has emphasized their desire to be linked with Russia. The Semirechie Cossacks have chosen the third possible way. Given the geographical situation of this community – no common frontier with Russia – their consciousness of a specific identity is weak and autonomist opportunities are limited. They thus ally with Russian movements defending the rights of Slavs and accept [...] their insertion into Kazakhstan. (Peyrouse 2007: 492; italics added)

Essentially, all Cossack groups ended their political activism and moved towards reconciliation with President Nazarbayev. Ultimately, the Cossacks ceased to become a serious threat to Kazakhstan because they lacked leadership, popular support, and financial assistance from Russia (Cummings 2000: 32).

Russian minority organizations faced a similar fate. The chairpersons of Lad, Aleksandra Dokuchaeva and her follower Victor Mikhailov, both left for Russia. In 1998 Russians established the Association of Russian, Slavic and Cossack Organizations of Kazakhstan (ARSC) but the organization is not united and wasn’t able serve as an umbrella organization for Russian minorities. The Russian Party of Kazakhstan was founded in 2001 and given its controversy, likely led to the ban of ethnic parties. In 2002 a new Law on Political Parties came into effect which prohibits the formation of parties based on “professional, racial, national, ethnic, and religious affiliation of citizens” (Article 5, Section 8, cited in Oka 2004: 367). The party was renamed Compatriot Party, however it was refused re-registration and eventually disbanded (Oka 2004).

Even though the immediate geographical threat of irredentism and secession no longer exists in Kazakhstan, several steps have been taken by the Kazakh government which indicates that the authorities have been working hard to dilute the Russian minority in the North and North-East. These actions include the relocation of the capital from Almaty to Astana, ethnic gerrymandering, and encouraging internal and external migration by ethnic Kazakhs. I believe
that each of these acts point out that the Kazakh government intends to weaken the power and concentration of the Russian minority in the North, even though the political and organizational power of Russians has been very limited since 2000. In each of these developments geography is being used as a means to establish control over a part of the country’s territory where the Russians live compactly and are a majority in most oblasts. I argue that these steps are also used for strengthening the Kazakh nation at the expense of limiting potential Russian minority power. In other words, these measures are venues of power signaling toward the Russian minority.

In 1997 President Nazarbayev moved the capital of Almaty, located in the South of Kazakhstan, to Astana, located in the North. Russians are highly concentrated and numerous in the North. Many reasons have been stated for the relocation of the capital. Government officials named the problem of earthquakes in Almaty as one reason for relocation (Borisov 1997, cited in Wolfel 2002). Air pollution was also mentioned. Further, the leadership declared that “Almaty has exhausted its capabilities. Its further development is being restrained as a result of the lack of available territories” (Kuzmenko 1996, cited in Wolfel 2002: 495).

Given its history of secessionist attempts and protests for autonomy, the move of the capital can be interpreted as directed against the Russian minority. During nation-building the Kazakh state wanted to make it clear with this move that the region in the North will be Kazakh in national character and wanted to reinforce that secession or irredentism was out of the question. Nazarbayev was concerned that the North was less integrated, which raised the potential for secession (Batalden and Batalden 1997). The president wanted to prevent irredentist movements and to keep a closer eye on the Russians (Wolfel 2002). Otherwise, why
would anyone relocate the capital city from a pleasant mild climate to the harsh weather at the footsteps of Western Siberia?

Kuzio sees the relocation of the capital from the other side and states that the move was rather aimed at strengthening the Kazakh identity (Kuzio 2002). During the Soviet system, control was exercised from the center in Moscow. After secession, Kazakhstan’s perception that the North was still out of their control led to a more centralized governmental system and the move of the capital (Cummings 2000: 35). Also, the northern capital is closer to the industrial regions of the republic and transportation between the center and the periphery is shorter and more efficient (Zardykhian 2004: 76). Chinn and Kaiser argue that this northern region is “the industrial and agricultural heartland of Kazakhstan” (Chinn and Kaiser 1996: 185).

In 1997 Kazakhstan carried out a reform based on which Russian-dominated oblasts were incorporated into Kazakh-dominated oblasts and vice versa in order to dilute the influence of Russians and to politically manipulate the borders of administrative regions. This ethnic gerrymandering led to Semipalatinsk being incorporated into East Kazakhstan and it increased the size of titular Kazakhs in this region. By 1999 the share of Kazakhs in Akmola was 37.5% (initially 22.4% in 1989), in East Kazakhstan 48.5% (up from 27.2% in 1989), and in Northern Kazakhstan it was 29.6% (18.6% in 1989) (Commercio 2004: 99). Little by little the entire ethnic political landscape was altered as a result of these gerrymandering reforms.

Going further, Nazarbayev has taken measures to attract ethnic Kazakhs to the North by encouraging internal migration but also the resettlement of Kazakhs living abroad (Cummings 2000: 47). As a result, a great number of ethnic Kazakhs moved from the South to the North of Kazakhstan. The main idea behind external repatriation was to bolster “the legitimacy of
Kazakhstani independence by appealing to a national community abroad and cultivating a sense of attachment to the newly independent homeland.” However, ethnic Kazakhs returning mainly from Turkey and Mongolia haven’t found life in their ethnic homeland as desirable as hoped and many of them actually returned (King and Melvin 1999: 128).

Consociational democracy has been suggested as a solution to mediate conflict between multi-ethnic groups and it is best applicable for groups that are geographically concentrated (Galbreath 2005: Lijphart 1977). Given the high concentration and number of Russians in Kazakhstan’s Northern areas this type of solution could have a potential to mitigate problems between titulars and Russians, however it has never been implemented because authorities feared that giving autonomy to Russians could lead to secession (Kolstø 1999: 286). As a result, Kazakhstan has become a highly centralized state and rejected the federalist system entirely (Cummings 2000). Lijphart’s analysis about consociational democracy has been applied to Third-World countries and to post-Soviet states as well. However, both Aasland and Laitin who analyzed consociationalism’s applicability to the Soviet successor states rejected this model (Kolstø 1999: 285). Interestingly, when determining the ideal number of ethnicities for consociationalism to work, Lijphart argued that the optimal number is three or four and he viewed two as an unfortunate number. He said that “in a society with two segments of approximately equal size, the leaders of both may hope to win a majority and to achieve their aims by domination instead of cooperation” (Lijphart 1977, cited in Kolstø 1999: 285).

As mentioned above, the remaining four countries of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have not experienced threats of further secession by the Russian minority. I argue that the absence of such threat is mainly the result of the low percentage of Russian
minority population in these countries. In Tajikistan and Uzbekistan Russians are highly territorially concentrated, yet the threat of further secession and violence coming from the Russian ethnic group was avoided. I argue that this development occurred, in addition to the low number of the population, because of the near absence of prior hatred towards Russians in Uzbekistan and Russia’s interference in the Tajik civil war. In Kyrgyzstan the Russian minority overall has a low level of territorial concentration but they are concentrated in the industrialized northern areas, especially in urban areas, where they have a strong group identity (MAR).

6.4.2 Threat to National Authority

Based on the overarching theory, a large number of minorities pose a higher threat to the seceded state. At the time of independence, Russians were a majority in Kazakhstan but because of severe emigration and the fact that some of the Russian professionals left, has led to a diminished threat from the Russian minority over time. In addition, the initially well organized and vocal Cossacks have also ceased demands regarding territorial separation. The relatively lower number of Russians in the other four republics poses a lower threat to these states’ national authority. Again, as stated in the theoretical chapter threat is understood both as lower level threat by the mere presence and concentration of the minority or as higher level geographical or military threat.

The general trend in Central Asia is tacit discrimination towards the Russian minority in almost all states, with the exception of Tajikistan and to some extent Kyrgyzstan. I argue that unfavorable laws and practices, described in the previous section, occur against the Russian
minority because they pose a threat to the governments’ national authority and because the
government views the political process as a zero sum game. This behavior is common across
many of the fifteen former Soviet states. As they start out on their path to form a new nation,
or in the case of the Baltics, to continue the interrupted process of nation-building, these new
administrations view minority accommodation as a zero-sum game. As such, the majority
groups are reluctant to enact favorable legislation and relinquish political power to the minority
because they believe that it occurs at the expense of the majority (Cunningham and Weidmann
2010).

The most severe perceived threat to the Kazakh state came from the Cossacks, who
posed both a territorial threat as well as a threat to the country’s national authority. The
Cossacks were well organized after independence and had established links with Russia, which
made the Kazakh government fearful of this group (Cumming s 2000: 32). Strong organization
and close ties to Russia are prerequisites for irredentism which didn’t take place at the end.
Cossack territorial demands as well as insisting on “cultural administrative self-rule” were a
serious threat to the Kazakh state in the initial years (Zardykahn 2004: 70).

The Cossacks and the Russian minority also posed a threat to the newly forming Kazakh
state’s national authority. Similarly to other nationalizing post-Soviet states, the Kazakh political
system was divided between hardliner nationalists and the communists and the stance the
president took and how well he managed the politics between these two major groups was
essential to the outcome. While President Ulmanis initially sided with those who advocated
stronger Latvian nationalist policies that burdened the Russian minority, President Nursultan
Nazarbayev appeared to be more of a balancer between the nationalists and the communists
on the issue of how Russians should be treated. Himself a high ranking influential official of the Communist Party during Soviet times, Nazarbayev ensured a more subdued transition in Kazakhstan. Nationalist parties, such as Zhetloqsan, Azat, and Alash were strong during the first couple of years after secession but became almost non-existent after 1993 (Kolstø 1999: 216). Alash for example wanted to create an Islamic pan-Turkic unity “from Vladivostok to Istanbul” and it was in fact in favor of sending the Russians “back” (Kolstø 1996: 216). Given the country’s highly authoritarian status, the Party of National Unity of Kazakhstan, which supports the President, has been most influential in overall policy making.

The threat by minority organizations towards the government is two-fold. First, these groups can destabilize the country by riots and violent attacks on majority groups. Second, minority groups pose a threat to the government by weakening government power during the establishment of the new administration. Groups that have the potential to mobilize the population for collective action can inflict violence on the fragile new states which are in the process of setting up coercive institutions, such as the army and the police force. The possibility of ethnic violence threatens the new state which will be likely to crush such rebellions and end atrocities. For instance, Viktor Mikhailov, a Russian nationalist leader in Kazakhstan, who held a seat in the Kazakh parliament and is member of the Lad movement, said in 1995 that “if the situation is not resolved democratically, there is a danger that it could be settled by weapons.” He also said that “he has heard Russians talking of picking up guns to defend their rights in the newly independent country.” On the question of the massive exodus by the Russians who were leaving Kazakhstan at the time, he stated that “it’s genocide [...] it will cause social explosion. If this continues, a civil war will erupt.” (The Globe and Mail, March 6, 1995). Further, Lad was
refused permit to hold demonstrations when Russian President Boris Yeltsin visited Kazakhstan; which is an indication that the group was viewed by the government that it could have potentially caused violence at the time (The Globe and Mail, March 6, 1995).

The government’s reaction towards violence generated by Russian minority organizations in Kazakhstan is ambivalent. Vitaly Mette, a deputy prime minister in Kazakhstan, said that he has visited “every region in Kazakhstan and there is not a single place where ethnic tensions are a threat.” However, shortly after he added that the government must prevent mob violence: “one person can provoke a crowd to do anything […] we don’t want a psychotic to turn a crowd on. If a crowd is agitated, it wouldn’t amount to anything serious – but why should we allow even that?” (The Globe and Mail, March 6, 1995). In other words, the government in Kazakhstan has a tendency to dismiss ethnic violence as mob violence.

The majority group is also afraid that their nation will disappear. Discrimination against the Russian minority occurs tacitly by unfavorable language legislation. Language legislation is one way to ensure that the majority’s national consciousness comes to the forefront and is developed in the future. Minority organizations serve a similar threat to the government since they can advocate Russification and weaken the development of the new nation. For example, Zhasaral Kuanyshalin, leader of the Kazakh nationalist group, Azat said that elevating the status of the Russian language would be “a death sentence to the Kazakh language” (The Globe and Mail, March 6, 1995). Both, Lad and the Russian Community organizations have been advocating for the Russian language to become an official language in the past.

Nation building in Uzbekistan occurred from scratch the way it did in most of Central Asia. President Karimov acknowledged this in the Uzbek press by stating that “During all years
of Soviet power, Uzbekistan, in reality, was not a state” (Gleason 1997: 574, in Bremmer 1997). He was referring to the over bearing power of the central soviet administration over the union republics and ultimately Uzbekistan’s somewhat limited say in major decisions. The communist ideology may be less visible but the political structure, lack of freedom of the press, and widespread corruption remain in the country. In that regard nothing has changed since secession (Bohr 1998: 24). Islam had been heavily suppressed during Soviet times; however beginning from the late 1980s a religious revival has been taking place in Uzbekistan. Mosques have been built, madrasahs, or religious schools have been built, and religious texts are more accessible (Bohr 1998: 25). Islam has been part of the national heritage before and after communism this trend strengthened. I argue that Russians in Uzbekistan pose a low level of threat to the state’s national authority because anti-Russian feelings in the country have been low even before the existence of Uzbekistan (Anonymous 1993: 53) and also because nationalism in general has been weak.

Overall it appears that the Russians in Tajikistan do not pose a threat to the Tajik government’s national authority. Part of this trend is explained by the civil war between 1992 and 1997 which was a struggle for power between the communists, Muslims and secular democrats and it ended with communist victory. This focused attention on other issues. Therefore Islamic radicals pose more of a threat to the highly authoritarian and corrupt government of Dushanbe. Further, Russia intervened in the Tajik civil war, supporting the communists and it would have used the Russian minority “trump card” had they been mistreated by the authorities (Akbarzadeh 1996). Tajikistan is an interesting case because it is the only Central Asian country where the Communist Party of Tajikistan purged its moderate
elements and “became a more homogenous party of hardliners” which remained in power after their victory in the civil war (Akbarzadeh 1996: 1110). Tajikistan may also maybe the least nationalist country in Central Asia, since the typical symbols of nationalism, such as the flag and billboards, which were present in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan after independence, were almost completely absent in Tajikistan (Akbarzadeh 1996: 1119). Perhaps the rule of communist hardliners and weak nationalism also contributes to the nonexistence of discrimination towards Russians.

6.5 International Threat

6.5.1 Relations with Russia

In the theoretical chapter I argue that at the time of independence the mother state poses a threat to the seceded state because it can help its kin further break away the country. In addition, the rump state may use the protection of the stranded minority as a way to reassert its influence over the seceded country that it no longer controls. At the same time, because of prior established economic relationships, such as trade networks and energy supply, the mother and the seceded state need each other because it is in the economic benefit of both to tend these relations. With respect to the balance of power aspect of this theory, in the Russian cases the balance is uneven and relations between Russia and the post-Soviet states are asymmetric since Russia possesses disproportionately more power than its former union republics.

The presence of its Russian ethnic kin gives Russia a way to influence politics and economics in Central Asia. However, Russia has rarely used this ethnic leverage over these
countries and its security and energy interests overshadowed its diaspora considerations (Ziegler 2006). Russia established military bases in many countries in Central Asia and argued that these states serve as “gatekeepers” and Southern borders to protect the country from terrorism and drug trafficking (Buszynski 2005). Establishing and being active members in cooperative organizations, such as The Eurasian Union, the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC), and the new Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) served similar purposes.

Playing the ethnic card in foreign policy decisions differed by presidents however. Boris Yeltsin focused on moving closer to the West and neglected relations with the former republics. He avoided the Russian compatriot issue as becoming a factor of Russian foreign policy at the time (Ziegler 2006). He also stayed out of the potential irredentist move by Russians and Cossacks and declared that Russia had no territorial claims to Kazakhstan. In 1992 he signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Aid with Kazakh President Nazarbayev (Hiro 2009). The treaty recognized the inviolability of each other’s borders and no serious territorial disputes have been present between the two countries ever since (Cummings 2000; Hanks 1998).

Vladimir Putin on the other hand has been more active in supporting Russians abroad. He created new departments to help Russian minorities and allocated funds to promote Russian culture and language in the new states (Ziegler 2006: 116). His intention to make Russia a great power again could be furthered by calling attention to and advocating for better conditions of Russians abroad. By making the Russian minority Russia’s leverage, Russia can have an influence over its former states. Further, Putin also embraced a more nationalistic
approach, which is partially due to his popularity by the Russian public that is disillusioned with Russia’s limited influence in world politics (Ziegler 2006).

Organizations in Central Asia, such as the Eurasian Union (EAU) and the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) promote not only the economic cooperation of its members but it also ties countries in the region to Russia and its economy. The Eurasian Union is based on the idea of the European Union and it aims at goals of regional integration of former Soviet states, such as Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The above countries signed an agreement in November 2011 that the Eurasian Union will be established by 2015. The treaty regarding the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) was signed in 2000 by the same five states as the EAU. The goal of the EAEC is to allow free trade between the countries and to form a customs union (Ziegler 2006).

Kazakhstan has been very active in promoting the above institutions because it demonstrates to Russia that Kazakhstan identifies with the Slavic community. At the same time both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have been using a so-called multi-vectored foreign policy, based on which they have kept good relations not only with Russia, but also with other major economic players, such as the United States and China (Ziegler 2006).

Uzbekistan has been more vocal than other states in resisting and preventing Russian influence in the region. One example of such attempt was Uzbekistan’s role in the CIS, by which it tried to halt Russia in becoming the hegemon of the organization. President Karimov for instance advocated against the CIS to become a political-military alliance among member states, which included nearly all former Soviet states. Overall, Uzbekistan “has acted as a southern pole of resistance to Russian efforts to exert undue influence on CIS member states”
The establishment of the Central Asian Union (CAU) had a similar focus by President Karimov, who promoted economic cooperation to counterbalance Russia’s control in Central Asia (Bohr 1998). Almost all Central Asian states are members of the CAU today, except Turkmenistan which declined on the grounds of retaining neutral status. Russia has observer status in the organization. Karimov also pushed the idea of a “common economic area” as well as to create a joint peace-keeping battalion in 1996 that is separate from the Russian peace-keeping unit. When Uzbekistan was invited to join the CIS Customs Union in 1998 Karimov declined because he believed that this organization will result in the Central Asian states becoming economically dependent on Russia (Bohr 1998: 46).

At the same time, Uzbekistan is striving to become a regional leader and a hub in Central Asia, somewhat similarly the way Egypt is in the Middle East. It has the most active research and higher education institutions in the region. Further, the country is also home to the largest and best trained armed forces. In other words, the state is trying to reestablish its central role that it occupied among the Central Asian countries even during Soviet times. Karimov wants to form a close union in the region under the name “Turkestan – Our Common Home” with the center in Tashkent. However, interestingly Turkmenistan was absent from the meeting. Ethnic Russians in Uzbekistan have strong group cohesion, however as the state is asserting its leadership position in the region, the government has become more assertive against Russians in the country as well as against rump state Russia (MAR). And even though at this time there is no discrimination in hiring against Russians in civil service and high-level government positions, this may change in the future (MAR).
There are several other aspects that show that Uzbekistan is against Russian influence in the region. First, when Moscow indicated that it wanted to defend “the USSR’s old external borders from potential invaders” Uzbekistan rejected it and Karimov stated that “we are capable of reliably defending our 156 km border with Afghanistan with our own forces and without the intervention of border troops from other countries, first and foremost from Russia” (Bohr 1998: 58). Second, there has been a shift towards the West in terms of protection in Uzbekistan. As a result, Karimov denied the establishment of a Russian military base in the country and improved relations with the United States instead (Bohr 1998). Third, Uzbekistan intends to become a key actor in Central Asia via fostering economic integration and by helping to resolve military conflicts (Bohr 1998: 68).

Russia used the predicament of the Russian minority in Tajikistan as one justification to intervene in Tajikistan’s civil war. Andrey Vladimirovich Kozyrev, Foreign Minister of Russia, stated that the threat of Islamist extremism endangered the Russian community there (Akbarzdeh 1996: 1123). Pavel Sergeyevich Grachev, the Defense Minister of Russia went further and said in 1993 that Tajikistan was in fact part of Russia (Akbarzdeh 1996: 1122). The latter statement indicates that Russia has been exerting influence over Tajikistan during the civil war; while at the same time the Communist Party of Tajikistan was defending the status quo of communism. The Russian speakers kept a low profile during the war and the opposition made sure that they were not harmed (Akbarzdeh 1996).

Overall, Russia used the leverage of helping its minority abroad to further its goals to some extent in the Central Asian republics since independence. With diplomatic statements it has put pressure on states, such as Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to argue in behalf of the Russian
minority and to call attention to human rights violations, but it did not outright intervene militarily in these countries. When the Pugachev rebellion took place in Kazakhstan, it decided to stay out of it. The only state where Russia did engage militarily was Tajikistan during its civil war and Russia’s reasoning for intervention in the conflict was underpinned by its protection of its ethnic kin, among other reasons. As a result, the Russian minority was not harmed by the opposition during the civil war (Akbarzadeh 1996). However, Panfilov, a Russian journalist said that the Russian community in Tajikistan was Russia’s trump card” to keep its sphere of influence in the country (Akbarzadeh 1996: 1123).

Further, Russian intellectuals, such as Solzhenitsyn and right-wing radicals, for example Zhirinovsky advocated that the Russian minority should stay within the borders of Russia and that those borders should be modified. However, statements from people in the government regarding this issue were not forthcoming. Finally, I think that there is a difference in Russia’s stance on the minority issue depending on the leadership at the time in question. The issue of Russia’s ethnic kin was not in the forefront of Russian political discussions, however under President Putin, the status of the Russian minority abroad is more important for the state. This has implications for future actions as well as for the minority with respect to how much they can count on the mother state to help them improve their rights and fending off societal discrimination.

6.6 Discussion

Based on the theoretical argument, the Russian minority in the Central Asian republics can pose a threat to the governments’ national authority or its territorial integrity. Both aspects
are especially important during nation-building and in Central Asia we encounter the issue of nation-building from scratch since these states did not exist as nation-states in a classical sense prior to their independence. In addition, rump state Russia also has a potential to assert itself on behalf of its ethnic kin.

According to territorial concentration variable, the curvilinear hypothesis is confirmed for all five states. Russians in Kyrgyzstan, for the most part, are treated well and they have low concentration levels. Both, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan have high to medium concentration levels and in these cases the Russian minority experienced the highest level of discrimination, both politically and economically. Russians in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are highly concentrated but overall they have not been discriminated against or only to a smaller degree. In Uzbekistan, their status actually improved with the 1995 Language Law that discarded clauses which made it mandatory for state-sector employees to speak Uzbek.

Results are mixed regarding the curvilinear hypothesis when observing population numbers. Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan have a low percentage of Russian minorities, but political and economic discrimination differs. While in Turkmenistan Russians are heavily discriminated against, this is not the case in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, where discrimination is relatively low.

According to the curvilinear theory, Kazakhstan should experience one of the lowest political and economic discrimination levels given its high population and high threat of further secession; however this has not been the case. Signs point towards the opposite. Discrimination in fact worsened over time (Chinn and Kaiser 1996) and language legislation has also become more restrictive (Table 6.5). I argue that this discrepancy can be partially explained by high
levels of emigration, the decreased political activity of the Cossacks and by the fact that some Russian professionals left the country over the years. After independence, the Russian minority posed a high threat and discrimination was lower, but as heavy emigration took place and the Cossack territorial threat subsided, Kazakhstan became more of a medium threat case, and is located in the middle of the graph (Figure 1 in Chapter 1).

Even though the Central Asian states established economic and security connections with Western countries, Russia’s influence in the region remains. Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are heavily dependent on Russia for their economies and Tajikistan has stayed in Russia’s sphere of influence since the collapse of communism. At the same time, Uzbekistan intends to limit Russia’s role in the region and wants to become the regional leader instead.
Table 6.1: Russian Share of the Population in the Central Asian Republics, 1926-1989 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ziegler, Charles. The Russian Diaspora in Central Asia: Russian Compatriots and Moscow’s Foreign Policy. *Democratizatsiya* 2006: 106.
Figure 6.1: Territorial Concentration of Russian Minority in Kazakhstan

Source: Natalie Koch’s Data and Map
Table 6.2: Summary of Kazakh Citizenship Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>1993</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law on Citizenship</td>
<td>Law on Citizenship</td>
<td>Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grants automatic citizenship to all permanent residents of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. obtain</td>
<td>Grants members of the Kazakh diaspora who return to Kazakhstan the right to Kazakh citizenship upon arrival, and to hold dual citizenship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Denies citizens of Kazakhstan the right to hold dual citizenship.</td>
<td>Denies citizens of Kazakhstan the right to hold dual citizenship.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.3: Summary of Kazakh Language Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Law on Languages</th>
<th>Effect on Kazakh</th>
<th>Effect on Russian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Cabinet of Ministers of Ruling</td>
<td>Establishes Kazakh as the state language of Kazakhstan</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Kazakh Constitution</td>
<td>Confirms Kazakh as the state language of Kazakhstan</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Kazakh Constitutions</td>
<td>Confirms Kazakh as the state language of Kazakhstan</td>
<td>Confirms Russian as language of interethnic communication in Kazakhstan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995/1998</td>
<td>Law on Languages</td>
<td>Confirms Kazakh as the state language of Kazakhstan. Calls on all citizens to fulfill their duty to master the state language.</td>
<td>Fails to designate Russian as language of interethnic communication in Kazakhstan. From 1995, Russian lacks de jure status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Presidential Decree</td>
<td>Establishes the need to create specific conditions for the mandatory use of the state language by 2000.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.4: Citizenship Laws in Central Asia

Uzbekistan

1992 July 28 Law on Citizenship grants universal citizenship

Turkmenistan

1993 December 23 “On the Regulation of Questions of Dual Citizenship” agreement is signed with Russia, the only agreement of its kind in the CIS at the time
2003 revoked the 1993 Law on dual citizenship
2010 enforcement of 2003 law begins

Tajikistan

1996 Agreement on dual citizenship is signed
2002 Agreement with Russia is signed to slow out-migration from Tajikistan
Table 6.5: Language Laws in Central Asia

**Uzbekistan**
1989 October Language Law Uzbek became the official government language.
1995 December “On the State Language” law is adopted; it puts Russian /on par with all languages other than Uzbek; no special provisions for Russian; removes many specific provisions of the 1989 law; discards article on making it obligatory for state-sector employees to know Uzbek

**Turkmenistan**
1990 May Language Law is adapted which gives Turkmen equal status with Russian; Russian remains the language of interethnic communication

**Kyrgyzstan**
1989 Language Law recognizes Russian as the language of interethnic communication
Article 8 required management and professional personnel to have the ability to speak Kyrgyz to their workers and clients

1993 Article 5 of Kyrgyzstani constitution designates Kyrgyz the sole state language status, while guaranteeing ‘equal rights’ for the Russian language

1994 June decree by Akayev makes Russian an official language in predominantly Russian speaking areas and in ‘vital areas of the national economy’

2001 November Kyrgyzstan amended its constitution to make Russian an official state language, this supplemented an earlier law
Russians complain about the increased use of the Kyrgyz language in government institutions and social life

**Tajikistan**
1989 July Language Law is adopted which makes Tajik the official state language; Russian remains the language of interethnic communication
Figure 6.2: Percentage of Ethnicities in Kazakhstan in 1989 and 2009

Figure 6.3: Map of Kazakhstan’s Provinces

Source:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Kazakhstan_provinces_and_province_capitals.svg#filehistory

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CHAPTER 7

THE SERB MINORITY AFTER THE DISSOLUTION OF YUGOSLAVIA

7.1 Introduction

Over 11,000 red chairs are lined up on Marshal Tito Street in Sarajevo in April 2012 marking the twenty year anniversary of the start of the war in Bosnia. The line stretches for about a half a mile in the middle of the city and little red chairs symbolize the children who died on both sides during the conflict (BBC News April 2012). People who walk by are reminded of their past when ethnic differences, which were dormant for decades, resurfaced again and resulted in massacres and mutual hatred on each side. There are three major ethnic groups in Bosnia Herzegovina, the Bosnian Muslims, the Croats and the Serbs. The Serbs are responsible for murdering 8,000 Bosnian Muslims at Srebrenica in July 1995 under General Ratko Mladic’s command. With the help of Slobodan Milosevic, the late president of Serbia, they committed some of the worst war crimes since World War II and orchestrated some of the worst ethnic cleansing in history. About 20,000 people died in the Croatian War on both sides and around 500,000 people became refugees or internally displaced people (UNHCR). Three major civil wars occurred, one in Bosnia and two in Croatia, which involved stranded Serb ethnic minorities.

Many questions remain unanswered in the literature after the Yugoslav wars ended, since peace science authors are often much more interested in writing about war than peace. One of the questions for example that we know very little about is what happened to the Serbs once the war was over and Bosnia became a federation. This was a unique situation since two separate entities were created in Bosnia, such as the Serb dominated Republika Srpska and the
Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina under the leadership of the Bosnian Muslim and Croat ethnic groups. How have the Serbs been treated in Bosnia-Herzegovina since the Dayton Peace Agreement which was signed in 1995? What about the other republics that seceded from the former Yugoslavia, such as Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, and Montenegro? What explains the difference in how the governments of these states handle the politics of the Serbian minority? These are the questions this chapter is about to assess. We know that many civil wars renew and that leaders often use the protection of their ethnic kin as a motive to intervene. By understanding what happened to that kin, the Serbs, maybe we can avoid future secessionist civil wars in this region and elsewhere.

I find that peace is still fragile in Bosnia and Herzegovina even after twenty years. It appears that the United Nations (UN) peace-keeping forces are a permanent cast on a broken leg that may not be able to function on its own once that cast is removed. Some even say that the government in Bosnia and Herzegovina has become so used to international guidance and the imposition of the rule of law that the country developed a dependence on them (Guzina 2007; Knaus & Cox, 2004; Dizdarevic’, 2004; Knaus & Martin, 2003, cited in Guzina 2007). Ethnic relations reflect this as well. Even though the Dayton Accords’ intention was to harmonize such relations, citizenship legislation for instance is implemented differently at the state and regional levels. Based on the Bosnia-Herzegovina constitution all three ethnic groups are constitutive nationalities in the country, however discrimination takes place in both entities, the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina when it comes to the non-dominant ethnic groups (Guzina 2007). In the end it became the task of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia-Herzegovina to harmonize these laws from the two different levels of legislation. Further, the
highest threat of further secession of Serbs is visible in the Serb administered Republika Srpska, where Serbs are highly concentrated territorially and make up a large percentage of the population (see Figure 2 for territorial references). In short, the Bosnian Serbs have not made peace with not getting their own state at the peace talks and there is a high threat of further secession.

Overall, the Serbian minority in Croatia poses a lower threat than in Bosnia, both in terms of territory and to the government’s national authority. Two explanations account for that. First, during the two Croatian civil wars a great percentage of Serbs fled the country and the Croatian government has been slow and reluctant to admit them back. Second, Croatia retook the areas of Serbian Krajina and Eastern Slavonia, originally Serb strongholds during the civil war; however since the end of the war the Serbs have not been able to gain political autonomy. Slovenia, Montenegro and Macedonia have a small percentage of Serb population with varying degree of territorial concentration. Overall, the Serbs have not been discriminated against in these states and the threat of further secession is minimal or non-existent. In this chapter I will mainly focus on the status of the Serb minority in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia and briefly illustrate the treatment of said minority in the remaining former Yugoslav states. Given that the international community has not made a final decision on the status of Kosovo’s statehood yet, this case will be touched upon but will not be elaborated in detail.

The outline of this chapter is as follows. First, I provide a short historical background about the Serb minority prior to the Yugoslav wars. Second, citizenship and language legislation are compared in the successor states, along with general discrimination towards Serbs. Third, domestic threat, such as the threat to national authority and the threat of further secession are
evaluated. Specifically, I describe the regions of the Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the regions of Serb Krajina and Eastern Slavonia with respect to geographic threat. Finally, I assess the role of Serbia as international threat after independence and the war. This chapter uses the most similar systems design (MSS) method and applies the directed case study methodology to evaluate six cases through the lens of the overall theory of the dissertation.

7.2 History of the Serb Minority until Secession

The national origins of the Serbs can be traced back to the Middle Ages when the Nemanjić monarchs began to lay out a road for their future (Judah 1997). The period of the Nemanjić dynasty marks the height of Serbia and it is also an era when the Serbian Orthodox Church came into being, both events being an important part of Serbian national identity. In 1196 Stephan Nemanja unified the Serbian tribes into a nation and created a Serb consciousness which could carry the Serbs through the occupation of the Ottoman Empire. The Serbs were a major military and political force in the Balkans from the late 12th century until the death of Stephen Dušan, the king of Serbia between 1331 and 1355 (Judah 1997: 25). The heroism of Lazar Hrebeljanović at the Battle of Kosovo has been an important component of the Serbian collective national memory and is used as an example of Serb perseverance. The battle was a draw between the Ottoman Turks and the Serbs, however by the end of the 15th century the Turks completely occupied all Serbian territory (Judah 1997: 26). The “sacred soil” of Kosovo is being claimed by the Serbs as ancient Serbian historical site and the secession of Kosovo is not recognized by Serbia proper for this reason.
The Great Serbian Migration was the result of the Turkish occupation. Two major waves can be distinguished during which the Serbs began to migrate towards today’s Bosnia and parts of Croatia. The first wave of Serbian migration occurred at the end of the 17th century between 1689 and 1692 when the Habsburgs retreated from the Ottoman occupied areas to the territories of the Habsburg Monarchy. Records indicate that between 40,000 and 60,000 Serbs migrated northward at this time (Pavlowitch 2002). The migration occurred under the Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević who in 1690 encouraged the Serbs to rise up against the Turks. The second wave of Serbian migration took place between 1737 and 1739 under the Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović because the Kingdom of Serbia fell to the Ottomans from the hold of the Habsburg Empire. With these two waves of migration both the political and ecclesiastical center of Serbia moved North (Judah 1997: 29) and part of the Serbian national identity grew out of the struggle for their independence from the Ottoman Turks. It appears that the Serbian Orthodox Church played an important role in the Serb national consciousness during the Turkish occupation and at the time of the Serb migrations.

World War I started in Bosnia when a Serb nationalist assassinated the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungary throne. The Serbs were heavily involved in the war and their intention was to gain the territories of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia by destabilizing Austro-Hungary. After the war the Serbs created Yugoslavia, the Land of Southern Slavs, in 1918 by combining the Slavic states under a unified Serbian leadership. However, the kingdom was poor and politically unstable; therefore it didn’t survive and became trapped in another follow up war, World War II. The Kingdom of Serbia was part of Mussolini’s territorial cravings (Judah 1997: 34). In 1941 when Hitler began his invasion of Serbia, the country quickly fell apart. The
Croatian Ustaše fascists already carried out genocide against Serbs, Jews and Gypsies on their own before the war but eventually they became the leaders of the puppet state of Nazi Germany. Josip Broz Tito’s partisan movement resisted Hitler’s rule and after the war established a communist state.

Even though Serbs fought other ethnic groups prior to World War II, such as the Albanians, it is important to point out that Croats and Serbs did not fight each other before the Second World War. Subsequent Serb and Croat animosities are partially explained by the fact that the Treaty of Versailles in 1918 concluded with Croats resenting their “junior status in a Serb dominated state” (Judah 1997: 35). Essentially, the origins of the irredentist and secessionist wars between Croatia and Serbia can be traced back to this time period of early antagonistic relations between the two ethnic groups.

After World War II Tito allied with Stalin and followed the communist model of political system and planned economy. However, the alliance came to an end in 1948 when the two leaders split because Tito was reluctant to completely succumb to Stalin’s power over Yugoslavia becoming a communist satellite state. Relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia were weaker after the split. Tito emphasized brotherhood and unity in Yugoslavia and suppressed ethnic grievances among groups. As such, not much room was left for collective grievances of Serbs relating to animosities that occurred during the war. One such example of collective grievances was the concentration camps that were operated by Croatian Ustaše fascists who exterminated Serbs along with Jews and Gypsies (Judah 1997: 36).

After the death of Tito, ethnic problems came to the surface and coupled with the economic recession at the end of the 1980s, the country became prone to nationalists rising to
power, such as Slobodan Milošević. Milošević used the image of Lazar, who would rather die than to give up Kosovo to appeal to the national psyche and fought several wars between 1991 and 1995 to create a Greater Serbia. However, he was not able to accomplish his goal and Yugoslavia fell apart amid several civil wars, such as the civil wars of Croatia in 1991-1992 and in 1995, and also the Bosnia-Herzegovina civil war between 1992 and 1995.

The breakup of Yugoslavia started with Slovenia’s and Croatia’s declaration of independence in June 1991. A few months later in December Germany recognized both states. Small fights and skirmishes took place in Slovenia but overall the country parted relatively peacefully. In Croatia, fighting intensified between Croats and Serbs (Shewfelt 2008: 196, in Civil Wars). As a result, the United Nations imposed an arms embargo on all Yugoslav states in September 1991 and economic sanctions by the European Commission (EC) were also imposed on all Yugoslav states in November 1991. Bosnia held a referendum of secession in 1992, which the Serbs boycotted but which passed nevertheless. Shortly after war broke out in Bosnia which lasted for three years (Jesse and Williams 2011: 146).

In 1992 the UN Security Council created the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and sent 14,000 peace-keepers to Croatia (Archer 2008: 325, in Civil Wars). In May 1995 NATO launched air strikes against Bosnian Serbs in Sarajevo and in July Bosnian Serbs attacked Srebrenica (Shewfelt 2008: 197, in Civil Wars). In August 1995 Operation Storm took place in Croatia during which Croat units recaptured previously Serb-occupied areas. Amid strong international pressure in 1995 Slobodan Milošević, Serbian President along with Alija Izetbegović, President of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Franco Tudjman, leader of independent Croatia signed the Dayton Peace Accords (Figures 1 and 2).
7.3 The Treatment of the Serb Minority

7.3.1 Political Discrimination

7.3.1.1 Citizenship Legislation and Practice

At the end of the Yugoslav wars, tens of thousands of people became foreigners in the country they lived their lives (UNHCR Report 1997). This situation is similar to what happened to the Russian minority after the dissolution of the former Soviet Union. After independence and the Dayton Accords the former Yugoslav States enacted ethnocentric citizenship laws that aimed at eliminating people who did not belong to the dominant majority group (Šticks 2010). In fact, the status of minorities in these countries can be compared to that of the metics in ancient Greece, with the exception that the metics never obtained citizenship and the people who became resident aliens in the former Yugoslavia have had citizenship prior to the territorial and political changes (Šticks 2010: 19).57

In the North-Western region of the former Yugoslavia, in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, no significant changes occurred in citizenship legislation since independence. In Croatia, the government has continuously prevented the return of Serbian refugees for years but since 2000 granting citizenship has become more accommodating in practice (Šticks 2010). At the same time substantial changes took place in the South-Eastern states of Serbia, Montenegro, and Kosovo with respect to citizenship law. Macedonia’s Constitution has undergone a change which met ethnic Albanian demands in that country. Serbia passed its new Law on Serbian Citizenship in 2004 that annulled all previous citizenship legislation and invited

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57 The metics in ancient Greece were foreign nationals who settled in the country and acquired the status of resident aliens. They did not have citizenship and we don’t know how long they were allowed to stay.
ethnic Serbs from nearby states and abroad to acquire Serbian citizenship. However, Montenegro reacted to this step by stating that it will not allow dual citizenship for the 32% Serbs living in this newest state that broke off from the former Yugoslavia in 2006 (Šticks 2010).

The most problematic and complex citizenship legislation is seen in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) today. The Dayton Accords set up a consociational democratic system that is unique and nowhere else can be found in the world. Based on the peace agreement there are two levels of administration and three territorially distinct regions. On the first level we find the overarching administration of the weak Bosnia-Herzegovina government. At the second administrative level the country consists of two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska. Both entities have their own government, president, parliament, and citizenship regulations. The third administrative district is the region of Brčko that is being administered independently and it is ethnically neutral (Sarajlić 2012).\(^{58}\)

The multi-level citizenship, stemming from the system described above, resulted in discrimination of the Serbian minority, especially in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Initially, the country put its Citizenship Act into practice in 1992 while fighting was still ongoing. According to the legislation, anybody who possessed the citizenship of the state that year could become citizens in accordance with the idea of legal continuity (Sarajlić 2010: 7). However, the Dayton Citizenship Law, which came into effect in 1995, created a two-level system that allowed the two entities to have their own separate citizenship rules. For instance, a person who is a Bosnian nationality is first the citizen of Bosnia and has the state citizenship. At the

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same time he can also be either a citizen of the Federation of Bosnia or the Republika Srpska and have entity citizenship (www.citsee.edu).

The most important consequence of this complex citizenship legislation is that it is used for political discrimination and social exclusion. Sarajlić argues that the system creates human rights violations for those who are not the majority in one of the two entities (Sarajlić 2010: 19). Discrimination stemming from obstacles to citizenship is above all political in nature. Specifically, entity citizenships prevent minority individuals running for office at certain levels of government, such as the state presidency for instance. Sarajlić gives an example:

“A Serb individual residing in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (a Bosniak-Croat dominated entity) cannot run for the office of Serb member of the state presidency, nor can he or she vote for it, because only individuals from Republika Srpska (a Serb entity) are able to run and vote for this office. Reciprocal rules exist for Bosniaks and Croats residing in Republika Srpska as well.”59

The existence of a multi-level administration therefore prevents persons from certain ethnicities, depending on which entity they live in, to participate in the overall administrative level.

Discrepancies stemming from this consociational system are difficult to settle even by the country’s Constitutional Court. Guzina states that because citizenship standards that were laid out in Dayton have been interpreted differently by each entity administration, the result is that both the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia Herzegovina discriminate against non-dominant groups (Guzina 2007). The Federal Constitution recognizes the constitutive

59 http://www.citsee.eu/citsee-study/bosnia-complex-citizenship-complex-country
status of all three ethnicities of Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats, but in practice non-dominant
groups in each region are treated as lower status citizens. In the Republika Srpska (RS), Serbs
have full citizenship, whereas Bosniaks and Croats were given second class status. Similarly,
Bosniaks and Croats are perceived as constitutive nationals in the Federation of Bosnia and
Herzegovina (FBH), but the Serbs are “being reduced to national minority status” (Guzina 2007:
8).

The Constitutional Court of Bosnia concluded in 2000, after five years of discussion
between the international community and Bosnian local officials, that neither of the two
entities, such as the RS and the FBiH, can practice ethnic domination and should not “uphold
the effects of ethnic cleansing” (Constituent People’s Decision of the BIH Constitutional Court,
Para. 60 & 61, 1 July 2000, cited in Guzina 2007). The court decision didn’t accomplish the
intended results at first, but after two years of negotiations with the UN High Representative
Wolfgang Petritsch, he finally imposed amendments to the constitutions of both entities in
2002. Again, as stated in the introduction, the country is dependent on the international
community for resolving problems that arise from the multi-level administrative system (Guzina
2007).

The Constitutional Court of Bosnia-Herzegovina is a federal level court which has already
functioned prior to the secession of Bosnia. It was established during communism in 1963 and
all six republics and the two autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina had their own
constitutional courts in accordance with the political structure of Yugoslavia.60

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60 http://www.ccbh.ba/eng/p_stream.php?kat=503
Serbs in Croatia, along with other minorities, such as Bosniaks, the Roma and Jews, have difficulties obtaining Croatian citizenship according to the “Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities” report on Croatia (FCNM 2010). FCNM is a convention that was established under the Council of Europe for the purpose of dealing with minority issues. Originally, the 1991 Croatian Citizenship Law extended citizenship to persons belonging to Croatian ethnicity, which meant that many individuals with other ethnic background, among them many Serbs, became foreigners in the country they lived before for a long time (Ragazzi and Šticks 2010).

Even though efforts have been made to simplify procedures of naturalization, these are only available to Croats. In addition, dual citizenship can also only be obtained by Croat individuals but not by ethnic minorities, such as the Serbs (FCNM 2010). Naturalization is possible with the criteria that the applicant must speak the Croatian language and accepts the Croatian culture by pledge. In addition, all previous citizenship must be relinquished by obtaining Croatian citizenship. Ragazzi and Šticks argue that the 1991 Croatian Citizenship Law is ethnocentric because non-Croats can acquire citizenship by declaration, such as a written statement about their intent of becoming Croatian but other minorities have difficulties during the process of naturalization (Ragazzi and Šticks 2010).

Citizenship of Serb minorities is most problematic in the Krajina region of Croatia (Šticks 2010: 16). Serb militias that participated in the atrocities during the two civil wars have occupied territories in Croatia which were not Serb majority in 1991. When the Croatian government retook these areas in 1995, many Serbs in Krajina either left or became refugees. Often they were prevented from re-entering the country and re-claiming their citizenship once
the war ended. After the death of Franco Tudjman, Croatia’s president between 1992 and 1999, this group was able to regain their citizenship status for the most part (Šticks 2010: 16).

7.3.1.2 The Status of Language

Prior to the war the Serbo-Croatian language was used as one of the main languages of communication in the former Yugoslavia. Serbo-Croatian is mutually understandable for Serbs and Croats and they are essentially two variants of the same language (Woodward 2000, in Mandelbaum 2000). The Serbo-Croatian language no longer exists in any of the seceded countries today. Instead, three “idioms” are used, such as Serbian in Serbia, Croatian in Croatia, and Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bugarski 2001: 83). Croatia made many efforts to differentiate its language from Serbian as much as possible since the conflict and has been practicing a so-called “linguistic nationalism” during which much of the terminology of the public language has been “croatized” (Bugarski 2001: 83). This rapid differentiation of Croatian is directed against “the other” which is the Serbian language.

Greenberg argues that Serbo-Croatian has undergone a process of language coalescence over time as the different ethnic groups interacted with each other and this process probably would have continued had it not been for the conflict. He maintains that for the most part, “ethnic Croats, Serbs, Muslim Slavs, and Montenegrins, spoke regional varieties of Serbo-Croatian” and that it is generally accepted that they understood each other when communicating among themselves (Greenberg 1998: 710). His detailed analysis in the differences in accent and phonetics of Serbs and Croats does not show drastic differences and
therefore he concludes that “data confirm that lexical similarities by far outweigh the lexical
differences” (Greenberg 1998: 718).

Serbian is considered a minority language in Croatia and Croatian is the only official
language. The use of Serbian is regulated by the Law on the Use of Language and Scripts of
National Minorities which was adopted in 2000. While the official regulation exists, local
authorities apply the law differently and inconsistencies exist about the interpretation of the
law as well depending on place. This problem arises because there are two ways to interpret
the law. First, “municipalities and towns must use the minority languages in official life when
the minority constitutes an absolute majority” and second, “when the minority constitutes a
relative majority” the threshold being set between 10-20% (Minority Rights Group International

All three languages of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian are official languages in Bosnia-
Herzegovina. The entity constitutions of the Republika Srpska and the entity of Bosnia-
Herzegovina do not define which languages are officially used in the two regions. The same
provision is included in both constitutions that all three languages are considered official (FCNM
Report 2012).

7.3.1.3 Discrimination against Serbs

Serbs face discrimination in Bosnia-Herzegovina, especially in the Federation entity of
the state. This discrimination takes place in access to political posts, job opportunities,
healthcare and education (FCNM 2008 Report). The Advisory Committee on the Framework

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61 www.minorityrights.org
Convention for the Protection of National Minorities recommended that the authorities in Bosnia consider amending the Constitution of the country and the Entities Constitutions as well in cases when national minorities and some constituent peoples (such as the Serbs) are being hindered to access certain political posts (FCNM 2008 Report). There are no official restrictions against Serbs; however informal constraints are widespread in Serb minority areas. Children of minorities face a hostile environment in schools and because of the influence of nationalist politicians; it has been difficult to remove discriminatory material from textbooks and to abolish school segregation.62

Discrimination against Serbs in Croatia still exists even though the government has been taking many positive steps against it in the past since the regime change in 2000, such as signing major human rights and minority rights documents and completing the restitution of property (Djuric 2010). In 1997 for instance, Jacques Klein, UN Transitional Administrator said that local Croatian authorities “are systematically terrorizing the remaining Serb population in the Knin Krajina and preventing the return of refugees” (BBC May 2, 1007). In 2003 Human Rights Watch accused Croatia of discriminating against Serbs by repossession of property, arbitrary arrests of suspected war criminals, and discrimination in employment (BBC, September 2, 2003).

In Slovenia Serbs are not recognized as a minority by the authorities of Slovenia and have difficulties using their language, gaining access to education in Serbian and participation in public affairs; and especially societal discrimination and exclusion is present (MRGI 2011).

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62 www.minorityrights.org/bosnia
Macedonian Serbs are seen as “partially advantaged minority” based on MAR information because they used to hold the political power during Yugoslavia. Group rights for Albanians in Macedonia improved which had consequences for minority politics for all groups, including Serbs (MAR). Religious discrimination against Serbs is present in Macedonia however. Hostilities occurred between the Macedonian Orthodox Church and Serbian Orthodox monasteries, many of which have been sized by the Macedonian church (Freedom House Macedonia 2006). But overall, I haven’t found evidence for official governmental discrimination against the Serb ethnic group in Macedonia.

7.4 Domestic Threat

7.4.1 Threat of Further Secession

Geography can serve as an opportunity or motivation for realizing minority demands (Weidmann 2009) such as gaining more autonomy or initiating further secession from the seceded state. However, I argue that geography may also serve as a threat to the integrity of the new state since a minority group that is large in number and territorially concentrated poses a higher threat to the government. The highest threat of territorial concentration among the former Yugoslav states is found in Bosnia Herzegovina, while Croatia and Macedonia belong to the midrange category. Since the war, Serbs have been more concentrated in Krajina and Slavonia in the Republic of Croatia (MAR). Unfortunately, quantitative territorial concentration values for the countries of Slovenia and Montenegro are not available at this time but we know that Serbs in Macedonia are concentrated along the Northern border adjacent to Serbia (Census Macedonia 2002). Three territorially separate regions emerged after independence,
such as the Republika Srpska (RS) in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Republic of Serb Krajina (RSK), and Eastern Slavonia in Croatia. Each of these regions posed a threat to the independent states of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. While the Republika Srpska became a politically autonomous region after the Bosnian war, the Republic of Serb Krajina and Eastern Slavonia in Croatia achieved a small level of cultural autonomy only. The autonomy of the RS was largely the result of the Dayton peace agreement but the status of Krajina and Slavonia were the outcome of Croatia’s internal politics. Serbs in the RS pose a threat to the central government of Bosnia-Herzegovina by continuously advocating for further secession (Associated Press, October 1, 2006; Radio Free Europe, October 23, 2008); and the Serbs in the RSK and Eastern Slavonia regions of Croatia still have not given up on the formation of self-governing districts (BBC/Hina, May 21, 2000). Let us turn to the dynamics that occurred in these regions since independence.

7.4.1.1 Republika Srpska (RS) in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Serbs pose the highest threat of further secession to the decentralized state of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Serb politicians in the territorially concentrated region of Republika Srpska have often warned the Bosniaks that they will consider further secession if their terms are not met regarding their preferred governmental structure, which is less centralization (Agence France Presse 1997, The Independent 2005, The Guardian 2006). After the Bosnian war in 1995 a consociational government was set up in Bosnia-Herzegovina with a power-sharing arrangement between the Bosnian Muslims, Croats and Serbs. This agreement established two separate regions, the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Republika Srpska with a three person presidency, one from each of the three ethnic groups. The majority of Bosnian Muslims
and Croats live in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and most of the Serbian population lives in the Republika Srpska. Even though the organizational set up was agreed upon at Dayton by each party, since then the two major entities have had opposing ideas as to how the country should progress in terms of the degree of power the individual entities should hold. Bosniaks and Croats would prefer a more centralized and unitary state. However, Serbs insists on keeping the federal political structure that would keep more political power in their hands. The international community sees a more centralized and unitary state as a solution to long term peace. As US Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Nicholas Burns stated it in 2005 “the logical objective will be a single presidency, strong prime minister and an effective parliament” (Agence France Presse 2005, October 12). However unrealistic this solution may be, there is evidence towards Bosniak push for centralization and Serb intent to move in the other direction. Disagreements over centralization versus keeping with the federalized system have led to the Serbs threatening further secession and irredentism on several occasion if the governmental system is changed and becomes more centralized in the future.

The region of the Republika Srpska is essentially a nested secessionist case, a secession within an existing secession. The Dayton Accords sealed the conflict by giving the Serbs high degree of autonomy, but I argue that evidence indicates that the threat of further secession is still high in this region of the country despite the settlement and despite the time elapsed since then. After Bosnia declared independence from Serbia in 1992 via a referendum of secession, Bosnian Serbs boycotted this referendum, which passed nevertheless (Jesse and Williams 2011: 146). Shortly after, a secessionist civil war broke out between the Bosniaks, Croats and Bosnian Serbs that lasted three years, claiming many lives. The war can rightfully be called a war of
“dueling irredentism” as Saideman states (Saideman 2008), since the aim of the Bosnian Croats was to unify with Croatia and the Bosnian Serbs’ goal was to attach their claimed territory to Serbia proper. However, in the end, none of these goals were accomplished and Bosnia remained divided.

The fact that the Bosnian Serbs have still not given up their idea of creating a “Greater Serbia,” the goal of Slobodan Milošević with respect to each former Yugoslav state, is evident in various records. The power-sharing agreement separated the Bosniak and Serb populations and administration, however it was unable to do away with or tame the radical segments of politicians on each side after the fighting stopped. Zakaria argues that five years into Bosnia’s independence in virtually every election the ethnic separatists have won. It is not only the Serbs who have radicalized since, but also the Bosniaks, who became the dominant ethnic group after the settlement (Zakaria, Newsweek 1997).

The Serbian territorial threat of further secession is also intertwined with the gradual process towards Kosovo’s unilateral declaration of independence. In November 2005, the Bosnian Serb Republic and Serbia discussed the secession of the Serbs from Bosnia. The Belgrade daily “Glas Javnosti” reported that the conclusion of the talks was that “the Bosnian Serb republic could join Serbia if Kosovo went.” It must be added that the Serbian government denied the report at the time (The Independent, November 11, 2005). A year later however, Milorad Dodik, the prime minister of RS, called for a referendum for the Serbs to secede from Bosnia-Herzegovina, an act which if it had followed through, would have had a high potential to lead to renewed war. This event took place three weeks away from the general election in Serbia and Serb politicians were appealing to the Serbian people with stronger nationalist
sentiments to win the election. Dodik’s proposal for a referendum of secession was also a reaction to Kosovo’s upcoming independence. He said that if Serbia looses Kosovo then Serbia may annex “large tracts of Bosnia” (The Guardian, September 6, 2006).

The Bosnian Serbs used the election climate of 2006 in Bosnia to draw on the nationalist audience and threatened with further secession again a month later in October 1st. This time the basis of their argument was the tension between centralization and keeping the federation governmental structure. The Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), of which Milorad Dodik is president, threatened again with a referendum of secession “if the country moves toward unification” (Associated Press, October 1, 2006).

Even after the general election, Dodik continued his strong stance against centralization. He insisted that he will request the creation of a new constitution if the international community stays firm insisting on centralization (Deutsche Presse-Agentur, May 21, 2007). While Bosnia and Herzegovina is a loose federation at the moment, more centralization would mean less power for the Serbs in the country. Further, upon criticism that Dodik, prime minister of RS and the Bosniak President of the tripartite presidency, Haris Silajdzic, were responsible for the instability in Bosnia, Dodic reacted that “If I am replaced, I have a plan ready for taking Republika Srpska into independence” (Radio Free Europe, October 23, 2008). Again, this statement points into the direction that the Serb community in Bosnia poses a challenge to the unity of the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Therefore, based on the theory they should face the best treatment, however given the multi-level nature of the state the effects are not clear.

Serbs have blocked the transfer of authority to Bosnia’s central institutions even though it was laid out in the Dayton Agreement. In fact, Valentine Inzko, High Representative of the
international community in Bosnia, used his power to stop Serbia’s attempt to further block the transfer of powers to the center. His predecessor, Miroslav Lajcak, a Slovak diplomat, argued that this development was one of the most serious political crises in Bosnia (GMT, June 20, 2009).

Two years later, Dodik used yet another call for a referendum, this time threatening to reject the Bosnian state war crime court set up in 2002 for the prosecution of war criminals (Guardian, April 28, 2011). His reasoning was that the court was not part of the original Dayton Agreement and he believes that it is biased against Serbs (SeeNews, May 13, 2011). The call for the referendum was eventually revoked however.

Finally, in May of 2011 Dodik dismissed a call for secession by the Bosnian Serbs and backed down from the referendum on decentralizing the country’s judiciary. In 2010 he said that he was “‘convinced’ that the Serb entity would eventually secede from Bosnia;” he also said that “however, it has to be done in a peaceful, civilized and non-violent way and that moment is approaching” (Agence France Press, May 22, 2011).

The overarching theory of geographic threat is most applicable to territorial concentration in the Balkan states. Serbs in Slovenia and Montenegro both pose low level of threat and here we find minimal discrimination against them. Serbs in Macedonia experience somewhat more discrimination but they also pose a low level of threat. Serbs in Croatia face the highest level of discrimination and pose a mid-range threat to the government. Finally, in Bosnia Serbs are the highest degree of threat to the state but face relatively low level of discrimination. Although in the Bosnian case discrimination differs based on where Serbs live and there is more intolerance towards them in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.
7.4.1.2 Republic of Serb Krajina (RSK) in Croatia

The Serbs in Croatia emerged as the “biggest losers” of the Yugoslav wars, especially when compared with the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina where they gained a form of territorial-political autonomy and constituent status (Owens, cited in Caspersen 2003). In the end, they achieved much less than what they aimed for when the wars of dueling irredentism started between Croatia and Serbia. Initially, the Serbs were far from hostile to the Croatian government. More than two thirds of Serbs in Croatia remained loyal when the country declared independence in 1991 and remained in Croatia to claim citizenship (Woodward 2000: 166). However, shortly after the behavior of the Serbs changed entirely. They declared the formation of the Republic of Serb Krajina (RSK) and created the “Serb Autonomous Region” (SAO) in 1991, which also included the Serb areas in Eastern Slavonia. Their motivation behind creating a nested secession, secession within secession, was for fear of Croatia’s breaking away from Yugoslavia and the negative treatment they expected from the state after that. In other words, the Serbs experienced the “ethnic security dilemma” and reacted with creating their own enclaves on a separate piece of territory (Posen 1993).

President Tudjman refused to recognize the SAO and since the separatists were backed by Serbia and the Federal Army (JNA) politically, materially and militarily, full scale secessionist civil war emerged as a result (Šticks 2010:7). Serbs paramilitaries seized more than a quarter of Croatia, and in 1992 the United Nations negotiated a cease fire agreement. In 1995 Croatia regained its lost territories including Serb dominated Krajina and Eastern Slavonia with two blitzkrieg operations. Many Serbs fled the country as a result. The Dayton Agreement in 1995
was a trade-off for Tudjman, who agreed that if he stopped meddling in the affairs of Bosnia in regions where Croats lived, he will be able to hold the regained Serb territories in his own country. Tudjman did not follow through with his promise but the two potential future breakaway regions of Croatia remained under Croatian administrative control (Saideman 2008: 68).

The Serbs in Croatia today have cultural autonomy, which is exactly what they demanded in 1990 before the war, albeit with one exception. Serbs are not designated as “constituent people” in Croatia’s constitution and have difficulty obtaining citizenship. Even though they are guaranteed three seats in the Croatian parliament their voice cannot be as powerful as it could have been if they were given “constituent” status in the republic.63

Caspersen describes very well how Serb demands changed over time during the course of the conflict in Croatia with respect to the degree of territorial distinction (Caspersen 2003). Before the war, the goal of the Serbs was to acquire cultural autonomy but later this demand changed to territorial autonomy and eventually to outright secession once Serb hardliners gained more power. During the war, Serbs accomplished the full secession of the Republic of Serb Krajina and gained territorial autonomy for Eastern Slavonia (Caspersen 2003: 16). However, both of these advances for the Serbs were taken back after the war. Eastern Slavonia’s status was regulated with the Erudit Agreement. Based on which the region had to make do with cultural autonomy instead of territorial autonomy and the area was eventually peacefully re-integrated into Croatia in 1998 after a period of temporary UN administration (Šticks 2010). After the war, due to high level of international pressure and the absence of

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63 Clauses regarding constituent status were laid out in the 1991 Constitutional Law in Croatia and in the Dayton Accords in 1995 in Bosnia-Herzegovina.
Belgrade’s support, the political status of the Serbs in both breakaway regions was reduced to cultural autonomy (Caspersen 2003).

While their demands are fairly modest when compared to the Serbs in Bosnia, nevertheless Croatian Serbs would like to achieve more autonomy. Initially, shortly after the Dayton Accords sentiments were running high among Croatian Serbs. The Krajina Liberation Army in an open letter to the Association of Serbs from Croatia and to other Serb organizations called for avenging the fact that Croatia retook areas that the Serbs occupied during the war (BBC August 5, 1996). They found the Association of Serbs’ demand for full autonomy too mild of a statement (BBC August 7, 1996). After Bosnian Serbs were given territorial autonomy, Serbs in Croatia called for international monitoring of the April elections in Eastern Slavonia and were asking for the same voting rights in both the RSK and Eastern Slavonia based on the Bosnian model (Tanjug, BBC April 2, 1997). In 2000, the Serb People’s Party (SNS) has advocated for the establishment of self-governing districts in the Glina and Knin Districts (BBC/Hina May 21, 2000). However, it is unlikely that Serbs in Croatia pose a threat of further secession, especially since part of the peace agreement was that Tudjman could maintain unlimited power of Serb areas and because of Croatia’s EU accession in 2012.

7.4.2 Threat to National Authority

The Serb minority in the former Yugoslav states can pose a demographic, political, or security threat to the majority groups. In countries where the Serbs have a higher ratio when compared to the indigenous ethnic group, the possibility of gaining political influence is higher.

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64 Knin used to be the capital of the Republic of Serb Krajina during the war.
and the government is more likely to interpret the political process as a zero sum game. In this case the government will be more likely to put obstacles in front of the minority group and prevent them from gaining advantages because it will perceive it that political gain by the minority means political loss for them, the majority. As stated in the theoretical chapter threat is understood both as lower level threat by the mere presence and concentration of the minority or as higher level geographical or military threat. In Bosnia-Herzegovina for example, Serb opposition to centralization is a political threat to the administration because Serbs want to prevent that power flows to the dominant Bosniaks. Further, in Croatia, government officials argue that the massive return of Serbian refugees after the war poses a threat to national security.65

Due to multiple wars and extensive refugee flows, many Serbs changed locations over time therefore their ratio also changed during and after the conflict. The highest percentages of Serbs live in Bosnia-Herzegovina today. Prior to the war the region was 30-40 percent Serbian, depending on sources (MAR, Woodward 2000, UNHCR). For the year of 1996 UNHCR data shows that 37.9 percent Serbs lived in Bosnia-Herzegovina after the war. Woodward states that it is difficult to tell the ratio of Serbs according to spatial distribution, but she believes that 17% Serbs remained in non-Serb areas once the conflict ended (Woodward 2000: 166).

In Slovenia, Montenegro and Macedonia the ratio of Serbs stayed relatively constant at about 2% each, although certain areas, such as the Čučer-Sandevo municipality of Macedonia has a much larger percentage of Serb minority. Here, Serbs make up 28.6% percent of the population (Census Macedonia 2002). Overall, the Serbs in Macedonia live in the northern

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65 BBC/Beta May 14, 1998
regions, close to the border with Serbia and are concentrated in the city of Skopje (40%) and the municipalities of Kumanovo (25%) and Ilinden (3%) (MAR).

The most drastic reduction of the Serb population occurred in Croatia. Before the war 12 percent of the overall population was Serb, but after the war only 4.5% Serbs remained. The Serb population was reduced by emigration and expulsion and their return has been hindered by the government for a long time. The issue of Serb refugee repatriation in Croatia has been one of the major aspects of EU accession talks that needed improvement.

In May of 1998, three years after the Dayton Agreement, Ivic Pasalic, President Tudjman's adviser on domestic policy issues, said that the mass return of Serbs to the country poses a threat to Croatia's national security. He stated that “If we were to accept unreservedly that the Serbs return to the country en masse, this would be unacceptable for national security reasons, and this is not in the interest of the international community either” (BBC/Beta May 14, 1998). Even though at the time Serbia no longer supported its ethnic kin in the seceded states, Bosnia-Herzegovina, especially the area of the Republika Srpska (RS), had a large number of Serbs, most of them living adjacent to Croatia. Therefore, Croatia’s perceived threat of the Serbs must also be looked at from the standpoint of the ethnic kin closeby but not necessarily in the mother state.

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), a body of UNHCR, as well as various news reports from Lexis Nexis indicate that the Croatian government hindered the return of Serb refugees into Croatia (MRGI Report 2003). In 2002 CERD reported that the state did not sufficiently prevent discrimination of returning Serb minorities and that problems regarding property restitution, occupancy rights and citizenship rights were prevalent (MRGI
Serbs themselves stated that Croatia’s new procedure is designed to prevent the return of refugees (BBC/Tanjug May 23, 1998) and the chairman of the Serb National Party (SNS), Milan Djikic, asserted that “no progress has been made so far” neither from the local or central administrators with regards to refugee return (BBC August 18, 1998). Borislav Mikelic, head of the Yugoslav committee for the protection of displaced persons, went as far as to say that Croatia’s plan for the return of refugees was “racist” (BBC/Beta July 1, 1998).

In 2000 after the death of President Tudjman, Stepjan Mesić took office, which created a turning point in refugee repatriation policy (Djuric 2010). Mesić in 2002 said that “The notion of threat posed by national minorities was groundless” and he argued that the measure of democracy is based on the treatment of national minorities, therefore he urged for property repossession and refugee return (MRGI Report 2003: 31). In 2007, he received a delegation of Serb refugees which was the first time a Croatian president has done so since the war ended (BBC January 3, 2007). By 2007 property restitution was almost complete (Djuric 2010). Djuric and Petričušić maintain that Croatia’s intention to become member of the European Union played an important role in the normalization of refugee relations after 2000 (Djuric 2010; Petričušić 2004.)

In Bosnia-Herzegovina the dominant majority group is the Bosniaks (46%) but the Serbs are very similar in numbers (37.9%) and used to be the politically dominant group during the existence of the Yugoslav state (Census Bosnia Herzegovina 1996). Recently, the Serbs have been hindering the Bosniaks’ move towards a stronger centralized government. Based on the Dayton Accords, both groups have administrative power in their own entities; however certain aspects, such as foreign policy and the presidency are shared among the three ethnic groups.
Bosnian Croats and Muslims (Bosniaks) have been continuously pushing for the change in the Dayton Peace Accords which they blame for the country’s slow progress in post-conflict peace development.

Bosnian Serbs are strongly opposing the strengthening of central government (Agence France Presse October 12, 2005). Bosniaks would prefer to create a more centralized government and do away with ethnic divisions, which is one of the main criticisms of the present power-sharing agreement. However Serbs have been threatening with a referendum on secession (The Associated Press October 1, 2006) as well as a referendum directed against the recognition of the Bosnian Courts (SeeNews May 13, 2011) if the Bosniaks try to centralize.

The power dynamics of how Serbs are a domestic threat, specifically how they pose a threat to the government’s national authority are somewhat different from the other cases because of the consociational set up. We still see that the Bosnian government views their political relations with the Serbs as a zero sum game and is afraid of giving concessions to the Serbs because they may lose some of their own power. However, in Bosnia-Herzegovina it is more of a power struggle between centralization versus keeping the federal system. In this sense then, Bosnia is unique from the other former Yugoslav states since in the other cases Serbs do not have territorial autonomy.

7.5 International Threat

7.5.1 Relations with Serbia

The Yugoslav wars were the wars of “dueling irredentism” between Croatia and Serbia, with Bosnia in the middle of the battleground (Saideman 2008). Both countries strived to attach
territories with Croatian and Serb majority populations to their rump regions respectively. Serbia’s intention to create a “Greater Serbia” was more visible than the same exact aim of Croatia to create a “Greater Croatia” mainly because of Serbia’s military support of Serbs in multiple regions. Since the two leaders of Croatia and Serbia could use the presence of ethnic Serbs and Croats as a motivation for intervention, Bosnia ended up being in the middle albeit with a demand of a territory on its own.

Ethnicity was used as a legitimation strategy by leaders who argued that their nation was under attack. Serbia’s influence of its kin in Croatia and Bosnia was so significant during the war, that Caspersen argues that Serb regional leaders in those states should not be regarded as independent actors (Caspersen 2010). Croatian and Bosnian Serb political parties and organizations were not monolithic political entities and all factions of rival elites had to appeal to Serbia for support to prevail (Caspersen 2010). In Bosnia and Croatia, kin state support manifested itself in three ways, such as Serbia was given authority to become involved in local politics, it possessed resources that it could extend to Bosnian and Croatian Serbs, and Serbia also provided military aid to the rebels (Caspersen 2010).

Serbia’s influence in the politics of Croatia and Bosnia has been fluid and was reduced substantially overtime. At the end of the war, Bosnia and Croatia “were all but ignored by Belgrade” (Caspersen 2010: 163). Relations between Serbia and Bosnian as well as Croatian Serbs deteriorated and Serbia did not act when Croatia retook Krajina and Western-Slavonia from Croatian Serbs. When Bosnian Serbs were still willing to go along with the Greater Serbia project, long after Milosevic decided to discard that idea, Milosevic ended up forcing them to
negotiate (Saideman 2008). Much of his decision was based on the fact that Serbia has been running low on military power and international pressure increased to negotiate.

The mother state’s ability to influence relations and to assist in further secession and irredentism can function as a threat to the seceded state. Even though signs point towards the resurgence of ultra-nationalists in Serbian politics, especially after 2000, I haven’t found evidence in news reports for Serbia’s support for assisting either in the Croatian Serbs’ autonomy demand or aiding the Bosnian Serbs’ effort to continue the decentralization of politics or to secede from Bosnia-Herzegovina. Reports indicate that Croatia tries to reach out to Serbia to improve relations via visits (BBC September 8, 2003) and statements (Vecernje Novosti January 8, 2010; BBC February 8, 2001). However, while Serbia reciprocates, it is also critical of Croatia at times. In 2008 for example, it forwarded a protest note to Croatia because of its recognition of Kosovo (Hina March 19, 2008).

Even though at this time there is no evidence that Serbia might be supporting its kin, the fact that the Serbian far right has been very successful politically since 2000, cannot be ignored. In the 2003 elections in Serbia the Serbian Radical Party (SRS), a far-right ultra-nationalist party, has become “the largest single party” in the Serbian Parliament (Stefanovic 2008: 1196). In the 2004 presidential election SRS candidate Tomislav Nikolić gained 46 percent of the popular vote, coming closely behind Boris Tadić, Democratic Party candidate who won the election. Further, in 2003 radicals assassinated Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindić, who extradited Slobodan Milošević to The Hague and worked on Serbia’s integration into the European Union. In the 2007 parliamentary elections, the radical SRS party won 78 seats in the 250 seat National Assembly, which was a significant win for the party. The 2012 elections strengthened the
political power of the radicals even further. After a split in the SRS, the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) broke off and with the leadership of Tomislav Ničić won 73 seats in the Serbian Parliament (Political Handbook of the World). Again, even though Serbia has not been supporting Bosnian Serb or Croatian Serb demands of further secession and more autonomy this time, Serbian politics have become radicalized and continues to do so.

One of the puzzling questions that arise is why Serbia has not been supporting its kin in the nearby states after the war. One explanation might be that there are over 2,500 peace-keepers in Bosnia who serve as a deterrent. Also, international organizations, such as the European Union, but also the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) have become venues where relations between the parties have been settled, more so then directly among the individual countries. Finally, the Serbian leadership has been reluctant or disinterested in supporting Serbs abroad, which might change if the radical leadership becomes more influential.

Relations between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia worsened since 2006 (Zuvela 2010-Reuters) although Serbia’s apology for Srebrenica and the Istanbul meeting are signs of improvement. The 2010 summit in Istanbul intended to strengthen these relations for the sake of attracting more investment into the country. The idea was that political stability will lead to more economic activity and investment. Silajdzic, the Muslim member of Bosnia’s “tripartite rotating presidency” has thus far ignored Serb invitations to visit Belgrade. But in 2010, once Serbia apologized for the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, he stated that he would be more open to such visits. In Srebrenica 8,000 Muslims were killed and this was one of the largest carnages that took place since World War II in Europe. Silajdzic attended the Istanbul summit. However,
the Serb member of the Bosnian tripartite rotating presidency, Nebojsa Radmanovic, said that he “may dispute the results of the Silajdz-Tadic meeting in Turkey because “this is not in line with the constitution,” he said (cited in Zuvela 2010-Reuters).

Relations between Croatia and Serbia have been tense since the 1990s (BBC, July 8, 2010). Reports are mixed as to whether these relations have been improving or gotten worse over time. Ognjen Pribicevic’s assessment, who is the Serbian Ambassador to Germany, that Serbian-Croatian relations have been going up and down over the past fifteen years may be adequate.66 In 2010 Ivo Jasipovic and Boris Tadic, Presidents of Croatia and Serbia respectively, met in Serbia and stressed cooperation and pledged to find solutions to the question of the return of refugees, for example. They also stated that they will cooperate with each other to accomplish the common goal of joining the European Union (BBC, July 8, 2010).

Previous good relations between Serbia and Croatia deteriorated in recent years for various reasons. First, in 2011 Tomislav Nikolić, a former extreme nationalist, became the president of Serbia and Ivica Dačić, the spokesman of Milosević, became Prime Minister. Further, the same year, even though two Croatian military officers, Ante Gotovina and Mladen Markac, were sentenced to 24 and 18 years respectively for their roles in the 1995 offensive to retake Krajina, they appealed the decision and were not convicted at the end. Croatians celebrated the outcome of the appeal, however Serbia was angry because it meant that none of the Croatians accused of war crimes were convicted. Finally, “Operation Storm” in Croatia is a national holiday when Croatians celebrate their liberation from the Serbs, but this is viewed

66 Jovanovic 2012 news article.
negatively by Serbs for whom the incident is seen as a war crime when 200,000 Serbs were ethnically cleansed from Croatia during the war.\textsuperscript{67}

7.6 Kosovo

I haven’t discussed the dynamics of minority politics of non-recognized states in the chapters regarding the Russian Minority because I believe that those statelets are different and they should be treated differently in analyses. However, the status of Kosovo needs some elaboration since it received 96 recognitions so far, which means that a substantial number of countries of the international community have already recognized Kosovo as a state after it unilaterally declared its independence in 2008.\textsuperscript{68} Therefore, Kosovo cannot be viewed the same way as other unrecognized states, such as Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan or South-Ossetia in Georgia, but perhaps it needs to be considered a quazi-recognized state at the moment.\textsuperscript{69} Serbia contested the declaration of independence of Kosovo on the basis of whether the action was legal but the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 2010 ruled that the declaration was indeed legal. However, the court did not take a stance on whether Kosovo should be considered a state going forward and left it to each country in the international community to decide that in the future (Daily Star August 4, 2010). We can say that Kosovo today is a quazi-state or a half-state until its final status is clarified; which given the complexity of international recognition will take a considerable amount of time.

\textsuperscript{67} Numbers are being disputed and some argue that this number is much lower, somewhere around 2,000 (Šoštarić 2011).

\textsuperscript{68} 96 out of 193 member states of the United Nations recognized Kosovo as a state as of 2012.

\textsuperscript{69} South-Ossetia for instance has been recognized only by five members of the United Nations.
Kosovo is a case in point that the threat of further secession and irredentism is always possible, even much later after the countries separated. Since it is nearly impossible to create entirely homogenous territories without population transfers, some ethnic groups will always find themselves on the wrong side of the border. At the end, views on whether partitioning Kosovo was even considered by Serbs differ. Posen suggests that there is no evidence that Serb officials suggested the partition of Kosovo, not at the Rambouillet Peace Conference in 1999 between Serbia and Kosovo and not during the war (Posen 2000). At the same time, it is argued that Aleksandar Despic, president of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences, suggested the partition of Kosovo between Serbs and Albanians (International Crisis Group, cited in Caplan 1998: 759). At this point, whether Kosovo will be recognized as a state is up to the international community.

The conflict in Kosovo was vicious and drawn out and in the end Kosovo never made it to the Dayton Agenda. There was much to negotiate already about Bosnia and no one wanted to alienate Milosevic who has already compromised a good deal on Bosnia (Caplan 1998). Having to concede on Kosovo in addition to Bosnia would have been too much at the time of the peace talks. The result was unfinished business in Kosovo and the continuation of mutual discrimination, albeit this time it was the Serbs turn to suffer the harassment.

Serious human rights violations exists towards the Serbs in Kosovo, who mostly live fairly concentrated in the Northern area of the country. The Serb community has been denied their political and social rights and the Serbian government went as far as setting a “parallel system” to provide education and health care for Serbs in the country and to compensate for the discrepancies. The systematic discrimination of Serbs in Kosovo has been institutionalized
and Serbs as “the other” have been presented as a threat especially in the media (Zdravkovic-Zonta 2011: 173).

One can only speculate what would happen once Kosovo receives full recognition to become a state but I believe that the Serbian community in the North would exhibit heavy irredentist tendencies and would try to join with Serbia given the history of mutual discrimination and violence between the Albanians and the Serbs. Therefore the Serbs would pose a high threat to the Kosovo government after further secession.

7.7 Discussion

The above cases in the former Yugoslavia indicate that the most discrimination against the Serbian minority is occurring in Croatia among the former Yugoslav states, which represent an intermediate threat to the government. The return of Serbian refugees has been especially slow and criticized internationally. However, Croatia has signed several documents regarding minority rights and enacted domestic laws, especially since the presidency of Stjepan Mesić. Bosnian Serbs also face discrimination in the Federation entity in Bosnia and have difficulty obtaining public offices; however the Serbs in the Republika Srpska have autonomous status and therefore have better treatment in this section of the state. Given that their status differs based on the region they reside in, it is somewhat ambiguous to determine their overall status in the country. Further, because the status of a large Albanian minority improved in Macedonia, this had positive consequences for the Serbian group as well. Slovenian Serbs face some level of occasional discrimination.
The possibility of further secession is most likely in Bosnia-Herzegovina where the Republika Srpska has indicated on several occasion that if the country’s centralization continues they will consider separation from the Federation entity. Therefore, Serbs pose the highest threat in Bosnia because of the possibility of further secession, highest concentration as well as the high percentage of Serbs in the country (about 30 percent). The territorial concentration of the Croatian Serbs is at medium level and even though the government insists that the return of Serbian refugees poses a security threat, Serbs overall pose limited threat to the government when their number and concentration is considered. All of the remaining three countries of Macedonia, Slovenia, and Montenegro have about 2% ratio of the total population and the Serb minority has not indicated any claim to territory or intention of accomplishing autonomous status.

As we can see, overall the curvilinear hypothesis holds for the former Yugoslav cases when all of the above aspects are considered together. However, in this cluster of the analysis the role of Serbia at the moment doesn’t show significance and washes out because Serbia has not indicated that it would support Serbian minority demands in the seceded states. Although the Serbian government has spoken about the Serbian minority in the former Yugoslav states, no concrete action has materialized that would indicate actual support of the Serbian minority by Serbia. At the same time, Serbian politics in the past ten years have been dominated by radical Serbian parties and there is no sign for this to change in the future (Figure 3).
Figure 7.1: Yugoslavia at the Time of its Dissolution, early 1992

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Figure 7.2: Current State of Affairs on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia, as of 2008

Permission is granted to copy, distribute and/or modify this document under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License
Figure 7.3: Territorial Concentration and Discrimination in the Balkans

- Croatia
- Slovenia
- Montenegro
- Macedonia
- Bosnia-Herzegovina
CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

My plan was to answer two major questions in this dissertation. First, I wanted to find out what happened to the Russians and Serbs who got stranded beyond borders after secession, away from their ethnic kin, in countries where they became minorities. Specifically, I analyzed how these two groups have been treated by the government and the extent of discrimination against them. Second, I wanted to create an overarching theory of minority protection after secession to understand what explains the differences in the treatment of minorities after secession. I applied curvilinear and linear hypotheses for my cases and found support for my argument, both in the overall quantitative part of this study, as well as in the three directed case studies in which I looked deeper into the nuances of the cases.

The treatment of ethnic minorities significantly impacts world politics, as it has serious repercussions for international stability, post-conflict peace building, nation building, and ethnic politics.\footnote{http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14316858; http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14595368 http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/27/AR2007042700165.html} We know from the literature that conflicts renew and that ethnic-territorial violence is the most intractable type of war to be resolved. Irredentist and secessionist movements have the potential to cause some of the worst conflicts with the greatest number of casualties. Disagreements over how to proceed about ethnic minorities can sour relations between the mother state and the seceded state, and we know that few conflicts remain without third party intervention. The country from which other countries secede often uses the protection of ethnic kin as the motivation to intervene and soon many other actors join into the fighting.
Whether secession was violent or relatively peaceful, nation-building after secession can be a
difficult experience for new states and resolving inter-ethnic relations is very often at the heart
of political negotiations during this time. As such, understanding what happens to the ethnic kin
in new states is crucial for keeping post-conflict peace if the secession was violent, and for
resolving political roadblocks in interethnic societies when the parting was fairly unproblematic.

My findings point out the importance of paying attention to the stranded minority, the
threat of further secession, and the power of the rump state after secession. I think that what
happens to minorities and refugees are some of the most difficult items on the negotiation
agenda at peace talks. Therefore their status is often not dealt with and pushed out for future
talks. I argue that this topic must be dealt with more in scholarly works in political science
because relations between the minority and the majority have implications for post-conflict
peace. After secession the minority is likely to pose a security threat to the new state in the
form of its potential for further secession. Especially if the group is territorially concentrated, it
will be more likely to claim their own territorial enclave because they face the security
dilemma, i.e. they perceive that they will be mistreated by the majority either in the form of
violent retribution or not giving them sufficient rights in the new state. This is likely to lead to
further violence since the majority will want to keep its territory and avoid the further breakup
of the country. Also, whether the rump state is more powerful than the seceded state makes a
difference in terms of minority treatment.

With respect to policy relevance, this project calls attention to broader participation of
underrepresented groups and advocates for better protection of minority group rights. A very
practical benefit of this research is its potential for conflict prevention and designing early
warning systems based on indexes of minority treatment. I believe that providing a detailed account of minority protection will serve as an important stepping stone to avoiding future wars.

This project helps to understand minority protection in new states and it has relevance for other cases as well, such as Southern Sudan, Kosovo, as well as aspiring independence movements, such as Kurdistan, Kashmir, Tibet, etc. As new states gain independence, there will always be significant minorities within them. Further, the theory can also be applied to understand other secessionist cases that occurred in the past. And finally, this theory has implications for future secessionist movements as well. (For a complete list of prior secessions see Table 8.2).

These dynamics are not unique to former communist states. Tribal groups, such as the Misseriya for instance, used to be able to move freely within Sudan to seek out water and pasture before South Sudan’s independence. Now that the country has broken into two, their movement is completely restricted and their status remains unresolved. South Sudan has not been able to issue identity documents for those who are supposed to transfer over to South Sudan. The “Four Freedoms Agreement” would allow the tribes to cross borders; however, at this point people who previously lived in Sudan but are supposed to move to South Sudan are left without work waiting for the red tape to be resolved.71 Nobody knows for how long. In the

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71 The Four Freedoms Agreement is a framework agreement between Sudan and South Sudan which was created in March 2012 and signed in September 2012. The document allows citizens to “enjoy freedom of residence, freedom of movement, freedom to undertake economic activity and freedom to acquire and dispose property” Sudan Tribune http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?mot2143
meantime the fighting that broke out in the spring of 2012 continues and the much celebrated secession the year before no longer appears to be such a beneficial solution.\textsuperscript{72}

I posited that there is a curvilinear relationship between the treatment of minority and domestic and international threat. Most discrimination takes place in the middle of the inverted U-shape graph, because here we observe a balance of power between the government, the minority and the mother state (Figure 1). I argue that domestic threat and international threat interact with each other; therefore the two must be looked at simultaneously. The minority can pose a domestic threat to the government’s national authority but it can also pose a territorial threat by initiating further secession or irredentism. In the latter two instances threat is a geographical threat. At the same time, the rump state has the potential to help its ethnic kin in its irredentist efforts; therefore the mother state can pose an international threat to the government.

There are several aspects that are being added to previous understanding of ethnic politics and post-conflict peace with this work. First, I argue that the relationship between threat and treatment is non-linear, while both Toft and Horowitz argue for a linear relationship. Second, literature has a tendency to separate out the domestic and the international aspects in the analysis; however I interact the two by assessing the relationship between the triad of the seceded state, the rump state, and the ethnic kin itself. Third, while works exist on the Russian minority in the former Soviet states, those mainly cover individual countries, regions and aspects related to this group and barely assess multiple aspects and all regions at once in a

comprehensive fashion. Further, no analysis has existed on comparing the status of the Serbian minority in all former Yugoslav states before.

The way I present threat is somewhat different from previous literature because it has a broader meaning. First, geography itself is a threat because the minority can always secede further even after the new borders have been settled. Second, the minority can also pose a threat to the government’s national authority. The government often views the politics of the country as a zero-sum game, therefore the mere presence of the minority, its size, and territorial concentration can pose a threat as well. Therefore, I see this low level threat also as being part of the notion of threat, whereas the conflict literature mostly understands military threat under this terminology.

This dissertation employs a mixed-method, using time-series-cross-sectional (TSCS) analysis, most similar systems design (MSS) and most different systems (MDS) design with directed case studies. The advantages of the mixed-method have been discussed before as it intends to correct discrepancies related to internal and external validity (Lieberman 2010 and 2005; Gerring 2007; Atkeson et al. 2011). Quantitative results mainly confirm my hypotheses. Especially, spatial concentration and capability ratios show highly significant effects in determining the inverse U-shape relationship between domestic threat and political as well as economic discrimination. However group size is less important to explain these differences. In terms of the predicted linear relationship between international threat and minority treatment power ratio shows a high impact, however being a neighbor state does not seem to have a significant effect.
The original idea behind this project can be expanded horizontally, vertically and thematically. Horizontally, the idea behind this dissertation can be applied to all ethnic minorities worldwide and it can be tested with a large-N study whether the hypotheses hold. Vertically, this project can clarify our understanding of conflict resolution and prevention, ethnic politics, and minority protection. Finally, this dissertation is concerned with ethnic minorities, specifically two major ethnic groups, the Russian and the Serb minorities. However, as the Arab Spring evolves, problems related to religious minorities, such as the Christians in several Arab states, or the Copts in Egypt, come to the surface. Therefore, focusing on religious minorities as a future study will be especially relevant going forward. Overall, this project has a high capacity to generalize to larger populations, which is one of the major goals of scientific inquiry.

Another topic of further research this project can move forward with is the status of ethnic minorities in unrecognized states. I have not included the status of Russian or Serbian minorities in those states at this time, because I think that the political and international dynamics are different when states are not fully recognized yet by the international community. However, it will be motivating to see whether the presence and threat of ethnic minorities makes a difference in how non-recognized states, such as Nagorno-Karabakh, South-Ossetia, and especially Kosovo develop politically in the international environment.

Another way to extend this topic further is to evaluate why some ethnic groups are more prone to secession than others and also what differentiates those that end up demanding secession from those that prefer autonomy instead. Finally, within the broader framework of secession I think that the recognition of new states has an important function. It would be
interesting to see how recognition of states leads to more or less violent secessionist cases. Overall, the role of recognition needs to be more theorized in the literature.

A normative debate exists in the literature about whether human rights should include minority group rights, given that every human being should be given the same rights regardless of their ethnicity. In other words, one side takes the viewpoint that minority rights as such are unnecessary since they only lead to tensions between ethnic groups and call attention to minorities being an exclusive and separate group. According to this view, creating separate minority group rights exacerbates problems and creates tensions instead of reducing them. On the other hand we find those who advocate for separate minority rights (Kymlicka 1995; Kolstø 1995).

With respect to this debate, this dissertation sides with the position advocated by Kymlicka and Kolstø (Kymlicka 1995; Kolstø 1995). According to this argument, traditional human rights does not give us an answer to specific questions that arise when dealing with minorities, such as which languages should be designated as official languages, how should political boundaries be drawn, and how will power distribution and political institutions look like between differing ethnicities. In other words, human rights alone do not give us any guidelines about the practicalities of ethnic bargaining in the country at the time of nation-building and following secession. Frequently, these questions are left to the majority to decide and minorities are vulnerable to injustice as a result. Therefore, Kymlicka argues for the provision of both, human rights for everyone in the country, and minority rights extended to the minority at the same time (Kymlicka 1995).
Interethnic relations in the former communist countries that seceded from the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have been diverse since independence. Discrimination varies within the clusters of the Baltic States, the Central Asian Republics and the former Yugoslav countries. Whether the country is democratic or has joined international organizations, such as the European Union (EU), NATO, or CIS do not fully explain the differences in discrimination. For instance, all Central Asian Republics are autocratic and all Baltic States are democratic, yet the status of Russians differs in each segment of analysis. Similarly, all Baltic countries joined both the EU and NATO, yet there is difference in the level of discrimination. In addition, almost all countries in Central Asia are part of the CIS yet they differ with respect to their relations with the Russian minority.

The issue of the Russian minority in the Baltic States was especially sensitive at independence given the large number of Russians. Problems regarding the status of this group are still part of current political dynamics, especially in Estonia where the Bronze Soldier incident in 2007 and language legislation has caused problems even after the country already joined the EU. In the early years both Latvia and Estonia imposed hindrances on Russians acquiring citizenship such as requirements to take language and history exams. Latvia was the most discriminative case, partially because they held on to the nationalist direction longer then Estonia did. Lithuania on the other hand enacted liberal minority legislation at the onset and no tests were required for minorities to become citizens.

Differences in treatment are linked to the size of the Russian minority and they partially explain the governments’ stance in the Baltics. In Estonia and Latvia Russians account for above 25%, or a quarter of the total population, in Lithuania this number is only 6%. In Latvia and
Estonia nationalists argued that restraining or eliminating Russophones from political power served the survival of these nations. After independence Russophone political party activity was minimal when compared to Estonia because parties split along ethnic lines, whereas in Estonia this was not the case (Ishiyama and Breuning 1998). Further, in Latvia communist parties, which many Russophones were members of, remained loyal to Moscow longer than in the other two republics.

Two regions could have had the potential for secession and irredentism, such as Ida-Virumaa in Estonia and Latgale in Latvia. The former posed a geographic threat after independence, however the latter did not. It is interesting to see as to why Latgale did not want to achieve even autonomous status. The region was hardly hit by the economic recession and Russians likely perceived that this was applicable to all ethnic groups not just theirs. Also, Russians in the center, Riga, viewed their situation direr than people in the rural areas of Latgale.

Gorbachev was reluctant to let go of the Baltic States and of all Soviet States in fact. He sent troops into Vilnius, Lithuania and cut off gas supplies to the country in order to prevent its secession. This hurt Lithuania economically, which was, and still is, one of the most important customers of Russian oil. In Latvia former communists intended to overthrow the government initially and to reinstate communist rule, and even after the signature of the formal treaty of secession, Russia intended to keep its influence in the country. Former president Boris Yeltsin tied the issue of troop-withdrawal to gain concessions for the better treatment of Russians abroad but at the end he withdrew his troops nevertheless. With the presidency of Vladimir
Putin, caring about the Russian minority became a more important part of Russian politics than it was before.

The Central Asian Republics extended automatic citizenship to Russophones and no language and history exams were needed to acquire it. Because many people within this group possessed much needed technical expertise, governments wanted to encourage their retention. Tajikistan offered dual citizenship for instance, and so did Turkmenistan, which revoked it later. Initiatives to keep the Russians in Central Asia were not very successful because large waves of migrations took place after independence. Discrimination towards Russians was perhaps most visible via language legislation. The issue of language development and the use of Russian in Central Asia are intricate and complicated. Because the Uzbek and Kazakh languages did not develop fully during communism, reinstating the usage of these languages have been some of the most interesting and complicated issues in the region. Even state officials, such as Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan’s president, and Chinaliev, a Kyrgyz official, have had limited language skills in their own national languages. Not to mention that the general populace widely used Russian and many titulars themselves did not speak the national language.

Discrimination in Central Asia is present in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan but less so in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. In Kazakhstan many Russophone parties have found it impossible to register and the clause of the Kazakh constitution that ethnic parties are disallowed to exist is also related to the previous political activity of Russian political organizations.
Cossacks posed the largest threat to the Kazakh state’s territorial integrity. In 1999, Pugachev orchestrated a secessionist attempt and wanted to create the “Russian Altai Republic.” Further, the Cossacks have openly demanded reunification with Russia. In addition, the Kazakh state took on multiple measures to dilute the ethnic makeup the North of the country. Relocation of the capital to Astana, ethnic gerrymandering, encouraging internal and external migration to the North within the country as well as inviting Kazakhs to return home from abroad were all attempts to weaken the Russophone’s power and to avoid further secession of the region.

Russia has reached out to the Central Asian Republics for economic, political and military cooperation. Organizations, such as the Eurasian Union, the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC), and the new Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) each function as furthering this intent. Under Yeltsin’s presidency Russia had limited success in using the plight of the Russian minority to provide leverage over the region, which is applicable to most former Soviet States as well. However, with Vladimir Putin’s leadership and his advocacy for better conditions for Russophones in the near abroad, Russia appears to have more intention in this regard. Although rhetoric about the revision of territorial borders has been absent, even at the time of the Pugachev Rebellion.

The status and treatment of the Serb minority must be evaluated in the context of a violent secession and legislation that was the outcome of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Major changes in citizenship legislation took place in Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo since the end of the war. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, multi-level citizenship legislation has complicated matters that had to be settled by the UN High Representative who imposed amendments to both entities’
legislation. In Croatia Serbs have difficulties obtaining citizenship and the return of Serbian refugees remains incomplete, although since 2000 Croatia has taken positive steps to improve the situation of Serbs in the country.

The highest threat of further secession is posed by Serbs in the Republika Srpska (RS) entity of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Here, the Serb leadership has indicated multiple times that secession is a possibility if certain demands are not met by the state. In the RS in every election the radicals won since the peace settlement. Also, the idea of secession came up at the time of the independence of Kosovo from Serbia and Serbs indicated that if Kosovo secedes, so will they. Further, while the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina entity intends to centralize politically, Serbs are pulling into the opposite direction of obtaining more federal powers and threaten with secession if centralization policies continue. Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina are treated differently in the two entities of the federation and while their rights are ensured in the RS, discrimination against them is widespread in the Federation entity. Therefore, I think that the treatment of Serbs in Bosnia can be described as neutral, since the two entities cancel each other out. For an overview of major findings of the case studies see Table 8.1.

During the Yugoslav Wars Serbia provided military and political support to Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia for the purpose of creating a “Greater Serbia.” Since 1995, after the war, Serbia has not been supporting its kin, and this lack of interest is likely to be the result of the settlement and the prominent role of the international community since then. Relations between Serbia and Croatia changed many times over the years. During the presidency of Tadić Serbia was willing to meet with Croatia and discussed issues such as economic cooperation and attracting foreign investment. However, since the election of a radical leadership in Serbia, this
has changed. Serb-Bosnian relations show signs of improvement after Serbia apologized for the Srebrenica massacre in 2010 and the Istanbul summit which was the first meeting between Bosniak and Serb leaders.
Table 8.1: Overview of Major Findings of Case Studies

**Baltic States**

Overall: Western leaning, all three countries joined EU and NATO in 2004  
Latvia: most discrimination of Russians, party activity allowed overtime, sizeable minority  
Estonia: discrimination increased again after 2004, Bronze Soldier incident, sizeable minority  
Lithuania: least discrimination of Russians, Polish minority, small percentage

**Central Asian Republics**

Overall: automatic citizenship, discrimination via language legislation  
Kazakhstan: highest discrimination, which increased overtime, Pugachev Rebellion  
Kyrgyzstan: low level of discrimination, low territorial concentration  
Uzbekistan: status improved, 1995 Language Law  
Tajikistan: dual citizenship, small size, civil war, Russian intervention  
Turkmenistan: high level of discrimination

**Former Yugoslavia**

Overall: violent secession, Dayton Peace Accords  
Croatia: most discrimination, return of Serb refugees is problematic  
Bosnia-Herzegovina: better treatment in autonomous republic of Republika Srpska  
Macedonia: status of Serbs improved, Albanian ethnic group, religious discrimination  
Montenegro: seceded latest, strong ties with Serbia  
Slovenia: occasional discrimination, most peaceful secession
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*PRD – Politically Relevant Dyads are “all contiguous dyads emerging from the same state plus all rump-non-contiguous-secessionist state pairs” (Tir 2006: 47, adopted from Maoz and Russett 1993).


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