ACCOUNTING FOR SEPARATIST SENTIMENT IN
BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA AND THE NORTH CAUCASUS OF RUSSIA:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESPONSES

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Abstract

A tenet of modern studies of nationalism is that mobilized nations will want to live separately from members of other groups to achieve ethno-territorial goals. A comparison of attitudes to a question on preferences for ethnic separatism for two zones of conflict, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the North Caucasus of Russia reveals large differences both between and within the regions. For the 2000 respondents surveyed in each region in December 2005, more than half of those in Bosnia-Herzegovina believed that geographic separatism will improve the state of ethnic relations while the comparative figure for the North Caucasus was only 13 per cent. When examining sub-categories of the ethnic groups in each region, traditional social science factors, like religiosity, perceived income and levels of pride yielded significant differences but more so for Bosnia-Herzegovina than for the North Caucasus. Intuitive factors, such as experience with violence during the wars, were not consistently revealing and significant. The best explanations for separatist sentiment in both locations were geographical location (individual towns and counties) and respondents' levels of general trust.

KEY WORDS: Bosnia-Herzegovina, North Caucasus, separatism, war experience, inter-ethnic trust, localities

'To live in a territory of one's own': since the advent of modern nationalism, this attitude has been a powerful force challenging the interstate system and re-making the borders of the world political map. Yet, it is far from obvious just what kind of territorial order the claim implies or how it is to be created. The ideological aspiration for the convergence of an imagined collective identity and a territorial region can be termed 'ethno-territorialism' and human history over the last century records a number of grandiose projects by state elites to draw and re-draw maps and re-engineer the spaces of human settlement to conform to the seductive simplicity of ethno-territorial visions (Mazower 1998). In regions of ethnic, cultural and religious diversity that are experiencing rapid modernization, urbanization and political transition, ethno-territorialism is presented as a 'solution' by some political forces to the anxieties, insecurities and fears that accompany these processes. 'To each group, its own space' is an accompanying seduction that proffers an apparently simple spatial solution to what is politically constructed as the 'unnaturalness' of cultural heterogeneity and ethnic or nationality mixing. In power and in control of the coercive and ideological apparatus of the modern state, such visions can lead to minority oppression, political instability and, if taken to extremes, to ethnic cleansing and genocide (Brubaker 2004; Mann 2004).

This paper examines the contemporary strength of exclusivist ethno-territorial sentiment in two human geographic regions that are well known for their cultural and demographic diversity, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation. Since 1990, both post-Communist regions have been characterized by considerable political instability, organized state violence, ethno-territorial ideologies and attacks by non-state forces. From 1990, the republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter BiH) started to experience political instability which was justified using the language of ethno-territoriality by some, most especially by the political parties SDS (Serbian Democratic Party) and the HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union), founded in 1991 and funded by state-affiliated forces in Belgrade and Zagreb, respectively. From April 1992, the country was plunged into an intractable international *qua* civil war that saw three distinct armies fighting against each other, with outside forces from Serbia and Croatia as well as transnational mercenaries also involved (Burg and Shoup 1999). The North Caucasus has been convulsed by political instability and violence since 1991 as nationalist counter-elites challenged the power and position of traditional Moscow-affiliated titular-group elites in the region. Open warfare broke out in 1994 when the Yeltsin

administration tried to crush the Dzhokhar Dudayev regime in Chechnya in the wake of its declaration of independence from the Russian Federation and aggressive moves to undermine Moscow's authority in the region (Lieven 1999). The result was a protracted and bloody war from 1994 to 1996 and a re-start in Autumn 1999 that has spawned acts of terrorism beyond Chechnya and a continued condition of low intensity conflict across the region that is centered particularly, but not exclusively, in Chechnya and the neighboring republic of Ingushetia. Other conflicts with strong ethnic elements occurred since the end of the Soviet Union in North Ossetia (between Ingush and Ossetians) and in the highly-complex ethnic mosaic of Dagestan

Both BiH and the North Caucasus are regions with great ethnic diversity where the post-Communist transitions have given rise to political instability, the flaring of ethno-territorial ideologies in the face of official creeds of multiethnic coexistence, and the use of collective violence by outside and local parties to organize political space to conform to their authority. Both regions have distinctive histories of ethnonationalist identification and the institutionalization of 'national' identities in local governance structures. Both also have localized geographies of ethnic concentration and histories of competition over land, landscape icons and public space. Finally, both places are conditioned by their geopolitical setting which provides a structure of constraint and opportunity which can exacerbate (as in BiH, with the emergence of Serbian nationalism in the late 1980s, Croatian nationalism from 1989 and an avowedly 'Muslim' party in the form of the SDA [*Stranka Demokratska Akcije*] within Bosnia) or dampen ethno-territorial thinking.

Part of a larger project on 'civil war outcomes,' this paper analyzes the results of a 4,000 person social survey (2000 each) conducted in both regions in November and December 2005. The paper analyzes binary (yes or no) responses to the following general claim: 'Ethnic relations in my locality will improve when all nationalities/ethnicities are separated into territories that belong only to them'.[1] The question was deliberately designed to articulate, in simple common sense terms, what we characterize as the aspiration to 'ethno-territorial separatism' perceived and represented as an abatement mechanism and possible 'solution' to ethnic/nationality conflict and strife. Our analysis, involving extensive cross tabulation of the ethnic preferences in the survey results, is divided into five parts. Part one contextualizes ethno-territorial separatism within the institutional context of both regions. Part two briefly discusses the literature on nationalist ideologies in post-Communist states and prevailing explanations of

ethno-territorial separatist attitudes. Part three discusses the design and methodology of the public opinion survey. Part four comparatively discusses the results from BiH and those from the North Caucasus. Part five elaborates a comparison of our results from both regions to the broader literature on nationalism and concludes the paper.

Contextualizing Ethno-Territorialism in Russia and Bosnia-Herzegovina

The concept of 'ethno-territorialism' requires careful contextual definition and specification. In the Soviet Union, as the Bolshevik regime slowly came to terms with the 'empire of nations' it had inherited from the Tsarist imperial apparatus, it adopted a territorial form of governance across the country informed by political calculations and primordialist assumptions about 'national homelands' (Gorenburg 1999, 2001; Hirsch 2005). Ethnic groups were reified as essentially unchanging and unchangeable; further, each region was viewed as 'belonging' to the ethnic group for whom it was named and so, the ethnic political elite could reasonably enact laws and policies that gave preference to their members. By further developing institutions such as cultural organizations and folklore/language offices to promote the ethnic agenda, the Soviet nationalities policy institutionalized a form of ethnic distinctiveness that ensured that assimilation into the predominant Russian culture was haphazard and incomplete (O'Loughlin, Kolossov and Radvanyi, 2007). Within the Russian Federation, so-called 'autonomous areas' were allocated to spatially concentrated 'nations' in the North Caucasus but political calculations meant that the borders of these autonomous areas were frequently drawn to separate similar groups or to locate different nationalities in the same republic or region in a 'divide and conquer' strategy (Wixman 1980). In this way, the seeds were sown for future inter-ethnic competition and conflict in North Caucasian regions like Chechnya-Ingushetia, North Osseta, Kabardino-Balkaria and Dagestan. Within the autonomous areas, a carefully chosen and politically constructed 'ethnic cadre' was given a monopoly over the resources and this cadre determined, in turn, when the institutionally-constructed ethnic group might be mobilized. It was therefore a 'strategy that achieved ethnic peace not so much by removing the root causes of ethnic grievances as by eliminating mobilizational opportunities for independent ethnic protest'(Roeder 1991, p. 199). It offered benefits to select groups in a type of Soviet 'affirmative action' (Dowley, 1998; Martin 2002). Encompassing this politically engineered and

institutionalized ethno-territorialism from above was an official state ideology of multicultural tolerance and multiethnic harmony.

In Yugoslavia, the policy of the Tito regime towards the diverse peoples within the country was also shaped by political calculations as well as by the Soviet experience. In the wake of a horrific multi-sided civil war during World War II, Tito's regime institutionalized an ideology of 'brotherhood and unity' *(bratsvo i jedinstvo)*, a slogan that emerged among Partisan fighters during World War II in the Bosnian mountains (Hoare 2007). It held that all members of the state had equal rights and duties as citizens of Yugoslavia regardless of their ethnicity, religion and background. In the early post-war years, a supra-national 'Yugoslav' identity was promoted, particularly within federal military structures and the federal Communist party apparatus. Modernizing elites, active Communists, young people and national minorities were those most likely to identify as 'Yugoslav' by the 1980s (Sekulić, Massey and Hodson 1994). Second, all republics were recognized as equal parts of Yugoslavia, with Kosovo and Vojvodina gaining recognition as autonomous regions within Serbia. Republican borders were devised in ways that mostly respected traditional borders but some modifications were made to bring the official creed of equality to practical use (Connor, 1984). Third, the peoples of Yugoslavia were recognized as either nations (*narodi*) or nationalities (*narodnost*). A *narod* was a Slavic people who had their own home republic, whereas a *narodnost* was a non-Slavic group that resided on parts of the territory of Yugoslavia but whose perceived 'homeland' was elsewhere in the region. Kosovar Albanians, for example, had Albania while Hungarians in Vojvodina had Hungary as their supposed 'homelands.'[2] Besides the three peoples recognized by the first Yugoslavia (Slovenes, Croats and Serbs), Montenegrins and Macedonians were also given the status of distinct peoples. Yugoslav Muslims were not immediately recognized as a distinct *narod* though they would acquire this status in 1968.[3] The previous year the Titoist state began placing national identity at the center of Yugoslavia's evolving governance and constitutional structures. A federal Chamber of Nationalities was established to address nationality questions across the country. Communist parties at the republic and federal level adopted the principle of 'national parity' in party institutions and leadership positions, a principle extended to all federal institutions in 1971.

Yugoslavia thus had its own carefully circumscribed and bureaucratic version of ethno-territorialism from above. Bosnia-Herzegovina was distinctive among the Yugoslav republics in

that it had three 'constituent peoples.' After 1967, political life there was organized around an institutionalized 'ethnic key' that was designed to promote ethnic equality and undermine resentments that might feed nationalism. As in the North Caucasus, the Titoist system tried to combat ethnic thinking there and elsewhere by institutionalizing an acceptable apolitical form of it while demonizing its more political (i.e. potentially or actually anti-Communist) expressions as 'separatism'. The irony is that bureaucratic containment mechanisms made ethnic identity relevant in a material fashion to thousands of professionals and administrators, precisely the class that, under modernization visions, should be shedding their 'pre-modern' ethnic identity.[4] One's ethnic identity was central to one's career advancement in state bureaucracies and companies. This produced a paradoxical situation: Bosnia was, on the one hand, Yugoslavia in miniature yet it was also structured around a system that inevitably produced ethnic competition over state employment opportunities. For Tito, Bosnia-Herzegovina was the essence of 'brotherhood and unity,' a shared homeland among three mutually tolerant peoples. In official discourse, Bosnia-Herzegovina was *neither* a Muslim, Serb or Croat republic but *also* a Muslim, *also* a Serb and *also* a Croat republic (Andjelic 2003, p. 115).

In both Soviet Russia and Communist Yugoslavia, institutionally-engineered and politically correct forms of ethno-territorialism from above were premised on a shared and non-exclusivist regime of territoriality. Challenging this Communist form of ethno-territorialism on the margins were counter-institutional and 'politically incorrect' visions of territoriality organized around notions of separatism and exclusivism. With the economic failure and political collapse of the Communist system in both the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, an emergent ethno-territorialism from within and below challenged the official creed of multicultural tolerance. As central authority in both regions diminished, localized structures and institutions were in place to allow challenger and adaptive local elites to fill the political vacuum and mobilize ethnically socialized population for a nationality-based politics.

In the North Caucasus, the grab for local autonomy by the Communist local elites - 'nomenklatura democrats' (Drobizheva, 1999) - was based on the principle that the region should take control of its own economic resources. With the important exception of Chechnya, these moves were not separatist as it was claimed that the benefits could be shared by the titular population and non-titulars (usually Russians) alike, a kind of 'consociational pseudo-democracy.' (For its implementation in Dagestan, see Ware and Kisriev 2000, 2001.) Gorenburg

(1999) shows how the economic-ethnic rhetoric ebbed and flowed and the ethnic agenda was pursued in the shadows, especially through increased control by the titulars of the state apparatus, while the economic argument was made for public consumption. Part of the unspoken arrangement between Moscow and the regions was that the local ethnic elite would rein in the more extreme separatist ambitions of the cultural nationalists (Tishkov, 1997). But divergent territorial aspirations have led to continued tensions within the titular populations in Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Kabardino-Balkaria and Dagestan in particular (Hunter, Thomas and Melikishvili, 2003). The republics developed the iconographic elements of nationalism with new anthems, flags, education in the titular language and bi-lingual language policies.

In Yugoslavia, the December 1990 election saw the triumph of ethnically based political parties in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Though the three dominant parties -- the Serb SDS, Croat HDZ and Muslim SDA -- had agreed to work together before the election, the structures of governance in Sarajevo and at the municipal level quickly became dysfunctional and divided (Andjelic 2003). Radicalized by Belgrade-sponsored ethno-territorial separatism and subsequent warfare in Croatia, local SDS and other Serb nationalist party officials proclaimed a series of 'Serb autonomous oblasts' across BiH in 1991, stimulating local HDZ officials to do the same in western Herzegovina. BiH's proclamation of independence in April 1992 brought war and the proclamation of the separatist ethno-territorial statelets Republika Srpska (RS, based in SDS-controlled Pale, just east of Sarajevo) and Herzeg-Bosna (based in HDZ dominated western Herzegovina in the *opština* of Grude, just west of Siroki Brijeg). As is well documented, the RS established its territorial basis through warfare, ethnic cleansing, population expulsions and genocide, most pointedly around Srebrenica in 1995 (Cigar 1995). Through the intervention of the American government in 1994, the Croat separatist statelet, Herzeg-Bosna, was nominally marginalized and a Federation of Bosniaks and Croats established to confront Republika Srpska. Armistice talks in the US produced the Dayton Peace Accords of November 1995 which, on the one hand, asserted the territorial integrity of the state of BiH but, on the other hand, give most state capacities and powers to ethno-territorial entities separated by an inter-entity boundary line. Though nominally not ethno-territorial, the Bosnian Federation was made up of an ethno-territorial cantonal system that preserved ethno-territorialism at the local municipal level (Bose 2002; Dahlman and Ó Tuathail 2005b). Post-war returns threatened to disturb the apartheid territoriality created by the war, and did indeed do so in some notable places like

Central Bosnia and the eastern RS (Ó Tuathail and Dahlman 2004). Though BiH once more has an official ideology of ethnic tolerance and multiculturalism, ethno-territorial separatism during the war created 'facts on the ground' which endure in the post-war period (Ó Tuathail and Dahlman, 2006b).

Five Hypotheses about Ethno-territorial Separatist Attitudes

Our paper is motivated by two central questions: 1, what is the character and intensity of ethno-territorial separatism in contemporary post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) and the North Caucasus?; and 2, what are the determining factors that explain its valuation across survey respondents? We examine here only the social, and not diplomatic and interstate, determinants of ethno-territorialism. Academic studies on nationalist ideologies in the post-Communist societies provide a plethora of accounts which can be used to organize and explain our research findings. We have taken this literature and generated five hypotheses about what accounts for support for ethno-territorial separatism, hypotheses which we then examine empirically using survey data. Our choice of these hypotheses reflects existing research evidence from the regions we are studying as well as larger theoretical literatures. We do not claim that this list is either comprehensive or exhaustive but argue that it reflects major prevailing assumptions about the social determinants of separatism. Nor are we implying any direct causal mechanism from these variables to separatism, which leads us to use the rather general non-specific 'connected to' in our hypotheses:

1. Support for ethno-territorial separatism is connected to particular geographical locations.
Political geographic research on nationalism has a number of themes that are relevant to our concerns, including the discourse of territorial claims (Murphy 1990), boundary change and territoriality (Paasi 2003), and spatial scale and identity formation (Herb and Kaplan 1999). Political geographers point to processes of *spatial socialization* – acculturation into certain spatial identities and aspirations -- and *social spatialization* – the social production of notions of 'homeland,' 'region' and 'territory' -- that unfold in particular places and geopolitical locations (Paasi 1996). Geography is not conceptualized as a variable or reduced to 'objectivist' measures like rurality/urbanity or distance from capitals or conflict centers. This is not to deny the importance of these and other factors like ethnic enclaves and the nature of their majority-

minority relations (Massey, Hodson and Sekulić 1999). For political geographers, location and place are geo-political forces in themselves that generate variable attitudes towards ethno-territorial separatism. Regions that are historic bastions of ethnonationalism, that are envisioned as part of imagined separatist spaces, that are ethnically homogeneous, and remote from centers of modernity and commerce are, we hypothesize, most likely to be strongholds of ethno-territorial sentiment. Whether place overpowers other factors like wealth, socio-economic status and position is an open question.

2. *Support for ethno-territorial separatism is connected to perceptions of relative impoverishment.*

Materialist political economy theories explain nationalist movements and attendant ethno-territorial separatism in terms of 'internal colonialism' and the particular place of a group within a political economy of opportunity and constraint. Social and cultural differences are magnified by economic factors. An internal colonialism approach applies a core-periphery relations perspective to inter-territorial relations within a state in order to explain the rise of nationalism (Hechter 1975). Hechter and Levi (1979) believe that ethnic solidarity among any objectively-defined set of individuals is principally due to the existence of a hierarchical cultural division of labor that promotes reactive group formation. Therefore, political mobilization based on nationalism or ethnicity is formulated according to the nature of core-periphery relations or spatial uneven development. This process is dynamic so ethno-territorial sentiment waxes and wanes. Moreover, structural position does not have the same impact on all the members of the group (Gorenburg 2003). The internal colonialist model has reverberations in the relative deprivation explanation of ethnic nationalist mobilization theorists. From work by Horowitz (1985) in Africa and elsewhere, the poorest regions have a higher likelihood of building a separatist movement because of fear of being squeezed by richer regions in a newly-independent state. But the empirical work by Gurr (1994), and by Roeder (1991) and Gorenburg (2001) in Russia show that nationalities with the highest levels of educational and political clout have generated the most protest.

Woodward's (1995) study of the breakup of Yugoslavia lends general support to this argument, with the richest republics (Slovenia and Croatia) leading the revolt against a re-centralization of the federal state and obligations to redistribute income to the poorest regions of Yugoslavia. It is questionable whether a similar pattern holds true at the scale of Bosnia-Herzegovina itself. Since the international community has invested considerable resources in

trying to reconstruct BiH and make a unified state work, it is likely that the richest segments of society would only view further separatism as a return to war and inimical to their material interest in state modernization. But perceptions of the relative standing of groups to each other matter most within this perspective. In those Russian regions with some tradition of autonomy based on their distinct ethnic and religious character, the titular elites were able to mobilize group resources while non-titular populations tended to assimilate and lose their distinct character and group cohesion (Roeder 1991). Overall, this perspective points to perception of prosperity/impoverishment as potentially significant in explaining ethno-territorial sentiment; 'winners' (those perceiving themselves as relatively rich) can, in certain circumstances, potentially be supporters of separatism but, more likely, 'losers' (those perceiving themselves as relatively impoverished) are more likely to be inclined to separatism as a means of changing, and possibly improving, their material circumstances.

3. *Support for ethno-territorial separatism is connected to levels of religiosity.*

Social primordialism also points us to the importance of religion in the performative (re)production of ethnic/national identity. In addition, classic sociological modernization theories -- including the Marxism that informed the Soviet and Titoist conceptualization of nationality -- lead us to expect that religiosity, as an anchor of traditional identities and a force generally hostile to modernity, will be associated with ethnic particularism and social intolerance. Religiosity is worth foregrounding in the case of Yugoslavia because it the social primordial basis – what Wieland (2001, p. 212) terms the 'epicenter' of ethnicity as a concept of action singling out one primordial characteristic as the main point of contrast to another similar group -- for the same south Slavic people to recognize, organize and constitute themselves as separate nations. Churches became the incubators of nationalism, and religiosity is a strong predictor of ethnic intolerance. In a survey conducted in the winter of 1989/90 in Yugoslavia, Hodson, Sekulić and Massey (1994) found that religiosity had the largest standardized negative effect on tolerance. Ethnic hatred and intolerance themselves, however, are insufficient explanations for the dissolution of the state (Sekulić, Massey and Hodson 2006). Further, Kunovich and Hodson (1999) argued on the basis of survey data from Croatia, that religiosity does not cause ethnic intolerance. They found support for a 'salience hypothesis' – religion as the salient marker of boundaries between groups -- that holds that ethnic intolerance and

religiosity are jointly determined by in-group/out-group polarization as a result of competition and conflict over finite resources.

In the North Caucasus, religion is also an important factor in constituting identity formations and axes of conflict across the region though not in any simple manner. While most titular groups are Muslim (the Ossetians and Russians are predominantly Orthodox peoples), significant differences in the strands of Islam can be seen across the localities. Further, amongst Russians and other groups, high ratios of secularism and atheism are evident, partly a legacy of the Communist era. Whether the same expected relationship holds as in Bosnia-Herzegovina is an open empirical question.

4. *Support for ethno-territorial separatism is connected to high levels of ethnic/national pride*
Primordialist perspectives point to the transcendent bonds and durable 'givens' that are at the center of the experience of nationalism for its adherents and believers. Nationalists themselves tend to be selectively historic and often essentializing primordialists, and they are justly contrasted to social constructivists who emphasize the historic and socially produced nature of all feelings of identity and community. Recent theoretical thinking on nationalism has sought to accommodate the insights of primordialism (ethnic identities are *a priori* social facts) within social constructivism (Wieland 2001). Those scholars of nationalism that emphasize the social power of primordialism can be classified as social primordialists: they explore the way in which primordialism is socially constructed and acquires social force. Social primordial explanations emphasize the role of durable social institutions in the production and reproduction of ethnic identities and ethno-territorial attitudes. Through families and churches, schools and sports, music and dance, nationalist subjectivity is learnt as performance (Billig 1995). Boundaries are created between groups and bonds of trust forged within groups in performative opposition to outside groups who are viewed with suspicion. Some theorists tend to emphasize the 'sense of shared blood' that creates an affect structure that is powerful, irrational, spiritual and emotional (Connor 1994). Petersen (2002) emphasizes the importance of emotion, resentment and status reversal in the breakup of Yugoslavia. This perspective points us to the strength of feelings of ethnic identity and trust in explaining variations in attitudes towards ethno-territorial separatism. Our expectation is that within ethnic groups, those who have greater levels of collective group self-worth and who are suspicious of the interests and motivations of other groups will have a higher rate of preference for the ethno-territorial separation option.

5. Support for ethno-territorial separatism is connected to wartime experiences with violence.
Grievance mobilization theories explain nationalist movements in terms of the political organization of a population to address an experience of oppression or perception of oppression and unfair treatment. Many accounts focus on the political construction and organization of grievance by political entrepreneurs to serve their own interests. Silber and Little (1995), Gordy (1999), Gagnon (2004), among others interpret the wars unleashed by the breakup of Yugoslavia in terms of elite interest in power preservation and augmentation. Dowley (1998), Treisman (1997) and Gorenburg (1999, 2001) conclude that instrumental explanations are better than primordialist ones in explaining nationalism and separatism in post-Soviet Russia. McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (1996) argue that post-Soviet elites learned to use a 'collective action repertoire' – a limited set of routines that are learned, shared, and acted out through a deliberate process. It is not coincidental that violence increased in the latter stages of mass mobilization in the mid 1990s Russia (Beissinger, 1998).

Our interest in this paper is more with perspectives that point to the power of mobilizing events, traumatic experiences and the power of discursive storylines and belief to create movements which are beyond the instrumental control of elite groups. While political entrepreneurs may organize collective sentiment and perceptions of grievance, the experience of conflict and its translation (or not) into attitudes and political discourse is an important dynamic worth researching. Since the everyday consequences of the war in BiH and ongoing low-intensity conflicts in the North Caucasus are pervasive and widespread, and since our project is specifically interested in 'war outcomes', we asked a considerable number of questions in our surveys about the wartime experiences of our respondents, including whether they were forced to move, whether they witnessed or participated in violence, etc. In a post-war survey in Croatia, Kunovich and Hodson (1999) found that individuals who experienced property damage and violence during the war are less trustful of others, more likely to be ethnonationalists and more intolerant of ethnic minorities. Fearon and Laitin (2000) have probed the complicated relationship between ethnic identity construction and ethnic violence and note how they reinforce each other through the actions of both elites and masses. We hypothesize that witnessing wartime violence is a traumatic and radicalizing event and that those who had such experiences are more likely to support separatist sentiment.

Our opinion survey was not designed to 'test' any one theory or definitively 'prove' one account as superior over another. Rather, what we present below are empirical results that allow us to examine our starting hypotheses in greater detail and to see if they have sufficient analytical power to generate consistent results in both conflict regions or not.

The Survey Questionnaire: Design and Sampling.

The aim of the survey design was to stratify sampling points using thematic data for a wide range of sources: data from aggregate geographic units (*rayoni* in Russia and *opštini* in BiH) derived from government sources (such as the Russian Census 2002) were the primary sources to sample individuals who were chosen to participate in the survey questionnaire based on a geographic design that includes all types of districts in the two study regions. To organize our data collection and to overlay and integrate the spatial coverages for the different types of data, we developed two Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to display and analyze the information collected.

Since there is a scarcity of work on war outcomes in the affected region around Chechnya, we begin there with an exploratory approach for the most part. By contrast, BiH has been the site of detailed examination of the political and economic effects of the 1992-1995 war and has been the focus of numerous surveys (e.g. those of the Southeast and Eastern Europe Social Survey Project at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology [-](http://www.svt.ntnu.no/iss/ringdalweb/SEESSPper cent20Surveys.html) http://www.svt.ntnu.no/iss/ringdalweb/SEESSPper cent20Surveys.html) and international agency data collection (e.g. the quarterly UNDP report on the country). We measure and document the nature of attitudes and preferences towards the contemporary situation, social networks, socio-demographic and national characteristics, and the nature of cross-national relations in the light of experiences of conflict and continued unsettled political environment of the region.

The key element of our work is the implementation of a large public opinion survey of 2000 persons in each region in December 2005. The North Caucasus is typically not included in Russian national surveys and while there have been localized surveys in individual republics of the region, we believe that ours is the largest public opinion survey of the broad region (minus Chechnya and Ingushetia). It includes representative numbers of all the major nationalities and

while we can't be completely certain of its representativeness because of migration and temporary residences produced by the Chechen wars, comparison to the Census 2002 data suggests that the ratios for each major group in our survey are appropriate. Similarly, the last census of population for Bosnia was 1991 and while small-area population estimates are available, enormous dislocations, ethnic cleansing, internal migration and emigration have rendered these numbers problematic.

Since we could not completely cover all the 115 *rayoni* and cities of Stavropol' *krai* and the four ethnic republics of the North Caucasus (North Ossetia, Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria, and Karachaevo-Cherkessia) and the 109 *opštini* of BiH, we had to be selective in the choice of study sites for the surveys so that we have enough respondents in each community and also that we were sampling correctly for differences in the sizes of nationalities. (Details on the sampling design are included in Ward *et al.*, 2006). The data collection involved 3 stages: (1) collection in the North Caucasus of aggregate thematic data (mostly census 2002 data) of the whole of the regions at the smallest geographic units available, *rayoni* and cities, from the statistical offices of the respective republics; in BiH, the equivalent data are 1991 population and ethnic data; (2) stratification of the sub-areas of the study sites for selection as survey sites; and (3) survey of populations using a random procedure. A non place-based, random sample of the republic's population (the norm in sociological studies of attitudes) would not adequately test the degree to which levels of postwar attitudes vary with respect to place of residence, while controlling for national group membership, material well-being, or political attitudes. Systematic stratification on the basis of geographical units – in this case, districts (*rayoni/ opštini*) and cities/villages -- allows for a thorough investigation of the expectations about ethnic territoriality that emerge from the literature.

We deliberately used only independent explanatory variables in order to avoid selection bias that would result from sampling districts on the basis of political activism or indicators of ethnic violence (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994, pp. 128-149). We used a grouping algorithm (Ward's hierarchical method) in order to cluster types of *rayoni*/cities and *opštini* in terms of the socio-demographic indicators. At each stage of clustering, an error term is generated and we picked the cluster solutions that offered the best compromise between gross aggregation and cluster complexity. For each of the clusters, districts were sampled randomly except that the main cities were also included in the sample *rayoni*. By strategically sampling a wide variety of

counties and cities, we created a representative sample of districts. On this basis, we are able to correlate the nature of postwar conditions, national attitudes and ethnic interactions with the explanatory social-demographic variables and thus determine if contextual and (personal) compositional factors are significant with respect to the variation. In the North Caucasus, because of the complex ethnic mosaic, 15 sample points (of a total of 82) were added in specific regions to bring the sample ethnic proportions for specific groups closer to their ratios in the regional population. Even so, the numbers per sampling point are not exactly proportional and a weight is given to each respondent to adjust for these differences. Thus, all ratios for the North Caucasus in this paper report this weighted value. (We used the *svy* option in STATA 8.1 for all these calculations).

A survey questionnaire was administered to a random sample of adults over the age of 18 (voting-age population) in each of the 82 counties/cities in the North Caucasus. The distribution was roughly proportionate to the number of adults in each republic/*krai* and was composed as follows: Dagestan 625, Kabardino-Balkaria 246, Karachaevo-Cherkessia 121, North Ossetia 198, and Stavropol' *krai* 810 for a total of 2000 persons. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the sample was distributed proportionately to population in 35 *opštini,* so no weights are necessary. The locations of the sample points are visible in Figures 1a and 1b.

In the North Caucasus, from one to 13 Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) was selected in each stratum, depending on the number of respondents falling in each cluster. A total of 4451 contacts were made for the completed 2000 interviews or a gross response rate of 44.9per cent. In BiH, a similar design was followed and a total of 2234 contacts made for the 2000 completed interviews, a 85.9per cent response. The average length of the survey interview was 45 minutes, and the surveys were conducted in Russian in the North Caucasus by surveyors from Krasnodar, Moscow and Stavropol', and in Bosnian, Serb or Croat in the respective regions of BiH by local interviewers.

Comparing the Results from the North Caucasus and Bosnia-Herzegovina

In a series of prompts regarding the best ways to improve ethnic relations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the North Caucasus regions that included options such as required instruction for all children about the history and culture of all groups, we asked respondents to provide a

yes/no/don't know answer to the statement: 'Ethnic relations in my locality will improve when all nationalities (ethnicities) are separated into territories that belong exclusively only to them.' Unlike the other prompts which asked respondents to agree or disagree with 'integrationist' options such as 'the government should take strong action against national exclusivism', this prompt about exclusive ethnic territories was designed to measure the level of preference for 'separatist' solutions to ethnic rivalry. Our assumption is that those who agree with the separatist option are more 'nationalist' in their practices and beliefs, which we test by examining the correlates of ideologies with responses to this survey question.

It is worth noting that of the eight questions in the Bosnian survey to the leading 'Ethnic relations in my locality will improve when…' prompt, the ethno-territorial separatist 'solution' received the lowest score with only 50.5 per cent of Bosnians choosing it.[5] Other options -- when there is a sizable improvement in economic prosperity (93.2 per cent), when people are more tolerant (92.2 per cent), when everyone cares more about common problems and less about national ones (91.1 per cent), when police enforce the laws against criminality (91per cent), when leaders are more tolerant (90.8 per cent) and when the government takes stronger action against national prejudice (89 per cent) -- obtained a near consensus across Bosnia's three nationalities. These results would seem to indicate that there is strong potential support for a political order in BiH based on the containment and displacement of nationalist antagonism. Economic concerns are consistently rated as more important than nationalist issues in Bosnian surveys (see the results from the many UNDP 'Early Warning' surveys; see http://www.undp.ba/). However, with post-Dayton politics persistently dominated by nationalist parties – the HDZ, the SDS, and SDA – this reservoir of sentiment is channeled through structures that reproduce the terms of nationalist competition and conflict.

The 50.5 per cent of respondents in BiH that agreed that ethnic relations would improve locally if all nationalities were separated into exclusivist territories is overall a considerable endorsement of separatism. Since we exclude the 'don't knows' /'refuse to answer' systematically in the analysis that follows for both BiH and the North Caucasus, that figure rises to 55 per cent of our sample. There are many reasons why this is a majority sentiment as we explain for the graphical displays but obviously the legacy of a bitter civil war and a peace agreement that split the country into *de facto* ethno-territorial entities shapes contemporary public opinion in BiH. Currently, as residents of a state with a weak centralized rule and

localized autonomy as a result of a peace agreement that allowed such a (temporary) arrangement, a slight majority of BiH respondents are in effect supporting the *status quo*. Before the war, BiH had one of the lowest levels of 'ethnic distance' in all of Yugoslavia (Hodson, Sekulić and Massey 1994). National non-identification and 'Yugoslav' identification levels among the young were higher than other parts of Yugoslavia (Gagnon 2004: 39-43). Historically, BiH was a region of considerable ethnic mixing. Mixed marriage levels were at 16.7per cent in 1981, with 15.8 per cent of children listed in the census of that year as having parents of different nationalities (Gagnon 2004, pp. 41-42). The vicious and brutal nature of the BiH war, driven forward by state apparatuses in Serbia and Croatia, destroyed not only BiH's communities but also the willingness of its people to live together after a war characterized by crimes against people, homes and communities solely on the basis of their nationality (Ó Tuathail and Dahlman 2006a). Unchecked ethnic cleansing and violence by a minority of convinced separatists can turn whole communities towards these views.

In dramatic contrast to BiH, only 13.99 per cent of North Caucasian respondents chose the separatist option, that is, agreed that the best way to improve ethnic relations is by separating groups into exclusivist non-shared territories. By contrast, 51 per cent agreed that the Russian government should take stronger action against 'national exclusivism' and 45 per cent agreed that all people should be 'more tolerant'. The overall thrust of the responses in Russia to the best way to reduce ethnic conflict is clearly towards changing government policies towards more equitable treatment of all groups and promoting tolerance and cooperation across ethnic lines. Unlike the conflict in BiH in the 1990s, the wars in southern Russia have been geographically confined to a couple of territories and their border areas with occasional outbreaks of violence through terrorist strikes. Most people are not nearly as affected by conflict as their Bosnian counterparts were from 1992-1995 (Lyall, 2006). The Chechen conflict does not threaten to re-shape the Russian Federation in the same way as the Bosnian war did for that state, and in the context of a mosaic of multi-ethnic localities across the North Caucasus, most respondents in Russia do not see ethnic exclusiveness as a solution but one posing a bigger nationalities problem.
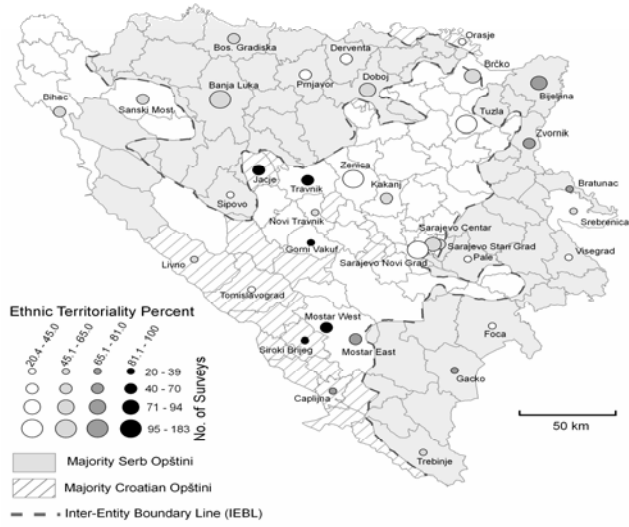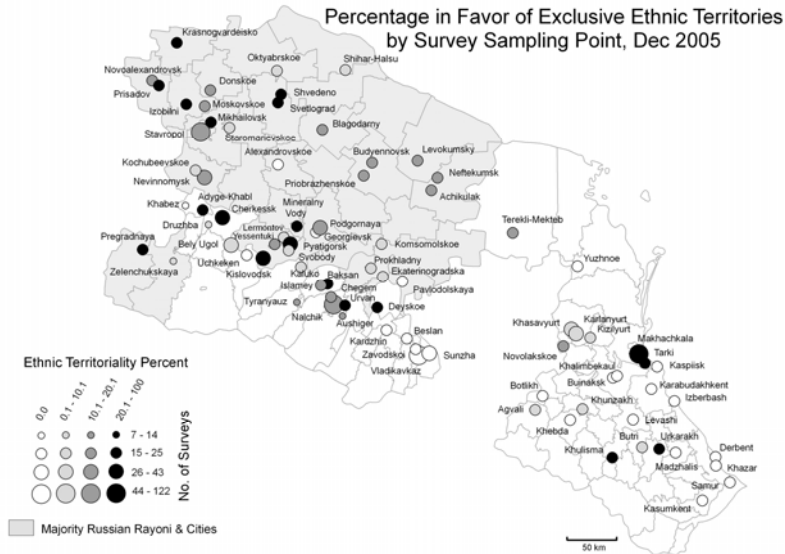
Figure 1: Geographic Distribution of Preferences for Ethnic Separatism by Sample Points a) Bosnia-Herzegovina, b) North Caucasus of Russia

Preference for Ethno-territorial Separatism by Nationality

Given the nature of the 1992-95 Bosnian context, one would expect Serbs to have the highest levels of support for ethno-territorialism. The war was fought over the creation of Republika Srpska as a separate ethno-territorial home for Bosnia's Serb population, though not all Serbs supported this separatist project in 1995 nor support it today. The results, shown on Figure 2, bear this expectation out to a certain degree. Fifty-seven per cent of Serbs support ethno-territorialism whereas only 44 per cent of self-identifying Bosniaks support it, reflecting in aggregate the simplified assumption that Bosniaks are mostly 'integrationists' whereas Serbs are mostly 'separatists.'[6] That only 57 per cent of Serbs support ethno-territorialism after the ethnic cleansing, death and sacrifice to create the RS is worth underscoring. Bosnian Serb opinion is heterogeneous, with an evident cleavage between 'paleo-nationalists' (committed separatists) and 'Euro-nationalists' *qua* 'liberal nationalists' (pragmatism within BiH in order to have a 'RS within Europe') (Ó Tuathail, O'Loughlin and Djipa 2006).[7] Also worth emphasis is the finding that Bosnian Croats recorded the largest level of support for ethno-territorial separatism at 58.2 per cent. The geographic variation in this figure is striking. One hundred per cent of respondents in the historic Ustaše (Croat fascist movement) stronghold of Siroki Brijeg, for example, supported separatism as did all respondents in Mostar West, uniformly self-identifying Croats. Respondents in the historically Croat region of the Posavina *opštini* of Orasje along the northern BiH border with Croatia, by contrast, tended to reject ethno-territorial separatism (38 per cent approval only). Similar forms of variation can be found among Bosniak majority regions (contrast Travnik and Tuzla) and Serb majority regions (contrast Bratunac at 80 per cent and Foča at 30 per cent). On the basis of this survey at least, there does not seem to be support for the contention that 'ethnic enclaves' are likely to be more predisposed to separatism than mixed areas (Massey, Hodson and Sekulić 1999).
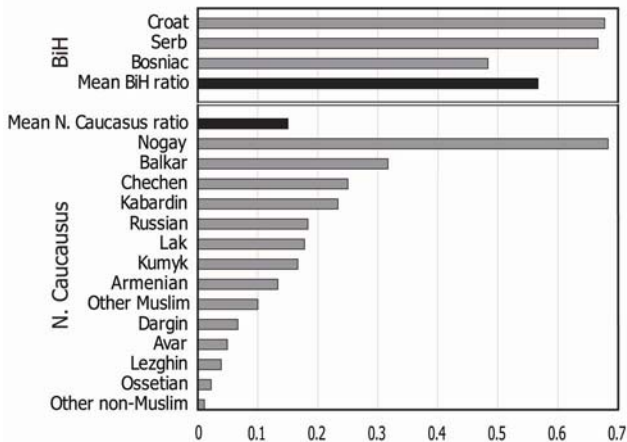
Figure 2: Distribution of Preferences for Ethnic Separatism by Ethnic Group in the Two Study Areas.

A range of responses similar to the geographic variation is visible in the graph of the average agreement level by ethnicity in the North Caucasus (Figure 2). Populations deported from the region by Stalin, Chechens and Balkars, have higher than average values. While Nogays (a formerly-nomadic Muslim group now concentrated in eastern Stavropol'' *krai* and northern Dagestan) have a two-thirds level of support for the exclusive ethnic territory option, Ossetians (an Orthodox minority) show only a 5 per cent support. Muslim groups (e.g. Avars and Lezgins compared to Kabardins and Laks) are found both above and below the regional average of 13.9 per cent. Neither is there a difference by governmental unit: for example, Muslim groups concentrated in Dagestan are both below and above the average.

At first blush, then, it would appear that ethnic accounts trump other alternative explanations of separatist sentiment in the North Caucasus but as we will show below, when we examine differences *within* these groups, these contrasts are even more dramatic than that of Figure 2 and the simple ethnic differences explanation fades. A common challenge for researchers on conflict regions, where 'nationality' and 'ethnicity' are politically produced constructions as a consequence of political entrepreneurship and mobilization by local elites, is to avoid reifying these identities or taking them as ciphers which explain all, while grasping that these identities are durable and dominant social facts, institutional categories and political identities that do not have as ready a fluidity and contingency as deconstructionist accounts find (Campbell 1998; Brubaker 2004).[8]

<u>Geographic Variations in the Levels of Support for Ethno-territorial Separatism</u>

The Bosnian war was not a single war but a series of local civil wars, featuring two and three sided fighting by the three main armies, the VRS (Army of Republika Srpska), HVO (Croatian Defense Council) and ARBiH (Bosnian government army). The war is sometimes described as a war of the countryside against the city, with the VRS holding vast swaths of countryside and surrounding ARBiH forces in urban enclaves (Burg and Shoup 1999, p. 33). Both these factors are starting points to help us account for the geographic variation in levels of rejection or support for ethno-territorial separatism. First, as might be expected, the areas with the highest rates of rejection of ethnic separatism are the cities of Sarajevo, Tuzla (43per cent) and Zenica (20per cent) (Figure 1a). The Sarajevo case is not a uniform rejection, however, as the Stari Grad recorded a 60 per cent level of acceptance of ethno-territorial separatism (45 Bosniaks, 1 Serb and 2 Croats in the sample), the center of Sarajevo 55 per cent (63 Bosniaks, 8 Serbs and 5 Croats) whereas the Novi Grad, our largest sample point in Sarajevo, had only 34 per cent (110 Bosniaks, 10 Serbs and 7 Croats). Other regions of low support for separatism are somewhat surprising but may be a result of the influence of refugee and displaced person returns: Tomislavgrad (39 per cent though a center of Croat separatism at the outset of the war) as well as Foča (30 per cent where 33 of the 38 respondents were Serb) and Višegrad (37 per cent) regions that saw terrible war crimes committed against their Bosniak residents.

The most important finding for BiH is that rejectionist sentiment is not confined to the Bosnian Federation but also has support in areas of Republika Srpska and western Herzegovina. The highest levels of support for the ethnic separatist contention are in regions characterized by intractable local struggles: the Mostar region and Central Bosnian axis of Jajce (100 per cent where 30 of the 43 respondents were Croats), Travnik (100 per cent where 44 of the 49 respondents were Bosniak), Gorni Vakuf (100 per cent, 17 Bosniaks, 1 Serb and 6 Croats), with our smaller sample in Novi Travnik recording a lesser level (57 per cent which comprised 10 Bosniaks, 3 Serbs and 16 Croats). Having fallen to the Croat army at the end of the war, Jajce has a very poor record of facilitating returns by Bosniaks and Serbs (Dahlman and Ó Tuathail, 2005a). Travnik was a major Bosniak refugee center during the war as well as arms production center and became a stronghold for strident Bosniak nationalism. Many Republika Srpska (RS) cities like Doboj (59 per cent made up of 12 Bosniaks, 76 Serbs and 4 Croats) and Bosanski Gradiska (52 per cent made up of 19 Bosniaks, 33 Serbs and 4 Croats) as well as the intensely

contested city of Brčko (56 per cent from 66 Bosniaks, 13 Serbs and 5 Croats) are close to the mean for the country as a whole. The RS capital, Banja Luka, is higher (64 per cent from 20 Bosniaks, 152 Serbs and 4 Croats) but the smaller sample in the former capital Pale is, surprisingly, lower (40 per cent from all 20 Serb respondents).

Though separatism is a minority view overall in the North Caucasus region, its expression varies dramatically from locality to locality as can be seen from Figure 1b which shows the percentage who favor the separatist option. By superimposing the map of the Russian-majority *rayoni* (counties) and cities, we can observe a general trend – a higher than average percentage of agreement with the separatist option is seen in most of the communities of Stavropol' *krai* in the north and west of the region. These mostly-Russian sample points differ from the mostly-Muslim (and Ossetian) communities. The highest rejection of separatism is visible in North Ossetia (Vladikavkaz and vicinity) with the four highest values (at 100 percent) found in eastern Stavropol' *krai* (Budyennovsk, scene of a major hostage-taking incident in 1995), the Nogay district of northern Dagestan, and two cities in the southern part of Stavropol' *krai* (Georgievsk and Yessentuki). Eastern Stavropol' and its adjoining regions have seen intensifying ethnic tensions in recent years, resulting in out-migration of ethnic Russians to the north and west (Kolossov, Galkina and Krindatch, 2001; O'Loughlin, Panin and Witmer, 2007), suggesting that local factors might contribute to these high values. But in remarkable contrast in another locale of conflict, sample points in the vicinity of Beslan, scene of a tragic hostage-taking at a school in 2004 that resulted in over 350 deaths, anchor the other end of the scale. Because Russians are a large minority in North Ossetia (about 22%) and relations between Ossetians and Russians are very good, the exclusivist territory option in this republic could be interpreted as a forced expulsion of Russians, an idea at odds with the state of ethnic relations. Similarly, most of the sample points in Dagestan, also the scene of growing inter-ethnic competition (Matzuzato and Ibragimov, 2005), are lower than average on separatism preferences. In general, inter-ethnic relations between the Muslim populations are good and a strong sense of Dagestani identity overlays the ethnic one (Eldarov *et al.*, 2007)

Preference for Ethno-territorial Separatism by Nationality and Wealth

While the nationalist literature is replete with theories about the effects of cultural, social and political traits of individuals in forming and mobilizing such movements, there is a need to

check whether these effects are independent or collinear with other personal characteristics. One of the possible underlying factors is the state of an individual's material status, the ability to acquire an adequate standard of living including food, shelter, and basic consumer needs. As noted, our expectation is that poor individuals will be more likely to support a 'division of spoils' along ethnic lines by supporting separatism in the belief that their material prospects will improve. Our surveys asked respondents to rank their income and material position into categories that we have composed as 'above average' and 'below average' (on a 4 point scale, we categorized "we can buy all we want" and "we can buy everything except major consumer goods" as above average and we categorized "we have only enough money for food" and "we don't have money even for food" as below average). The results are quite striking and suggest the complexity of the picture of support for ethno-territorial separatism in enlightening ways.
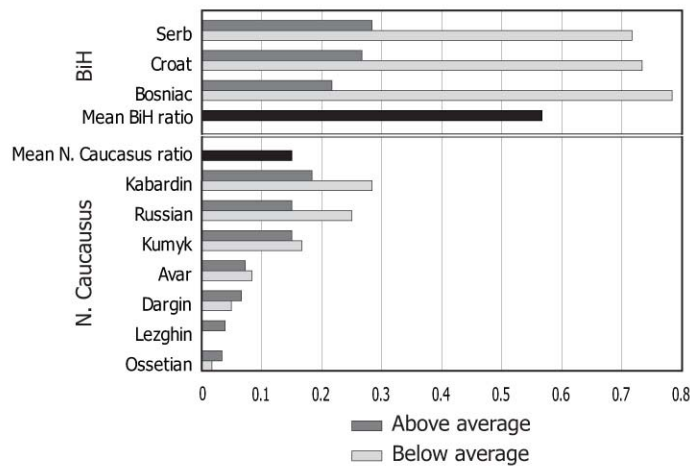

Figure 3: Distribution of Preferences for Ethnic Separatism by Ethnic Group and Material Wealth in the Two Study Areas.

In general, the correlation between reported material status and attitude towards separatism is strong. Those with perceived incomes below average register a level of support that is more than double that of those with incomes that are above average. In BiH, all nationalities with below average incomes express high preferences for separatism. Surprisingly, Bosniaks with below average incomes record the highest score followed by Croats and Serbs in this income category. Of those with above average incomes, Serbs are the most positively disposed towards ethno-territorial separatism though at less than 30 per cent, this is well below

the overall mean. Interestingly, the discrepancy in attitudes according to perceived income is greatest within the Bosniak community, with almost 60 percentage points separating the separatism attitude of poor Bosniaks from that of rich Bosniaks. Bosnian Croats are the richest of the nationalities in BiH and they too reveal a significant gap between how their richest and their poorest perceive separatism as a 'solution' to ethnic relations.

In the North Caucasus as a whole, individuals rank their material status as low; 35 per cent have only 'enough money for food' and 9 per cent do not even reach that income level. Lezgins, Laks, Avars and Dargins (all concentrated in Dagestan, one of the poorest subjects of the Russian Federation) all rank highest in the material well-being self-evaluation, while Ossetians (75 per cent), Russians (48 per cent and Kabardins (55 per cent) report that they can only afford food or are not even reach that income threshold. Our expectations for the effects for material well-being are generally met (the poorer segment of each sample has a higher preference for separation) but only the Russian sample shows a significant difference (14 per cent for above average and 24 per cent for below average). Of the independent effects examined in this paper for the North Caucasus region, the difference in the influence of material well-being within the national groups is the weakest, as a comparative glance of Figure 3 and the other graphs shows.

Preference for Ethno-territorial Separatism by Nationality and Religious Observance

There is a significant correlation between support for ethno-territorial separatism and religiosity in the overall BiH sample (see Figure 4 for survey definition of 'religious'). This is not surprising since religious identity is the ostensible social foundation for the construction of three different nationalities among people in BiH who speak the same language and share so many other cultural traditions and patterns of behavior. Religious institutions have also served as incubators of nationalism historically (Perica 2002). This is most apparent with Serb nationalism which developed closely with the distinctive identity of the Serb Orthodox Church (Cigar 1995; Gordy 1999). The situation is more complex with the Catholic Church and Croatian identity, especially in BiH which historically has been divided between Franciscans friars and the regular diocesan Catholic Church (Ramet 1996). Western Herzegovina gave strong support to the fascist Ustaše regime of Ante Pavelic during World War II. In local self-perception, this region is a devout stronghold and has at its center the Marian apparition pilgrimage site of

Medjugorje (in the opština of Citluk to the south of Siroki Brijeg) (Bax 2000). Finally, it is generally held that Islamic religious observation increased significantly since the outbreak of the war in BiH. The leading Bosniak political party, the SDA, remains strongly connected to Muslim religious leaders and the Islamic community. Religiosity, in all cases, tends to correlate with intolerance and support for ethnonationalism, though it may not be the cause of these (Kunovich and Hodson 1999). 'Religion is always exactly as civilized as the social layer that bears it' (Bax 2000, p. 29, quoting Norbert Elias).

The most striking correlation between religiosity and separatist sentiment is exhibited by Bosnian Croats where 85 per cent of the 'religious' supported separatism. The scores are slightly less for religious Serbs and then less still for religious Bosniaks. The range in support for separatism is slightest for Bosniaks but still considerable at over 40 per cent difference. The greatest range is exhibited by Croats at almost 70 per cent. The results from BiH tend to confirm the importance of a social primordialist approach to understanding political attitudes and preferences. In the wider literature on religion, it has been noted that religious individuals are more socially conservative and more in-group oriented. Regular socialization by durable social institutions like churches tends to produce in-group/out-group polarization (Kunovich and Hodson 1999).
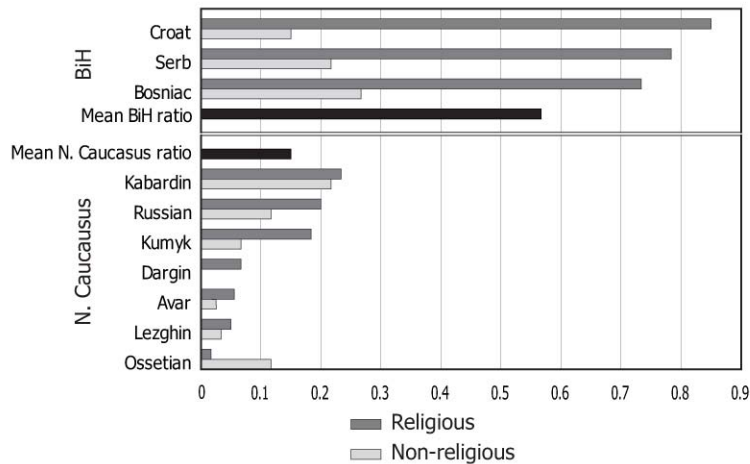

Figure 4: Distribution of Preferences for Ethnic Separatism by Ethnic Group and Religiosity in the Two Study Areas

Overall, the North Caucasus sample is not very religious, as measured by attendance at places of worship. Thirty-four per cent have never attended a place of worship with a further 14.3 per cent attend only rarely; only 12 per cent attend once a month or more often. While there has been a profusion of mosque building in the region, especially in Dagestan, since the end of the Soviet Union, most of these congregations are small (Giuliano, 2005; Matzuzato and Ibragimov 2005). As well as the revival of the traditional Sufism of the region, a major attempt to establish Wahhabism has also been evident (Walker, 2005; Ware and Kisriev 2003). The intersection of Wahhibism and Chechen nationalism has been noted by many observers and some villages outside of Chechnya have become part of the growing Wahhabist networks (Lyall 2006).

In the ethnic mosaic of the North Caucasus, many communities have a mixed religious profile with mosques and Orthodox churches in close proximity. As part of our consideration of how respondents are aligned on the ethnic territorial issue, we believe that the heterogeneous manner in which the religious revival after the repression of the Soviet years has been expressed across the North Caucasian landscape is an important cause, as well as a consequence, of the search for new identities in the wake of the end of the Soviet one.

A comparison of religious and non-religious respondents (we categorized those who attended a place of worship several times a year or more as religious) for the seven ethnic groups whose numbers in the sample were sufficient to allow such an analysis (more than 75 surveys) shows that our expectation was generally upheld. Only in the Ossetian sub-samples do the non-religious show a higher preference for separatism; repeatedly, the Ossetian sample does not line up with either their Russian or Muslim compatriots. Though North Ossetia is among the richer ethnic republics of the North Caucasus, like the others it depends for the majority of its budgetary needs – over 60per cent -- on subsidies from Moscow; it is also the location of major military facilities (Matveeva 1998). Ossetians are predominantly Orthodox and about 13 per cent are Muslim (Roschin 2006). Though generally following our expectation about the role of religion in nationalist discourse and ideology, only the Russian and Kumyk (a Dagestani Muslim group) sub-samples show significant differences, though the respective Ossetian sample differences reverse our expectation. Thus, the evidence is mixed and certainly, there is no consistent relationship between the frequency of religious observance and ethnic territoriality in the North Caucasus across ethnic groups.

<u>Preference for Ethno-territorial Separatism by Nationality and Ethnic Pride</u>

Ethnic pride is a socially constructed and repetitively reproduced 'affect structure' that is held to account for social and political attitudes. Similar to religion, it is to be expected that a sense of pride in one's nationality would translate into a greater sense of exclusion and separatism. While pride could be conceived as pride in a group's cultural or sporting achievements or as a general estimation of group self-worth, the evidence suggests that individuals who demonstrate a general sense of pride in their membership of a group are strong identifiers who tend to want and who produce clear boundaries between groups. They are, therefore, likely to be positively predisposed to ethno-territorial separatism. We categorized those who answered that they have "a lot" or "a little" pride in their ethnic group as "proud". Most ethnicities tend to have about four times more respondents who express "a lot" of pride as those who express "a little'.
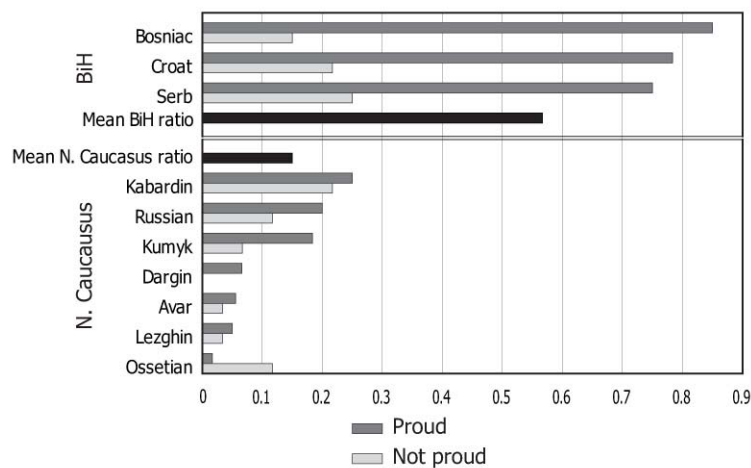

Figure 5: Distribution of Preferences for Ethnic Separatism by Ethnic Group and Level of Ethnic Pride in the Two Study Areas

The results from BiH confirm this expectation (Figure 5). Those expressing the greatest levels of pride are the most likely to choose ethno-territorial separatism. Like religion, the correlation levels are really quite striking. Those describing themselves as 'proud Bosniaks' are the most predisposed to separatism, followed by Croatians and then Serbs. Bosnian Serbs show the least variation in range and Bosniaks the greatest, with an almost 70 percentage points spread between proud and non-proud Bosniaks.

The contrast in ratios with our North Caucasus survey areas is sharp. Again, there, no sub-sample even reaches the 25 per cent threshold of a preference for ethnic separation (Figure 5). Only the differences between the sub-samples of Russians and Ossetians are significant, but the relationships are in opposite directions (proud Russians are more likely to prefer separation, while proud Ossetians are less likely to prefer it, only a 2per cent score for this subsample). Again, the special nature of the close Ossetian-Russian relationship in the republic underscores many of these results.

With the exception of the Ossetian sample, all other surveyed Caucasian nationalities line up as expected. Again, like the religious graph, Russians and Kabardins rank at the top while Avars, Dargins (the largest and second-largest groups in Dagestan) and Ossetians anchor the bottom. Despite some apocalyptic predictions of large-scale inter-ethnic conflict as a result of an avowedly ethno-political structure (Ware and Kisriev, 1997), the beliefs of ordinary Dagestanis do not support this prediction since the vast majority of them, across ethnic lines, do not wish to separate themselves into ethnic enclaves. Over the post-Soviet period, there has been significant population movement in the republic to the cities along the Caspian Sea coastline, as well as settlement by refugees from the Chechen war along the western border, but these movements are not reflected in any kind of strong exclusionist model. Among the Dagestani groups, the Laks have been most affected by displacement. In Stavropol' *krai*, mapping the population shifts since 1996 shows significant population growth in the northwest (in and near the city of Stavropol') and a decline in the plains of the eastern part of the *krai*. How much of these shifts are due to economic changes (land abandonment of marginal agricultural areas) or ethnic strife (Russians versus Nogays and other Muslim populations) is unclear (Belozerov, 2005; O'Loughlin, Panin and Witmer, 2007).

Preference for Ethno-territorial Separatism by Nationality and Levels of Trust/Suspicion

In conflict situations, the line between membership of the 'in-group' and the 'out-groups' is typically more firmly drawn. Bonding social networks between co-ethnics tend to become more important than bridging social networks across nationality *qua* ethnicity. One trusts one's own and maintains an attitude of suspicion to other ethnicities/nationalities (Cook, Hardin and Levi 2005). Widner (2004), Woodward (1999) and others note that social relations in conflict and post-war zones are characterized by pervasive levels of suspicion, and more

specifically by a lack of bridging social networks (Pickering 2006). Since these last three studies examine the post-Dayton BiH situation, a comparative look at the North Caucasus can be enlightening since the nature of conflict there is of a different scale than the large-scale destruction that engulfed Bosnia. Unlike Bosnia a decade ago, with the important exception of Chechnya, most people have not had to confront daily violence, the mobilization of able bodied adults to fight, the possibility of forced displacement, and generalized food shortages. With the general proximity of different nationalities/ethnicities to each other, social networks and attendant levels of suspicion/trust are likely quite different. Nevertheless, ethnic-based conflict in specific areas such as North Ossetia, Dagestan or eastern Stavropol' *krai* has possibly produced a growing separation of social interaction along national lines.

By categorizing individuals overall as trusting (agree that 'most people can be trusted') or suspicious (agree that 'you need to be very careful'), we develop an aggregate measure of general trust/suspicion which we relate to separatist sentiment in Figure 6.[9] Both the BiH and North Caucasus samples revealed high levels of suspicion. Only 22.2 per cent in BiH agreed that 'most people can be trusted,' a level that was slightly higher than that found in the North Caucasus. Our survey results in BiH show a strong correlation between level of distrust and support for ethno-territorial separatism (Figure 6). As we saw with the previous figures, it is a Bosniak subgroup (distrustful Bosniaks) that reveals the highest levels of support for separatism as a 'solution.' Serbs in the same distrustful category follow closely behind, and both are trailed by Croats. As with other socio-demographic predictors, the range is greatest amongst Bosniaks, suggesting considerable internal differentiation and cleavages within this group identity. Trusting Bosniaks are the most likely to reject ethno-territorial separatism, followed by trusting Serbs. Croats show the smallest range of attitudes along the trust/suspicious axis though the divide is a considerable one (over 45 per cent).
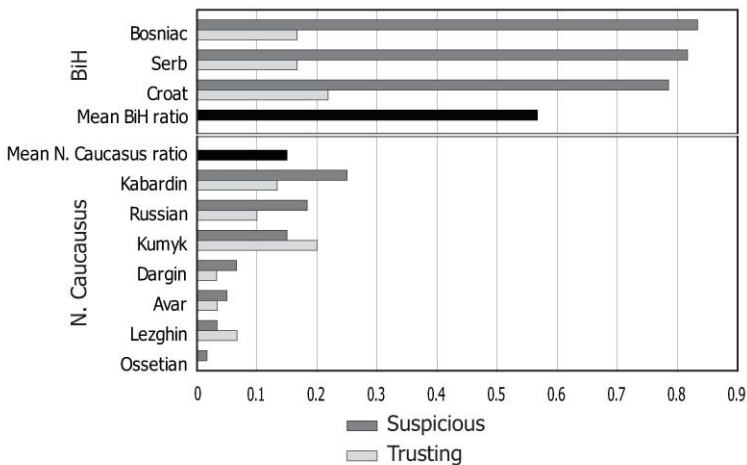
Figure 6: Distribution of Preferences for Ethnic Separatism by Ethnic Group and General Level of Trust in the Two Study Areas

In response to the general trust question that does not refer specifically to ethnicity or nationality, 18 per cent of the North Caucasian respondents believe that 'most people can be trusted.' There are big differences between nationalities. Dagestani nationalities like the Kumyks (35 per cent) and Nogay (35 per cent) have rates of trust more than double those of Russians (14 per cent) and Ossetians (14 per cent). The literature on generalized social trust has shown a sizeable positive correlation between income and trust but also shown that trust is dependent on local contextual circumstances (Secor and O'Loughlin, 2005). In the absence of any time-series data, it is hard to state whether trust is rising or falling in the North Caucasus region, as the second Chechen war seems to increasingly involve more districts and peoples beyond the confines of the republic (Baev, 2006; Kramer, 2005; Lyall, 2006).

Only the Russian and Kabardin samples support our hypothesis about suspicion and separatist sentiment in the North Caucasus; the others are either not significantly different (Ossetians, Dargins, Avars) or reverse the expectation (Kumyks and Lezgins, though the difference is not significant). While it is possible to argue that both Russians and Kabardins are disproportionately exposed to nationalist competition and occasional violence, the same could be said for the other groups in the study. The specific timing of the survey, a couple of months after the major attack in October in 2005 in Nal'chik (capital of Kabardino-Balkaria), in which over 100 died, probably contributed to the results for the Kabardin sample (see also Hahn, 2005).

<u>Preference for Ethno-territorial Separatism by War Experiences (Witnessing of Injury or Death)</u>

Even if individuals hold generally tolerant attitudes towards other nationalities, their attitudes can change as a consequence of traumatic events and personal experience with violence, injury and death. During the Bosnian war, an estimated 102,000 people were killed (estimate from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, ICTY) and over one-third of the 1991 population of 4.4 million was driven from their homes, 800,000 within BiH and over 600,000 abroad according to the UNHCR. Few people were left untouched by the violence for even if they managed to remain in their homes, they likely had an intimate experience with the war through the experience of relatives, through encounters with displaced persons, and maybe even with localized ethnic cleansing which drove neighbors from their community. Some would have directly participated in the fighting. Because the nature of the conflicts in the North Caucasus is different, comprised of guerrilla hit-and-run tactics since 2000, the distribution of violence there is uneven. For some, the key factor is distance from the Chechen war zone. For others, it will be the existence of a localized nationality conflict that cannot be subsumed under a general rubric and concerns the particular structure of governance in that republic or region. In certain cases, the violence will not be ostensibly political but will concern criminal activity and conflicting mafia networks. It was our expectation, in designing the survey, that the experience of individuals with violence will vary considerably and that this experience will color their attitudes to relations between nationalities. Communities which saw significant violence are expected to show weak cross-ethnic social capital and interactions (Coletta and Cullen 2000). In order to test this relationship, we asked specifically whether the respondents or their close family members had witnessed 'an ethnic incident that involved injury or death'. In a study of post-war Croatia, Massey, Hodson and Sekulić (2003, p. 71) found that experiencing a traumatizing event or suffering damage to one's home during the war is positively associated with ethnic nationalism. However, they also found that, contrary to their expectations, war experiences influence ethnic nationalist sentiment less than religiosity, education and professional status.
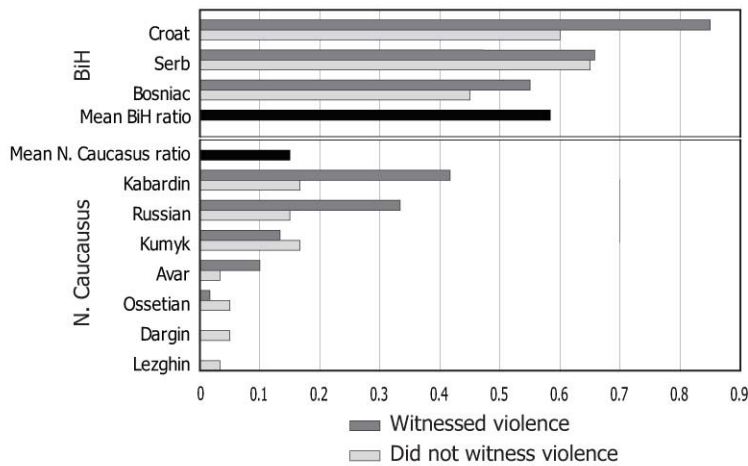
Figure 7: Distribution of Preferences for Ethnic Separatism by Ethnic Group and Experience of Witnessing Violence in the Two Study Areas

Over 25 per cent of our sample in BiH and 24 per cent in the North Caucasus indicated that they or a close relative had witnessed an 'ethnic incident that involved injury or death'. Unlike the other factors examined above, there was no overall simple correlation between witnessing a death or injury and attitudes towards ethno-territorial separatism (Figure 7). However, there were significant results by nationality. Croats who witnessed violence were distinctive in their overwhelming support for ethno-territorial separatism. Revealingly, the subgroups showing the next highest levels of support were Serb witnesses, then Serb who had not witnessed violence, and then Croats who had not witnessed violence. This is strong evidence that the experience of witnessing violence does not have a catalytic impact on nationality attitudes towards ethno-territorial separatism. National identity is more significant than any putative traumatic event or experience with violence. The two groups below the mean are Bosniaks who witnessed and Bosniaks who did not witness a violent ethnic incident.

In the North Caucasus, a surprisingly high overall ratio of 24.4 per cent answered in the affirmative about witnessing violence but it varied dramatically from place to place and from group to group. Ossetians (89 per cent), Kabardins (28 per cent) and Laks (26 per cent) have above average ratios of respondents who said that they or close family members saw violent incidents, while Kumyks (8 per cent), Dargins (8 per cent) and Lezgins (9 per cent) rank lowest. In a similar manner, the geographic range of this ratio reaches up to 100 per cent in Beslan, with

values greater than 90 per cent in Budyennovsk and Vladikavkaz (close to Beslan) and 64 per cent in Nal'chik. All of these locations have been the scenes of hostage-taking incidents with large loss of life during the past decade. At the other end of the scale, over 20 sample points have a value of zero per cent on this indicator of localized violence. The ratio of support for the ethnic separatist option has higher values for the Russian and Kabardin subsamples that witnessed violence than for the other analyses. These two groups consequently show a significant difference between the witnesses of ethnic-induced (or ethnic-blamed) violence and those who did not see it. Other groups do not show much percentage differences and for Ossetians and Kumyks, the ratios are the reversed of the expected relationship (but again not significant).

We attribute the result for the Kabardins to the events in Nal'chik in October 2005 which was fresh in the minds of the respondents. The results for the Russians are more intriguing since they are both the largest nationality and the most geographically dispersed in the region. In other survey questions, Russians report fewer effects on their daily lives of the ongoing violence than the overall average, and they are close to the average in reporting a forced move (11 per cent of the total) due to ethnic violence. However, Russians are more likely than other groups to report deteriorating relations between ethnic groups in the aftermath of the Beslan school hostage tragedy of September 20004. (This was another question in the survey). Compared to their Muslim neighbors, Russians are more likely to report a pessimistic outlook on the future of national relations, and are most negative about the (in)actions of the Russian government in reducing violence in the region.

The Power of Place

This paper has systematically compared attitudes in BiH and the North Caucasus towards ethno-territorial separatism using responses to the same question in large social surveys conducted in both locations at the same time. This type of controlled comparison is rare because the resources required to conduct such symmetrical research are considerable. It creates a unique opportunity to systematically test prevailing hypotheses about the social determinants of, or at least, the social correlates of ethno-territorial separatist thinking using evidence from two distinctive regions. We identified five distinct hypotheses about these social determinants.

Our overall finding was that BiH had much higher levels of acceptance of ethno-territorial separatism in comparison to the North Caucasus. (It must be remembered that Chechnya was not included in the North Caucasus survey and the statement about separatism was more explicit for the Caucasus). The geopolitical context, demographic structure and conflict experience in both regions is distinctive. Over three years of a brutal war characterized by widespread ethnic cleansing and the imposition of a cartographic fix by the international community produced higher levels of acceptance of exclusivist ethno-territorialism in BiH than in our North Caucasus sample region, where conflict is more localized and characterized by hit-and-run attacks on security forces.

Traditional social science factors, like religiosity, perceived income and levels of pride showed significant results but more so for BiH than for the Caucasus. Personal circumstances and personal beliefs are more important in explaining separation preferences than ethnic group membership. Intuitive factors like experience with violence were not consistently revealing and significant. The hypotheses that came closest to accounting for separatist sentiment in both locations were geographical location and levels of trust. Generalizations, however, are hard to make as 'geographical location' is itself something that is conditioned by multiple factors such as the state of local ethnic relations, war damage and experiences, economic prospects, and governmental actions.

In sum, the most salient, yet apparently banal, conclusion may well be the power of place, the power not of the allure of a 'place of one's own' to certain social groups within states but the power of regional circumstances, cultural distinctions, demographic weight and political opportunity structures in determining the strength of that sentiment. This encompasses the power of geopolitical traditions, socio-economic flows, communication networks and everyday spaces of encounter and mixing in ameliorating exclusionist sentiment and making alternatives to separatism much more appealing, natural and rational.

Returning to the 'salience thesis' of Kunovich and Hodson (1999, 2002) that ethnic relations are jointly determined by in-group/out-group polarization as a result of competition and conflict over finite resources, we can extend it to a consideration of how these competitions play out in localities. Neither Bosnia-Herzegovina nor the North Caucasus region was highly segregated at the end of the Communist era, though the war in BiH and the accompanying ethnic cleansings and migrations have now changed the residential map to one of large ethnic

majorities in most *opštini.* Though some Russian out-migration is evident in the North Caucasus, the ethnic map is still one of mixed communities. To dampen ethnic rivalries and to prevent in-group/out-group distinctions, Dagestan for example is constitutionally arranged and politically motivated to achieve fine ethnic balances and distributions. However, not all places have such careful rules nor do state-level actions always translate well to localities. Our maps of preferences for ethnic separatism show dramatic differences, even with the territories dominated by the same national groups. These geographic differences are as large as any socio-demographic distinctions and thus, undermine any simple ethno-nationalist explanations for separatism.

Acknowledgements

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NOTES

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[1] In BiH we used the more common word 'nationality' rather than 'ethnicity." The wording was: Međuetnički odnosi u mom mjestu poboljšat će se onda kad...pripadnici svih nacionalnosti budu svaki na svojoj teritoriji." The Russian text was: "Chto, po vashemu mneniyu, nuzhno sdelat', chtob' uluchshit'othosheniya mezhdu narodami v vashei mestnosti (vashem rayone)? Vyi mozhete v'bpat' do trekh otvetov u kazhdogo korennogo naroda dolzha b'it' svoya zemlya, a lyudi drugikh narodov dolzhn' uekhat' s etoi zemli." ("What, in your opinion, is necessary to do to improve relations between the peoples in your locality (your region)? Each defined ethnicity should have its territory and peoples of other ethnicities must leave this territory." We accept that this Russian wording of the survey question is more explicit and elaborate than that in Bosnia, and that this may well be a factor also in accounting for some of the considerable differences of responses across both locations.

[2] Italians, Turks, Ukrainians and even Roma were considered *narodnost*.

[3] The bulk of Yugoslav Slavic Muslims lived in Bosnia-Herzegovina (81.5per cent of the 1.3 million recorded in the 1981 census) but there was also a significant group of Muslims from the Sanjak region of Serbia and Montenegro -- historically part of Bosnia-Herzegovina – who identified as part of a trans-republic Slavic Muslim nation. Alija Izetbegovic's SDA(Party for Democratic Action) had close ties with this community and saw them as part of its constituency. Later, as republic borders became the basis for new states, a gathering of Bosnian Muslims intellectuals in 1993 voted to use the name 'Bosniak' to describe their national *qua* ethnic identity.

[4] Marxist-Leninism, like liberalism, held the view that national and ethnic identities were grounded in traditional modes of production and that a transition to modernity, either capitalist or socialist, would see these 'pre-modern' forms of identification wither away (Connor 1994).

[5] In keeping with conventional practice, we use the term 'Bosnians' for all citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bosniaks for those who self-identify as Bosnian Muslims.

[6] The language of 'integrationism' and 'separatism' is relative to BiH only. At the outset of the BiH war, most Serbs tended to identify with the 'integrationist' project of the Milošević regime which, first, sought to create a more centralized Yugoslavia and, second when that failed, sought to create a more integrated 'Serbian nation.' In this discourse, Bosnian Muslims and Catholics were viewed, along with the exemplary case of Kosovar Albanians, as 'separatists.'

[7] It should be noted that while the vast majority of Bosnian Serb identify and want to preserve the RS, this does not necessarily imply support for ethno-territorial separatism.

[8] In the discussions that follow of the factors underlying the ethnic separatism preferences, we used cross-tabulations to examine the ratios and used Chi-square to judge whether the differences with ethnic sub-samples (e.g, Serbs with incomes above and below the mean) are significant.

[9] Note that this is not a measure of ethnic trust or suspicion. We have a separate measure of that in our survey but use the general question here as an aggregate measure of disposition.