

**CHARLES UNIVERSITY**  
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Department of Political Science

**Bachelor's Thesis**

**2019**

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**Secessionism, external support and parent states'  
reaction: cases in East Africa and former Yugoslavia**

Bachelor's Thesis

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Year of the defence: 2019

## **Declaration**

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on 8 May 2019

František Novotný

## References

NOVOTNÝ, František. *Secessionism, external support and parent states' reaction: cases in East Africa and former Yugoslavia*. Praha, 2019. 47 pages. Bachelor's thesis (Bc). Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Political Studies. Department of Political Science. Supervisor Mgr. Bohumil Doboš, PhD.

**Length of the Thesis:** 57 214

## **Abstract**

This thesis attempts to understand how external support for a secessionist movement influences the parent state's strategy towards it. This question has not been well explored yet and remains relevant. The thesis tests the external security theory of secessionist conflict. The theory hypothesizes that likelihood of future war and higher levels of external support lead parent states to adopt more repressive strategies against secessionists. Likelihood of future war is understood here as determined by the relative war proneness of the region and the depth of ethnic divides between the given groups. Two pairs of comparative case studies are performed, of South Sudan and Ogaden, and of Kosovo and Serbian Krajina. The thesis concludes that the theory does explain the cases in Ogaden and Serbian Krajina, while it does not hold in the cases of Kosovo and South Sudan. It is suggested that this might be the case because of their support by the United States, an internationally dominant, yet stability-seeking power.

## **Abstrakt**

Cílem této bakalářské práce je porozumět tomu, jak vnější podpora pro secesionistické hnutí ovlivňuje strategii mateřského státu vůči němu. Tato otázka prozatím nebyla dostatečně prozkoumána a zůstává nadále relevantní. V práci je testována teorie vnější bezpečnosti secesionistických konfliktů. Ta předpokládá, že pravděpodobnost budoucí války a vyšší úroveň vnější podpory vede mateřské státy k zaujmutí represivnějších strategií vůči secesionistům. Pravděpodobnost budoucí války je v tomto případě chápána jako určovaná relativní náchylností regionu k válce a hloubkou etnických rozkolů mezi danými skupinami. V práci jsou provedeny dva páry komparativních případových studií, konkrétně Jižního Súdánu a Ogadenu, respektive Kosova a Republiky Srbská Krajina. Závěrem práce je, že zmíněná teorie vysvětluje případy Ogadenu a Republiky Srbská Krajina, nicméně nikoliv případy Kosova a Jižního Súdánu. Možným vysvětlením je fakt, že v těchto případech byly secese podporované ze strany Spojených států amerických, mezinárodně dominantní mocnosti, jež ovšem usiluje o regionální stabilitu.

## **Keywords**

secession, external support, external security, parent state, South Sudan, Ogaden, Kosovo, Republic of Serbian Krajina

## **Klíčová slova**

secese, externí podpora, vnější bezpečnost, mateřský stát, Jižní Súdán, Ogaden, Kosovo, Republika Srbská Krajina

## **Název práce**

Secesionismus, externí podpora a reakce mateřských států: případy ve východní Africe a bývalé Jugoslávii

## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to express my gratitude to Mgr. Bohumil Doboš, PhD. for his support, patience and helpful comments.

# **Teze závěrečné diplomové práce**

**Katedra politologie IPS FSV UK**

## **Zdůvodnění výběru práce:**

The 20th century has seen a dramatic increase in the number of sovereign and internationally recognized states, mostly former colonies. Many other groups, apparently inspired, attempted to form a state of their own, seceding from states sometimes only very recently independent. Some states, already part of the exclusive "club", often decide to support some of the new aspirants in their struggle. What is interesting is that in some cases, the central governments claiming sovereignty, or simply the parent states, accommodate the movements, while in other cases violently repress them. In this work, I will try to find out what roles can external powers have in influencing the parent state's reaction and how that might happen. With a knowledge of that, we, as well as the external powers themselves, may acquire a better understanding of how certain geopolitical goals may be achieved or how to inhibit the fragmentation of the international system.

## **Předpokládaný cíl:**

The goal of this thesis will be to understand how does external support for a secessionist entity influence the parent state's reaction towards the entity. I will be assuming Milena Sterio's theory of great power's rule and limit it to the influence of the United States as the sole superpower after the end of the Cold War. More specifically, I will enquire into how direct US support for the independence of South Sudan and Kosovo, or the lack of it in Darfur and Republic of Serbian Krajina affected the central governments' reaction to the calls for independence.

## **Metodologie práce:**

As the method of this thesis, I will use comparative case studies, specifically comparing the reaction of the government in Khartoum to secessionism in South Sudan and in Darfur, following with an analogical comparative case study of the reaction of the central governments in former Yugoslavia to the attempted secession of Republic of Serbian Krajina and Kosovo. In the analysis, I will be focusing on the effect of great power influence in these cases, specifically the US and its allies.



### **Základní charakteristika tématu:**

All the cases of entities that I will be focusing on have at some point claimed statehood, with different results, however. In the area of former Yugoslavia, around the time Croatia's independence was being internationally recognized, the Republic of Serbian Krajina declared its own independence. However, with the international community deciding to recognize the new entities of the dissolving Yugoslavia based on the former federal division, it did not succeed, and Croatia managed to military defeat the breakaway region. This cannot be said of Kosovo, which also declared independence at the start of 1990s, but in the crucial years of 1999 and 2008, was supported by the United States and its allies, and it now enjoys strong, albeit not universal, international recognition.

Similarly, groups from both South Sudan and Darfur were, or still are, fighting against the central government in Khartoum. In case of South Sudan, the battles started already in the 1950s and finally in 2011, the South Sudanese government, supported by the US, gained independence and is now recognized by a clear majority of the international community. On the other hand, the clashes in Darfur have commenced at the start of this millennium and there is no independence or international recognition in sight.

### **Předpokládaná struktura práce:**

1. Introduction
2. Secessionism and external actors
3. Methodology
4. Comparing the Sudanese cases
  - 4.1 South Sudan
  - 4.2 Darfur
  - 4.3 Analysis
5. Comparing the Yugoslav cases
  - 5.1 Kosovo
  - 5.2 Macedonia
  - 5.3 Analysis
6. Analysis of the results
7. Conclusion

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# Table of Contents

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1. EXTERNAL SECURITY THEORY OF SECESSIONIST CONFLICT .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2. RESEARCH DESIGN .....</b>	<b>16</b>
2.1 Hypotheses .....	16
2.2 Conceptualization.....	16
2.3 Case selection.....	17
<b>3. SOUTH SUDAN .....</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Second Civil War .....	18
3.2 Ethnic Divides.....	19
3.3 External Support .....	19
3.3.1 Ethiopia .....	19
3.3.2 Uganda .....	20
3.3.3 United States .....	20
3.3.4 Other relevant actors .....	21
3.4 Strategy of the Parties .....	22
<b>4. OGADEN .....</b>	<b>23</b>
4.1 History of the Self-Determination Movement.....	23
4.2 Ogaden National Liberation Front .....	23
4.3 Ethnic Divides.....	24
4.4 External Support .....	25
4.5 Strategy of Ethiopia .....	25
<b>5. ANALYSIS OF SOUTH SUDAN AND OGADEN.....</b>	<b>27</b>
5.1 South Sudan .....	27
5.2 Ogaden .....	27
5.3 Comparing the Two Cases .....	28
<b>6. KOSOVO .....</b>	<b>29</b>
6.1 Ethnic Divides.....	30
6.2 External Support .....	31
6.3 Strategy of the Parent State .....	31
<b>7. SERBIAN KRAJINA .....</b>	<b>33</b>
7.1 Ethnic Divides.....	34
7.2 External Support .....	35
7.3 Strategy of the Parent State .....	35
<b>8. ANALYSIS OF KOSOVO AND SERBIAN KRAJINA .....</b>	<b>37</b>
8.1 Kosovo .....	37
8.2 Serbian Krajina .....	37
8.3 Comparing the Two Cases .....	38
<b>9. POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>LIST OF REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>47</b>

## **Introduction**

The 20th century has seen a dramatic increase in the number of sovereign and internationally recognized states, mostly former colonies. Many other groups, apparently inspired, attempted to form a state of their own, seceding from states sometimes only very recently independent. Some states, already part of the exclusive "club", often decide to support some of the new aspirants in their struggle. What is interesting is that in some cases, the central governments claiming sovereignty, or simply the parent states, accommodate the movements, while in other cases violently repress them.

The goal of this thesis is to answer the research question: How does external support for a secessionist movement influence the parent state's strategy towards the movement? This will be done by testing Ahsan Butt's (2017) external security theory of secessionist conflict by comparative case studies of South Sudan and Ogaden on one hand, and Kosovo and Serbian Krajina on the other. The method of controlled comparison will be used.

Bearing in mind that secession is a contested concept with many different definitions (Pavković 2015), it will be understood here as "demands by an ethno-nationalist group for either independence from, or significant regional autonomy within, a modern nation-state", based on Butt's usage of the term. This follows Horowitz's (2000, p. 232) rather broad categorization. In it, he considers possible differences between openly stated goals of the movements, sometimes under tactical or situational pressure, and real internal objectives for secession.

Theoretical approaches to secession are diverse (Pavković, Radan 2011). Besides those aiming to justify it are those attempting to explain why and how secession takes place (Pavković, Radan 2007, p. 171). Paraphrasing Horowitz (2000, p. 230), while the key to the emergence of a secessionist movement is domestic politics, the key to its success is mainly international politics. Research has been focusing on external involvement in secessionist conflicts for nearly three decades already (Heraclides 1990).

There has been a debate on what is the motivating factor behind external actors' support of secessionist movements. Some (Belanger, Duchense and Paquin 2005; 2007) emphasize political regime types, others (Saideman 2007) suggest the importance of ethnic ties and vulnerabilities.

Other research (Regan 2002; Paquin, Saideman 2008) addresses similar questions within the context of civil wars, a focus too narrow for issues of secession, however. Salehyan, Gleditsch and Cunningham (2011) examined why some rebels receive external support, while others do not. The effects of external involvement on the side of the rebels and its effect on the duration, termination and outcome of the conflicts has been investigated in recent years (Balch-Lindsay, Enterline, Joyce, 2008; Sawyer, Cunningham, Reed 2017).

Importantly however, the specific question “How does external support for a secessionist movement influence the parent state's strategy towards the movement?” has so far not been given much (and certainly not enough) attention, barring Butt’s work. This is remarkable also considering that parent state behaviour towards the secessionists and the role of external actors are two of the three units of analysis according to which the relevant literature on secession can be divided (Siroky 2011, p. 47). The case for testing the aforementioned theory further is therefore clear.

The structure and research design of this thesis diverts in some regards from the original project. The main reason for this is the discovery of Butt’s monography, which presents an interesting, yet so-far untested theory. Therefore, the original goal of focusing on the effects of superpower support has been replaced with a more general view of external support. Furthermore, a different case has been selected to be compared with the secession of South Sudan. The main reason for this is a clearer case of secessionism in Ogaden compared with Darfur and greater variance on the dependent variable in contrast with South Sudan.

The structure of the rest of the thesis is following: In chapter 1, Butt’s external security theory of secessionist conflict will be introduced. Chapter 2 contains the research design of the thesis. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are devoted to the cases in East Africa, first South Sudan, then Ogaden and in the end their comparative analysis. Analogically, in chapters 6, 7 and 8 the cases from former Yugoslavia, Kosovo and Serbian Krajina, will be introduced and analysed. Finally, chapter 9 discusses the findings in context of the theory and contains some thoughts on how the theory could be adapted to explain these cases.

# 1. External Security Theory of Secessionist Conflict

How does external support for a secessionist movement influence the parent state's strategy towards it? It depends, Butt (2017) argues. It first depends on how likely a future war after the secessionist moment is. If it is likely, another variable comes into play – the perceived level of support the external actor provides.

Put simply, when the parent state does not fear future war, it will react by negotiations and concessions, whatever the external support. When the parent state does fear future war, the level of external support matters. When it is limited, so may be the reaction, in the form of policing or similar measures. With moderate support, the general policy taken by the state tends to be militarization. When the support is high, the state turns to collective repression. In other words, “more serious threats are dealt with more violently” (Butt 2017, p. 18). This basic model can also be seen on the diagram below.

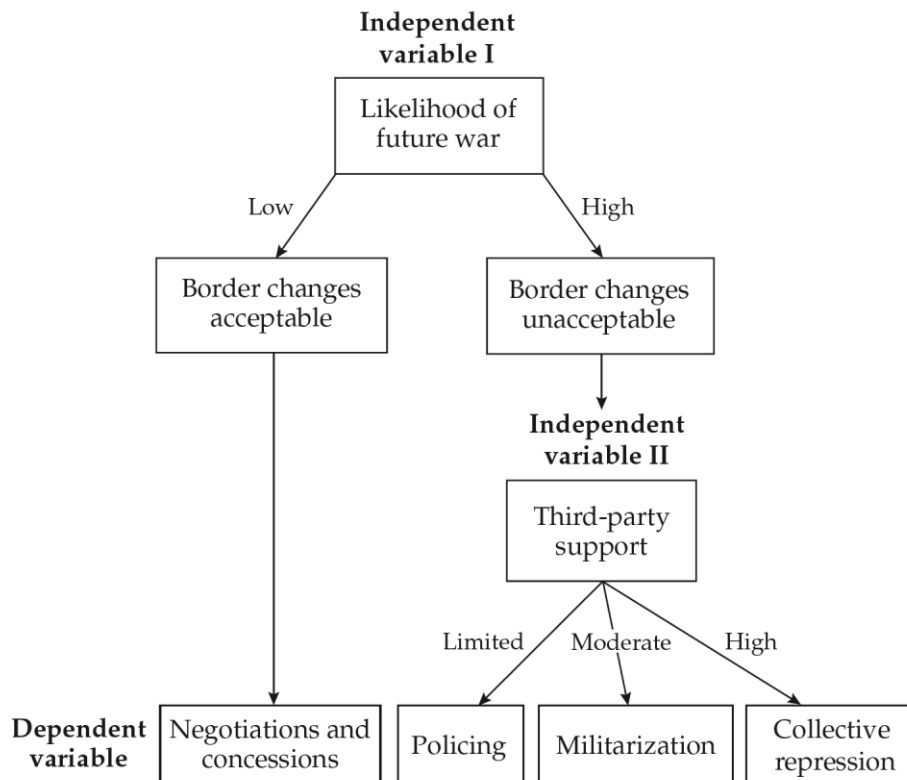


Figure 1: state decision-making when confronted by separatists (Butt 2017, p. 40)

The decision-making should be analysed at secessionist moments. That is, when the secessionists make “a demand or declaration of independence or significant autonomy” (Butt 2017, p. 19).

The reasoning behind why secessionist bids can trigger fears of future war is that secession makes rapid changes in the balance of power. The secessionists suddenly take a significant part of the population from the parent state. They will also be able to realize their own economic policy and control a military of their own, again to the detriment of the parent state (Butt 2017, p. 21).

Elaborating further, such fear is based on the depth of ethnic divisions and relative war proneness of the region. The former applies when the parent state fears war against the secessionists themselves, while the latter is more significant when the main threat is the supporting external actor itself (Butt 2017, p. 28). If the secessionists do not mobilize around an identity that threatens the parent state’s dominant conception of itself, and the region they inhabit is not war prone, the parent state will not deem future war likely. The table below captures this model.

		<i>Identity distance</i>	
		<i>Indifferent</i>	<i>Opposed</i>
<i>Regional dynamics</i>	<i>Peaceful</i>	Future war unlikely	Future war likely
	<i>War prone</i>	Future war likely	Future war likely

*Table 1: likelihood of future war (Butt 2017, p. 32)*

Why the parent state then tends to turn to a repressive strategy in case these conditions do not apply can be explained as a commitment problem. Rather than risking losing a future war against a strengthened rival, the state decides to escalate immediately (Butt 2017, p. 26).

Moreover, the stronger the secessionists are, the more force is needed to defeat them. Not only does external support lead to stronger movements, it may also incite emotional decisions and behaviour by leaders of the parent states, as they may experience feelings of betrayal. Those are the main reasons why more support leads to more violence from the parent state.

## 2. Research design

To test the theory, based on Van Evera's (1997) recommendations, two controlled comparisons will be conducted, totalling four case studies. Further reasons can be found below.

### 2.1 Hypotheses

Following from Butt's theory are these hypotheses, which will be tested:

H1: *When the likelihood of future war is high, parent states do not accommodate secessionist movements.*

The independent variable here is the likelihood of future war, while the dependent variable is the strategy of the parent state.

H2: *With higher levels of external support for a secessionist movement, the strategy of the parent state tends to be more repressive.*

In this case, the independent variable is the level of external support, and the dependent variable is again the strategy of the parent state.

### 2.2 Conceptualization

As mentioned above, Butt (2017, p. 28) sees the likelihood of future war as consisting of two components: depth of ethnic divisions and relative war proneness of the region. The latter is based on Jenne's (2015) model of nested security.

The levels of external support are conceptualized more clearly. The first level is (a) *limited*, which can include verbal/diplomatic support, financial aid or providing sanctuary to the secessionists. A higher form of support is labelled as (b) *moderate* that includes mainly military aid, though not direct military support "on the ground" – such support is in contrast marked as (c) *high*.

The key study variable is then the strategy or reaction of the parent state. The first cluster of reactions are (1) *negotiations and concessions*. Under this strategy, violence against secessionists is ruled out, the representatives of the parent state are willing to sit down with the challengers, and in the end may grant them greater political autonomy, some economic advantages or for example more control over culture.



Regarding the coercive strategies, the most moderate one is (2) *policing*, where armed forces may be used, though not extensively and only sporadically. (3) *Militarization*, as a higher form of repression, is understood as using the armed forces still on a limited scale, but against population centres and training camps of secessionists. The main target are combatants or direct supporters and not civilians, however. The most repressive strategy (4) *collective repression*, entails indiscriminate violence, civilians often being targeted, and it may include even ethnic cleansing (Butt 2017, p. 36).

### **2.3 Case selection**

Butt (2017, p. 20) considered the case of South Sudan in his work briefly, using the analogy between this case and that of Eritrea and Ethiopia to support his theory. However, this raises some doubts since South Sudan's last (and in the end successful) secessionist bid seems to correspond to a situation which should raise fears of future war in Khartoum, yet the secession turned out to be mostly peaceful between the two states. He also mentions contemporary "fears of full-blown war between" Sudan and South Sudan. Yet these have so far proved to be unwarranted.

Similarly, he mentions Kosovo and Serbia having "an icy relationship," a prospect of war seems currently misplaced, however. These are again mentioned as examples evidencing that there is a possibility of war between secessionists and the parent state after independence, though this has not yet happened, and the secessionists were not coerced after the final secessionist moment.

These cases are interesting from a different perspective than Butt suggests. Rather than supporting his logic, they seem to be the cases that do not fit it completely. It is therefore appropriate to test the theory using these cases. To do so, they will be compared with similar cases in each region, in line with Mill's *method of difference* (Van Evera 1997). In the case of South Sudan, this means Ethiopia's Somali Region – or simply Ogaden – and in the case of Kosovo, the short-lived Republic of Serbian Krajina.

It is fair to say that the method of difference (or most-similar systems design) is a weak testing method as the properties of the cases are never really identical except for one variable. This is the case here as well.

### **3. South Sudan**

South Sudan emerged as an independent state in 2011. However, history of its secessionism is much older. Since Sudan's own moment of independence from colonial rule in 1956 up until now, it has experienced two long civil wars, spanning almost the whole period in question.

The first civil war, fought by the so-called Anya-Nya movement in pursuit of South's secession, resulted in a semi-autonomy for the South, anchored in the Addis Ababa agreement signed in 1972. The deal and consequently also peace have, however, not endured (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, pp. 24-31).

The main actors of the second civil war were the government in Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). It's stated goal was, paradoxically, a "United Socialist Sudan, not a separate southern Sudan," (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 31) even though eventually the war resulted in the so-called Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the two parties, and consequent South Sudan's secession. The movement was divided in whether to seek autonomy or independence and the latter option only prevailed after the signing of the CPA with SPLM/A's leader's death. This second civil war and the final secession are the subjects of this case study.

#### **3.1 Second Civil War**

The second civil war lasted from 1983, when the Addis Ababa Agreement broke down, up until January 2005, when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA, also called the Naivasha Agreement) was signed by Sudan's Vice President Taha and SPLM/A's Chairman Garang.

The whole war can be retrospectively divided into three phases. The first one was marked by atrocities against civilians but also successes on the battlefield by the SPLM/A. After 1991, in-fighting almost brought the rebellion to collapse. However, this did not happen and after 1997, the movement adopted more progressive policies and was able to re-engage its supporters (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 32). Ultimately, the fact that neither of the parties was able to win the long war militarily was the principal reason for negotiations (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 105).

The CPA's individual components have brought, most significantly for this study, an explicit recognition of the right to self-determination of the people of southern Sudan and a pledge of an internationally-monitored referendum on whether to stay in a united Sudan or whether to secede. Besides that, the parties have stipulated agreements on wealth- and power-sharing. The former concerned the key issue of oil, which is abundant in South Sudan. The latter provided a guarantee that should the people of southern Sudan choose not to secede, they will enjoy significant autonomy and an important role in a reformed Sudanese state (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 109).

## **3.2 Ethnic Divides**

Why did the secessionist movement emerge in the first place? Idris (2013, p. 143) argues that the roots of the violent encounters are "legacies of local slavery, colonialism, and the postcolonial policies of Arabization and Islamization." The northern political leaders and elites in general were eager to construct a unified Sudanese nation based on "Arabness." Consequently, the political leaders have not embraced all ethnic groups as full members of the country.

He further claims that what has kept Sudanese politics so violent was not an artificiality of competing "Arab" and "African" identities, but rather the artificiality of the polity itself (Idris 2013, p. 4). As elsewhere in post-colonial states, the nations within them are older than the states themselves. And while race was a determining factor for citizenship in the North, ethnicity was the key in the South (Idris 2013, p. 144).

## **3.3 External Support**

Throughout the second Sudanese civil war, the SPLM/A have been supported by external actors, both regional and extra-regional. Major support came from the neighbouring Uganda, as well as Ethiopia during some phases. The role of the USA was not always the same and direct, although very important during the whole period in question.

### **3.3.1 Ethiopia**

Ethiopian government was supportive of the SPLM/A during the reign of Mengistu Haile Marian of the Marxist Derg regime, which ruled Ethiopia from 1977 until 1991. In fact, the military aid and safe havens provided were key to the emergence of the SPLM/A and Mengistu was SPLM/A's main backer (The Economist, 1998). The major

problems SPLM/A experienced during the first years of the 1990s can be traced to the collapse of the regime in Ethiopia as it stopped providing military aid and did not play a significant role in its support until late in the 1990s again (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 102). Nevertheless, even after the change of regime in Ethiopia, the state stayed generally supportive of the South Sudanese movement (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, pp. 204-5).

### **3.3.2 Uganda**

Uganda was a supporter of the South's independence already during the first civil war, primarily facilitating Israeli aid to the Anya-Nya. Uganda and South Sudan have also hosted each other's refugees (Heraclides 1990, p. 349; Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 203).

More importantly, during the second civil war, Uganda gradually started to provide safe haven, and military and other aid to the SPLM/A (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 204). The support SPLM/A was receiving from Uganda was crucial for them to again start with "effective and sustained operations" (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 102).

These ties have been at least partially based on personal relationship between the South Sudanese leader Garang and Uganda's president Museveni. During the interim period after the signing of the CPA, Uganda also emerged as the South's largest trading partner (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 204).

Uganda and the SPLM/A had also a common enemy in the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) as well as other insurgent forces on the borders of Sudan and Uganda. The LRA was supported for much of the civil war in Sudan by the Sudanese National Intelligence and Security Service and was based in Juba, now South Sudan's capital (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 204). The two central governments were thus each supporting proxy forces fighting the government in the other country.

### **3.3.3 United States**

During the later stages of the Cold War, Sudan has been an important strategic and economic partner of the US. It was in fact the largest recipient of US foreign aid within Africa. The US was therefore an opponent of the SPLM/A, as it was receiving backing from the socialist Ethiopia. The sides have turned, however, with the end of the Cold War (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 207). Sudan was labelled a state sponsor of terrorism by the US as Khartoum supported Islamist extremists, Washington pursued regime change

and sought to isolate Sudan internationally (Natsios, 2008). The SPLM/A was for its part attempting to disassociate itself from its socialist roots at the time, in order to appeal to the West and the US in particular (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 94).

The US was believed to be supporting the SPLM/A indirectly in the 1990s through the neighbouring countries, as it was not willing to support a brutal and unsuccessful rebel movement publicly (The Economist, 1998). At a minimum, it is clear that “in the mid-1990s the United States began implementing a new policy to strengthen the military capacity of Uganda and Ethiopia. For its part, Uganda began to coordinate with the SPLM/A in resisting the LRA and other insurgent forces in northern Uganda, providing a pretext upon which, and an environment in which, the Ugandans could give the SPLM/A more serious support, including military aid” (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 102).

The negotiations leading up to the CPA were facilitated by the United States, the Bush administration had a key role in initiating them, along with the UK and Norway (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 109), and it has become one of the agreement’s guarantors. During the interim period leading up to the secession, it supported South Sudan by large financial aid and helped SPLM/A to develop a credible military force (Natsios, 2008). “The primary role played by the US during the CPA process was pressuring Khartoum and bolstering Juba” (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 208).

### **3.3.4 Other relevant actors**

Among other relevant external actors who have in some way influenced the process leading up to the South Sudanese secession were also Eritrea, Kenya and Libya. Eritrea has supplied some aid to the SPLM/A when the Ethiopian backing diminished (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 92). Kenya has not adopted as much of a partisan position as for example Uganda, mainly acting as a constructive mediator between the two parties and hosting the peace process talks (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 203). Libya under Qaddafi’s long rule shifted its position on the conflict multiple times. During the 1980s, it was one of SPLM/A’s most important sponsors, then it was one of the first to help Khartoum militarily assault the SPLM/A, and in the end, just before the Western intervention in Libya, Qaddafi promised the new South Sudanese government some substantial assistance (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 202).

### **3.4 Strategy of the Parties**

As is clear from the previous sections, the Sudanese government in Khartoum has twice waged a war against the southern rebellions. However, at the turn of the millennium, negotiations between the warring parties have begun and, in the end, led to a successful secession by South Sudan.

Andrew Natsios (2008), a former U.S. Special Envoy in Sudan, argues that the reason the government has agreed to start negotiating was less in the international pressure on Sudan but rather in its weakness on the battlefield. Furthermore, continued fighting was hampering the prospects of enjoying profits from oil production. The peace deal was in fact a way for the government to guarantee its own survival.

Arnold and LeRiche (2013, p. 105) agree with this interpretation, citing the weakness of the government while also stressing the SPLM/A's own inability to achieve its goals. These were, crucially, the toppling of the government, not necessarily secession.

“The key contradiction of the history of the war is that a national revolution resulted in secession. A partial but crucial explanation of this is that with the death of John Garang in 2005, the revolutionary character of the SPLM changed overnight and a new understanding and approach to the CPA was applied. Rather than working towards the revolutionary transformation of the Sudanese state as the CPA provided, the focus overwhelmingly turned inward to South Sudan and the goal of independence” (Arnold, LeRiche 2013, p. 116).

Even though the goal has shifted towards secession, this has not changed much on the strategy of the Sudanese government during the interim period. There were heightened tensions after the signing of the CPA temporarily, especially over territorial demarcations, though this has not led to armed conflict again and the provisions of the CPA were abided by.

After the secession, there have been limited clashes between Sudan and South Sudan, mainly over the town of Heglig, stemming from the border disputes and control over oil fields (BBC 2012).

## **4. Ogaden**

In October 2018, Ethiopian government and the Ogaden National Liberation Front have signed a peace deal after 34 years of insurgency and a failed secessionist bid (Deutsche Welle 2018). Yet even before 1984, the relations were tense between the Ethiopian government and its Somali minority living primarily in Ogaden, an under-developed region in eastern Ethiopia (also called Ogadenia, officially the Somali Regional State).

### **4.1 History of the Self-Determination Movement**

Already in 1943 has the Somali Youth League laid claims to the territory, many years before it was even fully handed over to the Ethiopian administration by the British (Henze 2000, p. 261). This group was, as many others, calling for unification of all Somali-inhabited territories in the Horn of Africa, which also include areas of Kenya and Djibouti, and establishing a so-called Greater Somalia (Barnes 2007).

During the 1960s, Ogaden Liberation Front (initially called the United Liberation of Western Somalia) was set up in Mogadishu at the time of Somalian independence. This group has been supported with weapons, often originating in the Soviet Union, by the Somalian government (Henze 2000, p. 263). In 1975, the Ogaden/Western Somali self-determination movement was again resurrected with the newly constituted Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) (Henze 2000, p. 295).

The existence of this and similar groups has later been used by the Somali government in pretext of the Somali invasion of Ethiopia in 1977. During the invasion, regular Somali troops were concealed as “local” WSLF troops (Henze 2000, p. 298). During the summer of 1977, when Somalia held much of south-eastern Ethiopia, the distinction between local insurgents and Somalian invaders disappeared completely (Henze 2000, p. 300). The invasion was not successful for Somalia, however, and in March 1978, Somalia’s leader Siad Barre announced the withdrawal of Somalian forces from Ethiopia – admitting thus for the first time they were in fact there (Henze 2000, p. 302). Even after the war, the WSLF has continued with guerrilla operations within Ethiopia for two more years (Henze 2000, p. 303).

### **4.2 Ogaden National Liberation Front**

During the 1980s, divisions emerged within the WSLF and they led to the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) being established in 1984 – yet again in Mogadishu.

“Contrary to the WSLF, which had sought reunification with Somalia, the ONLF demanded a popular plebiscite to decide whether ‘Ogadenia’ should remain within Ethiopia, merge with Somalia, or aim for independence” (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p. 39). From then on, ONLF has become the most significant Ogaden self-determination movement. Still, even though ONLF has claimed to represent all Somali-Ethiopians, its biggest support comes from the Ogaden clan within the Somali Region in Ethiopia and most non-Ogaden Somalis in Ethiopia do not support it (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p. 41).

After the 1991 change of regime in Ethiopia, the state adopted more decentralizing policies. It invited the Ethiopian-Somalis to help organize a new ethnically based regional state. A regional government was set up and the ONLF has won over 60 % of the seats in June 1992 elections. Finally, in February 1994, the Ogaden-clan-dominated regional assembly has decided to pursue secession on Ethiopia (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p. 29). This was based on the Article 39 of the Ethiopian constitution, which states that “every Nation, Nationality and People in Ethiopia has an unconditional right to self-determination, including the right to secession” (Constitution of the FDRE 1994). For the purposes of this study, this will be seen as the secessionist moment in question.

It is necessary to stress that “while a multitude of opinions exists among members of the global Somali diaspora, most reject the possibility of a distinct Ethiopian-Somali identity”, while a part of the diaspora support pan-Somalism and a part defends independent Ogaden (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p. 38). Similar division exists within the Ethiopian-Somali population.

### **4.3 Ethnic Divides**

Ethnic Somalis and other Ethiopians identify themselves as opposites in many respects – often stereotypically, yet politically instrumentally. In linguistic terms, the divide is between the Cushitic Somalis and the Semitic Amhara people (one of the two largest ethnic groups). Religion again divides the Muslim Somalis and the majority-Christian Ethiopians. Economically, Somalis are viewed as the pastoralists while the Ethiopians as the settled cultivators. And politically, the Ethiopians have a hierarchically feudal tradition, while the Somalis follow egalitarian segmentary kinship. Thus, for a very long time, the two groups have generally viewed each other as members of different social universes (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p. 25). Even within Ogaden, “the majority of non-



Somali highland Ethiopians view all Somalis (whether living within or outside the country's territory) as alien to Ethiopian nationhood" (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p. 38).

#### **4.4 External Support**

If there has been any significant support for the ONLF throughout the years, it has come from Eritrea, which is allegedly its main sponsor (Deutsche Welle 2018). However, whether material support is real and significant is disputed, since the only such information come from the Ethiopian government (GlobalSecurity.org 2016).

According to Lyons (2006, p. 16), Eritrea was using the ONLF (as well as other insurgents in Ethiopia and Somalia) as a proxy force against the Ethiopian government in their own conflicts, while Ethiopia has acted in the same way with different groups in Eritrea. Lyons argues that Eritrea has provided sanctuary and military assistance to the ONLF. Hagmann and Khalif (2006, p. 36) also explain the ONLF's resurgence in the 2000s as being possibly driven by Eritrean military assistance.

There were also allegations of ONLF's ties to the al-Shabaab/al-Qaeda, though this too has been disputed (Bloom, Kaplan 2007; Human Rights Watch 2008, p. 30).

#### **4.5 Strategy of Ethiopia**

Following the request for exercising the right to self-determination by the Somali-Ethiopian regional assembly, the federal government has intervened harshly. Regional and federal security forces were used against the ONLF and their suspected supporters. A second side of the central government's strategy was to isolate the more militant members of the ONLF and their allies from the political process while at the same time supporting the moderates (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p. 36).

The central government also replaced several elected officials of the ONLF in the regional assembly and its members were imprisoned. This has led to sporadic clashes between the two sides (Markakis 1996).

Later, the government has combined "patrimonial and coercive tactics" (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p. 43). "Perhaps the most effective strategy by the central government has been the skilful exploitation of competition and differences among the region's clan lineages. The numerically smaller non-Ogaden-clan groups voluntarily accepted federal patronage with the aim of gaining influence in the region" (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p.

35). The federal forces have also been present militarily in the Somali-inhabited lowlands since then.

In 2007, the situation has temporarily escalated on the background of Ethiopia's intervention in Somalia. The ONLF has increased its insurgent attacks and it led to the Ethiopian forces first increasing their presence and then in June of that year starting a large-scale counterinsurgency offensive. The offensive has also targeted civilians and there were reports of village burnings and forced relocations (Human Rights Watch 2008, p. 31).

Internationally, the Ethiopian representatives have framed the issue as an international border dispute with Somalia (Hagmann, Khalif 2006, p. 26).

## 5. Analysis of South Sudan and Ogaden

### 5.1 South Sudan

In the case of South Sudan, it is possible to say that the parent state of Sudan may have been fearful of future war, in Butt's terms, when the South decided to secede. The ethnic divisions between the people of the north and the south have long been very clear, at least as perceived by populations of each of the countries, and especially by the northern political elites.

The relative war proneness of the region is also high. Not only have the two sides in questions fought two long wars themselves but there are also other conflicts. Sudan has a troubled relationship with Uganda (as well with other neighbours) and the two states have supported each other's insurgents. Considering this and the depth of the ethnic divisions, it can thus be said that the likelihood of future war at the moment of secession has been *high*.

The SPLM/A was supported externally mainly from Ethiopia, Uganda and the USA, most crucially by military aid. The level of support can thus also be considered as *moderate*.

The strategy the Sudanese government has adopted against the SPLM/A has shifted throughout the years. Since the two sides have waged a brutal war, it is clear that the strategy could be considered as *collective repression*. However, later in the conflict, the parent state has shifted its strategy and was willing to *negotiate* with the SPLM/A and did not reverse this position even when it was clear South Sudan was willing to secede.

### 5.2 Ogaden

Regarding Ogaden, it can also be assumed that Ethiopia's fear of future war was *high*. The ethnic divisions between the Somalis and the other Ethiopian ethnic groups are clear. Ethiopia has also experienced a war over the territory of Ogaden with Somalia, and it lies in a volatile region.

The amount of support the ONLF was receiving is disputed, though at least some form of it from Eritrea is quite likely and the level could be either *limited* or *moderate*.

Ethiopian government has, after the attempted secession in 1994, increased its armed presence in the region and has used the armed forces. Nevertheless, most often, it has

done so on a very limited scale. This strategy thus in the crucial time most resembled what Butt considers to be *policing*. The parties have recently started to negotiate, yet a prospect of an independent Ogaden now seems rather unreal.

### **5.3 Comparing the Two Cases**

In both cases, the likelihood of future war after the secessionist moment was high and there was some form of external support. However, in contrast to Butt's theory, in the Sudanese case, this has ultimately led to negotiations and a more or less peaceful secession, while in the Ethiopian case, secession was prevented by a moderate use of force.

Therefore, the two hypotheses, "*when the likelihood of future war is high, parent states do not accommodate secessionist movements*" and "*with higher levels of external support for a secessionist movement, the strategy of the parent state tends to be more repressive*" seem to be false in the case of South Sudan, yet not in the case of Ogaden.

## **6. Kosovo**

On 17 February 2008, the Assembly of Kosovo declared the independence of the Republic of Kosovo, seceding from Serbia after turbulent two decades, which included the first phase of the Yugoslav wars, the war of 1998-99 and an international administration.

At the start of the 20th century, Ottoman Empire was increasingly losing control of its territory in the Balkans and during the two Balkan Wars, new states were created there. The territory of today's Kosovo came under the rule of the Kingdom of Serbia and Montenegro. This persisted even after the chaos of the two World Wars and for most of the 20th century, Kosovo has been a part of what was mostly known as Yugoslavia (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 8).

Even when Yugoslavia has become a federal state, Kosovo did not acquire a status of a federal unit, only an autonomous province within Serbia. This was due to the fact that Kosovo, populated mostly by Albanians, did not qualify to become a republic as only the South Slavs could be recognized as nations in Yugoslavia under its ideology. Kosovo's autonomous status was even effectively removed before the break-up of Yugoslavia and under international law, Yugoslavia was supposed to dissolve on the federal framework (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 11).

Nevertheless, Kosovo has soon become a sensitive issue. Demands for self-determination have been raised at the start of the 1990s (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 11), while Kosovo remains an important symbolic territory for the Serbs who stress their medieval cultural and religious significance and are thus very sensitive to a possibility of an independent Kosovo (Ker-Lindsay, p. 8).

The conflict has significantly escalated in the second half of the 1990s. A guerrilla movement called Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) has become active and violent. The Serbian security forces have responded in a similar fashion, attacking presumed KLA strongholds throughout 1998 (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 12). This can be considered a stark parting with a history of non-violent passive resistance on the side of the Kosovo Albanians (Babuna 2000).

The Western countries, led by the USA, became increasingly involved in the situation. Pressuring the sides to agree on a peace deal did not materialize and NATO decided to launch an aerial bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY;

dominated by Serbia) even against Russian veto in the UN Security Council in 1999. The aim was not to create an independent Kosovo but rather for it to receive autonomy within the FRY and the result was a Serbian loss of physical control over the region (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 15).

Following that, Kosovo came under international administration (UN mission UNMIK, NATO mission Kosovo Force/KFOR) and from May 2001 was ruled within the “Constitutional Framework establishing the Provisional Self-Government”, a UN agreement (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 17). It nevertheless remained an integral part of the territory of the FRY.

During the period between war and secession, the Kosovo Albanians were ever more demanding of independence and a UN process meant to determine the status of Kosovo ended in deadlock in December 2007. Following that, the Assembly of Kosovo has, in the end, decided that Kosovo should secede and adopted the declaration (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 3).

## **6.1 Ethnic Divides**

Albanian nationalism is the youngest of the Balkan national movements, yet it exists already since the second half of the 19th century. After the establishment of the independent Albanian state, almost half of ethnic Albanians remained outside of that territory. Those living within the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes were marginalized and often forced to emigrate (Babuna 2000).

The divide between the Serbs and the Albanians is principally linguistic. Even though the religious aspect is also very important as the great majority of Serbs are orthodox Christian and the majority of Albanians Muslim, this is not absolute. There is also a significant portion of Albanians who are Christian. Besides that, as Babuna (2000) states, an important aspect of Albanian nationalism is a feeling of kinship.

The territory of Kosovo has also been a virtual demographic battlefield due to the symbolic significance it has received from both nationalities. The region has seen a dramatic demographic change in the second half of the 20th century marking a relative increase of the Albanian population there, caused by the Albanians’ higher birth rate. On the other hand, the Serbian authorities unsuccessfully tried to settle Kosovo with ethnic Serbs from the Krajina region in Croatia (Babuna 2000).

## **6.2 External Support**

Financial support for the KLA came predominantly from private sources. Specifically, it was mainly the members of the Albanian diaspora in the West that helped raise funds for the insurgency (Perritt 2010, p. 90).

There is no evidence of substantial financial aid from any of the western governments (Perritt 2010, p. 92). Only the Albanian government provided very modest financial support during the 1980s. Afterwards, it ceased to support the KLA materially due to its own financial problems and pressure from the outside not to get involved (Perritt 2010, p. 92).

There was also no state that would be directly supplying the KLA with weapons and it thus had to buy them on the international arms market (Perritt 2010, p. 117). The only exception of direct state support came during the 1999 bombing campaign as NATO “probably facilitated the weapons supply to the KLA” (Perritt 2010, p. 92).

Afterwards and up until today, NATO troops have been present in Kosovo physically within the mission KFOR, with the United States still being the largest contributor (U.S. Department of State 2018).

After the secession, Kosovo has been promptly recognized by many western governments, including the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Italy. However, a large group of states has decided not to officially recognize, most markedly Russia (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 4). After it has recognized it, the United States have also began supporting Kosovo with military aid (Balkan Insight 2008).

## **6.3 Strategy of the Parent State**

After the Serbian leader Milošević was ousted from power in 2000 by democratic parties, the country took a more moderate policy towards Kosovo. In 2003, before early Serbian elections, there have been significant calls raised for the Serbian troops to re-enter Kosovo (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 19). This has not materialized, however.

In 2004, after violent riots in Kosovo and the UN’s decision to push for a final settlement of Kosovo’s status, the Serbian government came up with its own proposals for Kosovo’s future. According to this plan, Kosovo Albanians would be given an extreme level of autonomy, albeit certainly not independence. Alongside that, it demanded that Kosovo Serbs would have a high level of autonomy within the

autonomously functioning Kosovo – “an autonomy within autonomy” (Ker-Lindsay 2009, p. 22).

After the declaration of independence by the Assembly of Kosovo, the Serbian government protested the move and continues to protest it. Yet the reaction has been only verbal and diplomatic. Serbia decided not to use force (CNN 2008) and the immediate reaction was only to recall ambassadors from the western states who recognized Kosovo’s independence (BBC 2008).



## **7. Serbian Krajina**

The Republic of Serbian Krajina was established by a proclamation of its constitution on the 19 December 1991. The constitution was approved by a joint meeting of the Assembly of Serb Autonomous District (SAD) Krajina, People's Assembly of SAD Slavonija, Baranja and Western Srem, and the Assembly of SAD Western Slavonija, three regions within Croatia, with Serbian majority (Radan 2017, p. 25).

This attempted secession came during the break-up of Yugoslavia and the Serbian-Croatian war, after Croatia opted for a secession of its own. The secession of Serbian Krajina thus constitutes a case of recursive secession (Pavković 2000). The process of Krajina's secession is highly interlinked with these historical events. However, the aim of this study is to focus on the happenings directly relating to Krajina's issue.

Soon after the victory of Croatian nationalists in presidential and parliamentary elections in Croatia – still within federal Yugoslavia – a process of constitutional reform began. This elicited severe anxieties among the Serb population of Croatia, which has been, during the Communist Yugoslav era, one of the two equal constituent nations within Croatia. The constitution was meant to relegate the status of Serbs in Croatia to the level of other national minorities, notwithstanding the fact they accounted for more than 12 % of the population there (Radan 2017, p. 13).

One of the first reactions of the Croatian-Serb population was the creation of the Association of Municipalities of Northern Dalmatia and Lika by six Serb-dominated municipalities in July 1990. It was proclaimed not to challenge the Croatian territorial integrity within Yugoslavia but rather be an “expression of the national and cultural specificities of that part of Croatia” (Radan 2017, p. 16). This was one of the first steps on the way for Croatian-Serb self-determination.

Soon afterwards, the Serb National Council was established, and a Declaration of Sovereignty and Autonomy of the Serb People endorsed, which was demanding of autonomy for Serbs in Croatia. Later, the Council organised a plebiscite in 23 Croatian municipalities that resulted in a clear call for autonomy (Radan 2017, p. 16). At the end of 1990, territorial political units were established in anticipation of Croatia's secession, including the SAD Krajina (Radan 2017, p. 18).

The crucial variable influencing the decisions taken by the Croatian-Serb leaders was whether Croatia would decide to secede from Yugoslavia. Milan Babić, supported by

Milošević, came to dominate the Croatian-Serb movement and he initially supported the idea of Serb populated areas being annexed by Serbia proper/Yugoslavia, should Croatia opt for independence. There was initially no clear answer to whether the Serb-populated areas should, in such a case, seek independence or annexation. What was clear was that they ideally preferred staying in Yugoslavia, while seeking some form of autonomy within the federal unit of Croatia (Radan 2017, p. 20).

In April 1991, a referendum was supposed to be held on the issue of whether Krajina should be annexed by Serbia. This was, however, refused by the Yugoslav/Serbian leader Milošević, who adopted the strategy of keeping Yugoslavia united. Such a move would only support Slovenian and Croatian ambitions for self-determination. With an amended question, the referendum was held later in May (Radan 2017, p. 21).

After a referendum on independence of Croatia in May 1991 and a passing of Declaration of Independence by the Croatian Assembly in June 1991, the People's Assembly in Slavonija, Baranja, and Western Srem (districts in eastern Croatia) first adopted a resolution declaring the will to seek self-determination and then later in September declared itself a federal unit of Yugoslavia (Radan 2007, p. 22). In August, a third autonomous district within Croatia was created, the SAD Western Slavonia (Radan 2007, p. 23).

After the Croatian Assembly formally declared secession in October 1991, the three assemblies of SAD Krajina, SAD Slavonija, Baranja, and Western Srem, and of SAD Western Slavonija together proclaimed a constitution of the Republic of Serbian Krajina, encompassing the territories of these three districts and thus seceding from the newly established Republic of Croatia (Radan 2007, p. 25).

## **7.1 Ethnic Divides**

As shown by Radan (2017), Croatia's nationalist movement was based on defining itself in opposition to the Serbs. The main line of divisions between the two are religious, linguistic and historical. Most Croats are (at least historically or nominally) Catholic, while most Serbs Orthodox Christians. Although the two are similar, Croatian and Serbian are two distinct languages. Croatia has also historically been a part of the Habsburg Empire, whereas Serbia belonged mostly to the Ottoman Empire (Trošt 2012, p. 41).

## **7.2 External Support**

During armed stand-offs at the start of the process described above, firstly during the so-called “log revolution” in August 1990, Serb militias were supplied by arms coming from Serbia and by taking over stockpiles formerly under local Yugoslav self-defence control (Radan 2017, p. 17).

As mentioned above, the Croatian-Serb leader Babić was supported also by Serbian president Milošević and the Yugoslav Army was fighting on behalf of Serbian Krajina. However, by 1995 Milošević was facing an increased domestic opposition, UN-imposed sanctions and a consequent disastrous economic situation. For these pragmatic reasons, Milošević has decided not to seek the unification of all Serb-populated territories in former Yugoslavia anymore and ceased to support the Republic of Serbian Krajina. Since Krajina was totally dependent on Serbia, its existence soon vanished.

The Soviet Union was prepared to back the Serbs in Belgrade in August 1991 with a secret arms’ deal worth 2 billion USD. However, the attempted coup in Moscow that month thwarted that, since the hard-liners in Kremlin that were planning it were purged. This led to a reverse of Soviet/Russian policy and ultimately a loss of clear Russian support for Milošević (Bowker 1998, p. 1247).

The western European countries of the European Communities were initially divided over the position towards the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Germany was a proponent of independence for Slovenia and Croatia, while France favoured a united Yugoslavia (Radan 2017, p. 22). The European Communities have ultimately decided, based partly on a legal opinion of the Badinter Commission, to follow the federal framework for dissolution. Since Krajina was, however, not one of the federal republics of Yugoslavia, it was not recognized by any of the western European countries (Radan 2017, p. 27).

The United States initially refused to address the question of Republic of Serbian Krajina as it was, during this phase of the Yugoslav wars, opposed to changes in the countries’ internal borders (Paquin 2010, p. 58). During the Operation Storm, the USA covertly assisted Croatia in regaining the territory (Coggins 2011a, p. 39).

## **7.3 Strategy of the Parent State**

It is crucial to see the establishment of Republic of Serbian Krajina in the context of Croatia’s own war of independence from Yugoslavia (at the time already dominated by

Serbia). Even before the Serbian Krajina officially declared secession on Croatia, Croatian and Yugoslav/Serbian forces were in heavy combat. Soon after Krajina came to be, the parties have agreed on a UN-monitored ceasefire, based on the Vance plan. Despite that, Croatia sought to get Krajina under control again (ICTY 2019). In 1995, Croatia conducted two successful offensives to regain the territory. Tens of thousands of Serbs were expelled from the country (ICTY 2019).

## **8. Analysis of Kosovo and Serbian Krajina**

### **8.1 Kosovo**

Has Serbia feared future war after Kosovo's 2008 secession? Such questions are never easy to determine. What is possible to say is that Kosovo has not been the most stable region in Europe. Even with the presence of international peacekeeping mission, ten years after the war, it would be misguided to call the regional dynamics peaceful. The identity distance between the Kosovo Albanians and the Serbs is also very much opposed. In Butt's model, future war should have been considered likely at the time.

Even though the KLA, the insurgency group in Kosovo, has not received much external support during its struggle, after Kosovo declared its independence, Washington has promptly decided to support the new-born state – not only by recognition, but also with material aid.

It is not entirely clear whether international peacekeeping presence or international administration could be seen as a form of external support within Butt's theory. What is clear is that there were many US and other soldiers on the ground in Kosovo. We can therefore confidently say the external support Kosovo was receiving was at least *moderate*, maybe even *high*.

Yet (or precisely because of that), the Serbian government has decided not to use force in opposition to that move. The reaction was almost strictly diplomatic. Even before the 2008 secession, Serbia was open to Kosovo having a lot of autonomy, provided it stayed within Serbia. It is thus necessary to label the strategy as *negotiations and concessions*.

### **8.2 Serbian Krajina**

Analysing the likelihood of future war in case where a full-fledged war is taking place seems rather bizarre. The regional dynamics during the Yugoslav wars were very much war prone and the identities of Serbs and Croats could almost not be more opposed. Border changes were thus definitely not acceptable for the newly independent Croatian state.

The level of external support Republic of Serbian Krajina was receiving from Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav People's Army was also definitely *high* as it was fighting the Croatian forces on its own.

The strategy Croatia adopted after the establishment of Republic of Serbian Krajina was soon a negotiating one, which resulted in a ceasefire. This was, however, a rather tactical move and later on, Croatia conducted major offensives that included ethnic cleansing and the strategy must therefore be considered a *collective repression*.

### **8.3 Comparing the Two Cases**

These two cases have a lot in common as the seceded states originate from the same state, Yugoslavia, and each one seceded from one of its federal units. Nevertheless, one was supported by the Yugoslav government and the other heavily opposed. What is also important is that their secessionist bid came in quite a different period.

There is also a significant difference in that unlike Kosovo, which in the past had a certain level of autonomy, Serbian Krajina's attempted secession was not based on any legacy of internal federal borders. This relates to the fact that Krajina was a (classic) case of recursive secession, in contrast with Kosovo. Both of these people struggling for self-determination also had a state nearby dominated by their national compatriots, though in the case of Kosovo, that state was outside the borders of the former federation.

As in the previous two cases, even in these two, the likelihood of future war at the secessionist moment was high. In both cases, there was also a major external support. Yet once, in the case of Kosovo, it in the end resulted in a peaceful strategy by the parent state and once, in the case of Serbian Krajina, in a very violent one.

The two hypotheses therefore again seem to hold in one case (Serbian Krajina), but not the other (Kosovo).

## 9. Possible Explanations

As has been shown, the strategies that parent states of South Sudan and Kosovo adopted against the secessionists cannot be sufficiently explained by Butt's external security theory of secessionist conflict. The comparative case studies presented here point in some directions regarding what might explain it.

Adhering to the external-support-based explanation, it is worth pointing out that the United States – a dominant actor in the international system during the whole period in question – supported both of these movements in the crucial moment, unlike the secessionists in Ogaden and Serbian Krajina. As Radan and Pavković (2007, p. 56) make clear, repressive and violent measures are usually costly to the parent state. Butt claims that in case of a secession that might lead to a war against a relatively strengthened rival in the future, the state decides to escalate sooner rather than risking conflict later.

However, in case 1) the parent state has already experienced major conflict relating to the secessionist movement and 2) a great power gets involved on the side of the secessionists, the calculations might change for the parent state. Put simply, it might be rational to surrender rather than risking being humiliated even more.

This is in line with Milena Sterio's (2013) argument regarding international recognition of secessionist movements. She claims it is in fact the great powers who rule on whether a secession will ultimately succeed or not. There is more than just this one condition – the support by a great power – in her argument. Nevertheless, she claims it "encompasses and engulfs" the other conditions and is a necessary one. Similar findings demonstrating the importance of great powers' role in state emergence have been presented by Coggins (2011b).

This possible explanation presented above might add to this argument, since the strategy the parent state adopts towards the secessionists is naturally key to whether they will ultimately succeed or not.

Alternatively, the "presence" of this particular great power in a given region might influence the parent states perception of the likelihood of future war. As Paquin (2010) has argued, the United States is a stability-seeking power, which only supports secessionists as a last resort, if it adds to regional stability rather than reducing it. This

might explain why the parent states are then either willing to negotiate with the secessionists or tolerate them without resorting to the use of force.



## **Conclusion**

This thesis has aimed at answering the research question "How does external support for a secessionist movement influence the parent state's strategy towards the movement?". Two pairs of comparative case studies have been performed in order to test Ahsan Butt's external security theory of secessionist conflict. The theory posits that when the likelihood of future war is high, parent states do not accommodate secessionist movement and that with higher levels of external support for the movement, the strategy of the parent state tends to be more repressive. These were also the two hypotheses tested.

For the secession of Ogaden from Ethiopia and Republic of Serbian Krajina from Croatia, these hypotheses hold true. The likelihood of future war could be considered high and the parent states did not accommodate the movement. Moreover, the level of repressiveness was corresponding to the level of external support the movements were receiving.

However, the secession of South Sudan from Sudan and Kosovo from Serbia cannot be fully explained with this theory and the hypotheses were false in these cases. Even though the likelihood of future war could be considered high and the level of external support was also moderate to high, the response to the secessions was in the end not repressive, as the theory would predict. On the contrary, the parent states did not use force in the crucial secessionist moment to stop the secession from happening.

What makes these two cases unique is that both of the movements experienced severe repression before the ultimate secessionist moment and they were supported by the United States. As suggested in the last chapter, these two conditions might change the calculations for the parent states, and it may be more rational to let go of the seceding state rather than keeping it by force. Or, alternatively, it might even decrease the perceived likelihood of future war, a fundamental condition within Butt's theory for the parent state to accommodate. These possible explanations require further research, however.

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## **List of Appendices**

Appendix no. 1: State decision-making when confronted by separatists (picture)

Appendix no. 2: Likelihood of future war (picture)