The Reintegration of De Facto States: A comparative case study of Republika Srpska Krajina and Eastern Slavonia

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1. Introduction

In the 1990s Croatia was everything but uneventful. The decade started with the Croatian War of Independence, during which the central government lost control of territory in the east to Serbs who were living there. Here, the Republika Srpska Krajina (Krajina) was created, a de facto state created by Croatian Serbs that claimed self-determination (Caspersen, 2012, p. 57). In 1995 the territory of Krajina was reintegrated into Croatia, which happened with the use of force and violence (Caspersen, 2007, p. 630). Eastern Slavonia was the only remaining area of Krajina under control of the Serbs after that. However, after a few years this region was also reintegrated, although this time peacefully (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 630-631).

By focusing on the aforementioned cases, this thesis aims to explore what can explain why parent states use different ways of reintegration, namely peaceful and forceful reintegration. Why was it necessary to reintegrate Krajina in a forceful manner, but was peaceful reintegration estimated to be a better option for the reintegration of Eastern Slavonia? On the basis of these specific two cases, this research provides a broader understanding of similar situations. The topic is highlighted from the perspective of the parent state, thus the state from which the de facto state seceded in the first place. When the focus is on the perspective of the parent state, it means that the factors that determine whether the parent state uses peaceful or forceful reintegration will be explored.

De facto states are an important topic in international relations, because they can create quite some tension. De facto states come into existence when an entity separates from a country that is recognized by the international community, but this means that the de facto state violates the territorial integrity of its parent state. At the same time, the principle of self-determination is highly valued. A weigh-off between the two principles can create friction and influences how actors in international relations act (Caspersen, 2018, p. 374). Because of that, de facto states are a relevant research topic. There is an important element of de facto states that has not been the topic of much research yet. Shortly said, de facto states are characterized by the fact that they function as an independent state, but still lack recognition by the international society of states. This typification implies that generally, the status of being a de facto state is temporary, although the time it survives differs greatly. This means that at some time a de facto state dies, be it through reintegration back under the parent state, which for example happened in Ajara (back under Georgia) and Tamil Eelam (back under Sri Lanka), or through achieving independent statehood and recognition, which among others can be seen in

the cases of Kosovo (seceded from Serbia) and South Sudan (seceded from Sudan) (Florea, 2017, p. 339). The factors that influence those outcomes have not yet been researched much.

Adrian Florea (2014) has made an effort to contribute to existing data sets about the international system in which de facto states were not included. His findings show that there have been 34 de facto states in the time period from 1944 to 2011. In this data set he also shows the outcome which de facto states face, i.e., if they were (peacefully or forcefully) reintegrated, survived or gained independent statehood. In another research from Florea (2017), the factors that might explain which of these outcomes is attained are discussed. He draws up four hypotheses, but it is necessary to be careful with taking the results from his research as fully substantiated, because he makes use of a statistical test that does not really fit the kind of research he aims to do. This has to do with the fact that Florea's research is not based on a sample but contains the entire population, thus all de facto states, while the results are interpreted as if the research was depended on a sample. Besides that, Florea focusses mostly on reintegration vs. independent statehood, while there is also a lot to learn about peaceful vs. forceful reintegration.

Regardless, Florea (2017) does raise an interesting point and provides an engaging niche, namely explanations for different outcomes for de facto states, for other researchers to fill. Another important researcher in the field is Nina Caspersen (2012), who dedicated a book to the subject of unrecognized states. Other academic articles that provide a foundation for this research regard external patronage (Coggins, 2011; Rafaat, 2018) and the influence of decentralization on ethnic conflict (Brancati, 2006).

To date, little attention has been paid to explaining how parent states make a tradeoff between peaceful and forceful reintegration of a de facto state that legally violates the parent state's territorial integrity. This makes it impossible to form a complete understanding of the functioning and nonfunctioning of de facto states. By contributing to knowledge about the topic, more thoughtful decisions or expectations may be formed in the future with similar cases.

From this intention follows the research question What determines whether a parent state reintegrates a de facto state peacefully or forcefully? To be able to answer this question, it is divided into three sub questions, that need to be discussed consecutively in the theoretical framework to be able to conduct research. The first two questions regard the establishment of definitions, so that it is clear to what this research specifically applies. These questions are 'What is the definition of peaceful reintegration?' and 'What is the definition of forceful reintegration?'. The third question is considered to guide through the theoretical framework to

make hypotheses based on existing literature, which can then be tested against the cases of Krajina and Eastern Slavonia. This question is 'Based on what factors does a parent state use which type of reintegration?'.

The constructed hypotheses will be analyzed by looking at articles that are written about the two cases. Through historical details of their existence it is tried to find explanations that can explain why the one de facto state was reintegrated peacefully while the other was reintegrated forcefully.

The second chapter will focus on theories that provide a foundation for the research conducted in chapter 4. The methodologies of the analysis are explained in chapter 3. The last chapter, chapter 5, is the conclusion in which will be ascertained if the constructed hypotheses can be confirmed, and what the added value but also shortcomings of this thesis are.

2. Theoretical framework

In the specific field explored in this thesis, namely that of factors that determine the use of peaceful and forceful reintegration, limited research is available. Because of that and also because it is necessary to have a broader understanding of theories that relate to the topic, the framework developed here draws on theories that are about de facto states in a broader perspective.

Before drawing hypotheses from existing academic literature on the peaceful and forceful reintegration of de facto states, I make three conceptual clarifications.

Concepts

De facto state

Not all scholars refer to de facto states as 'de facto states', and this may explain some slight differences between definitions, although the core of the definition is overall similar. That is why for this thesis articles that speak of unrecognized states, unrecognized quasi-states, state-like entities, proto-states, contested states and pseudo-states are also taken into account. This thesis uses the term de facto state because it is becoming the term that is most commonly used in academic literature (Kolstø & Paukovic, 2014, p. 310).

Toomla (2014) recognizes the fact that there are multiple different conceptualizations of a de facto state and examines multiple academic articles to find their common ground (Pegg, 1998; Kolossov & O'Loughlin, 1998; King, 2001; Lynch, 2004; Kingston & Spears, 2004; Bartmann, 2004; Kolstø, 2006; Geldenhuys, 2009; Caspersen, 2012). He finds that there are eight general criteria, although some scholars do differentiate from them a little bit. The criteria are focused on territory; populations; government; capabilities for international relations; absence of recognition; temporal criterion, some threshold in years that must be exceeded in de facto state's existence; declaration of independence or some other statement of intent. The first five criteria are well represented by all scholars, but the last three differ more (Toomla, 2014, pp. 47-48).

Caspersen (2012) draws up a list of four criteria to define in her terms an unrecognized state:

- The entity has achieved de facto independence.
- Its leadership is seeking to build further state institutions and demonstrate its own legitimacy.
- The entity has sought, but not achieved, international recognition.

- It has existed for at least two years. (Caspersen, 2012, p. 6)

Florea (2014) formulates seven criteria and puts emphasis on slightly different elements than Caspersen. Florea defines

[…] the de facto state as a polity that:
- belongs to (or is administered by) a recognized country, but is not a colonial possession
- seeks some degree of separation from that country and has declared independence (or has demonstrated aspirations for independence, for example through a referendum or a "sovereignty declaration")
- exerts military control over a territory or portions of territory inhabited by a permanent population
- is not sanctioned by the government (Florea, 2014, p. 792)

It is important to address that Eastern Slavonia is not always considered a de facto state by scholars. As will be elaborated later on, Caspersen (2014, p. 57) explains that Eastern Slavonia was part of Krajina but was the only region that remained autonomous after its fall. However, because of that, Eastern Slavonia never officially made a statement of independence, which for a lot of scholars is an important criterium for being considered a de facto state. Caspersen (2012, p. 57) also mentions that the declaration of independence of Krajina in general was already not very explicit, because although they made a statement about their secession from Croatia which was based on the principle of self-determination, they identified with an existing national state, that of the Serbs, instead of claiming a separate national. However, Eastern Slavonia is considered a de facto state based on the criteria that is placed emphasis on this thesis, because some scholars, such as Florea (2014) do also consider it a de facto state, and because it shows that the criterium of declaration of independence is not always as straightforward as presented by scholars.

De facto independence, (military) control over the territory, no international recognition and independence for at least two years are considered to be the criteria for a de facto state in this thesis.

Parent state

Rafaat (2018) refers to a parent state as a 'political unit that has international legal recognition but fails to exercise authority over a particular region that is part of its territory. According to

him, this means that it is likely that a de facto state arises' (p. 18). It is important to note, that the expectations that a de facto state arises is not enough to define this concept. In this thesis, a parent state is only a parent state if in fact a de facto state did emerge from the said parent state's territory. This thesis also does not put emphasis on the criterium that a parent state has to be a recognized state, because it implies that it should be recognized from the beginning of the secession process. However, these processes are not as sequential as theory implies, which is also seen in the case of Croatia, the parent state of Krajina and Eastern Slavonia, which gained recognition during the existence of the de facto state.

Pavkovic and Radan (2007, p. 5) define secessionism as 'the creation of a new state by the withdrawal of a territory and its population where that territory was previously part of an existing state'. The existing state is what they call the host state, which is a synonym for parent state. During a secessionist movement power is transferred from the parent state to the new entity (Pavkovic & Radan, 2007, p. 8).

Combining the two leads to the definition that is used for this thesis. A parent state is a state that used to have political power over a specific region within its territory, but this power has been transferred to the entity that seceded from it.

Peaceful and forceful reintegration

Conceptualizing reintegration in the context of de facto states distinguishes it from other types of reintegration such as the reintegration of minorities or groups that do not meet the criteria of a state. This reintegration process may be very different. Florea (2014) and Caspersen (2012) discuss the type of reintegration also referred to in this thesis.

Florea (2014, p. 797) explains peaceful reintegration as a de facto state that is reintegrated into its parent state where usually also a negotiation finds place to settle an autonomy arrangement. Forceful reintegration on the other hand is defined as reintegration with the use of force, during a battle. The de facto gets reintegrated under the authority of the parent state without gaining any autonomy afterwards (Florea, 2014, pp. 296-297).

Caspersen (2012, p-. 123-14) concludes that the reintegration of de facto states regularly happens with the use of force. With forceful reintegration, the main interest is the restoration of the parent state's territorial integrity, and no to little account is taken of the situation that regards the citizens and their safety. She shortly mentions peaceful reintegration, stating this happens through 'negotiated settlement' (Caspersen, 2012, p. 125).

This thesis combines the two conceptualizations. Forceful reintegration is the reintegration of the de facto state back under the parent state with the use of military power,

during a battle, and the living situation of the citizens after reintegration is generally not taken into account. Peaceful reintegration is formed through negotiations where the circumstances for citizens after reintegration is considered.

Theories

The focus of the research is on the perspective of the parent state. According to Caspersen (2018, pp. 373-374), it is considered a good thing when states engage with de facto states since it would be a conflict resolution device, because the hope is that this will eventually pave the way for a solution in the form of negotiated settlement. However, for the parent state this solution would contain that the de facto state will be reintegrated and that its territorial integrity is restored, while the de facto state would expect such a solution to be about international recognition and making their independence official. This shows that a de facto state most likely in first instance does not want to reintegrate at all. This view is also shared by Prorok (2015, pp. 74-75). In her article she talks about the role of leaders in civil wars, which does not always happen in the case of de facto states, but this theory on role of leaders can also be interesting to consider here, because the goal of civil war and secessionism is similar: self-determination. Prorok (2015) finds that leaders that are responsible for the war are inclined to settle for nothing less than victory, since only in that manner they can be sure that they will not fail politically and physically, because anything else will be perceived as failure.

It can, therefore, be assumed that a de facto state does not consider reintegration to be an option, thus having no premeditation about the process of reintegration, making it less interesting to research. Besides that, even if a de facto state were to want to reintegrate, this would likely be in a peaceful manner, because then it would surrender voluntarily or see an option to negotiate to establish a good position for itself under the authority of the parent state.

External patronage

External states are a key element within the topic of de facto states. Not only because de facto states are characterized by the fact that they are not recognized by the international community, but external states also play an important role in establishing new states. This is because, according to the constitutive theory of recognition, recognition is necessary to be considered an international person and be subject to international law (Grant & Barker, 2009,

p. 199). Theories in international relations mostly claim that the internal factors are very important for making a claim of independence valid, but Coggins' article suggests that the help from external states is also highly valued to establish legitimacy (Coggins, 2011, p. 435).

Rafaat (2018, pp. 21-22) explains that the state that helps the de facto state is referred to as a patron state, and this aid is called external patronage. One of the reasons a state wants to extent external patronage is because they can benefit from it, since it can for example pressurize the parent state involved or get power in the region at stake (Kolstø, 2006). Rafaat (2018, pp. 21-22) establishes also another reason for external patronage, namely when the patron and de facto state share the same ethnicity or nationality, which makes it a matter of protecting one's own men.

Following from external patronage, it can be presumed that this strengthens the position of the de facto state. Especially when the patronage is based on positive support, because the patron state will most likely try to help in a way that effectuates that the de facto state can make a better case for independence. Florea (2017, p. 340) touches a likewise subject in his article, in which he explains that support in the sense of military decreases the likelihood of reintegration or gaining recognition and becoming a state. Although external patronage is not necessarily the same as external military support, it does show a similar expectation one would have with external patronage in general, namely that it would increase the chances of survival of a de facto state. However, when the optional outcomes are just peaceful and forceful reintegration, and independent statehood and survival are excluded, it might show that this can also explain this difference.

Caspersen (2012, p. 124) also addresses that what can play a role in the outcome of reintegration (peaceful or violent) is that the parent state often is not completely aware of the relative strength of the de facto state, which is very much influenced by the actions of the external patrons. The estimation of the relative strength is important when the parent state makes strategical plans about reintegration.

If a de facto state receives help from other countries, their position relative to the parent state is strengthened, making that the de facto state has to include them in negotiations when trying to reintegrate them. From this follows the first hypothesis:

H1: When a de facto state receives external patronage, the parent state is more likely to reintegrate the de facto state peacefully.

Parent state's willingness to grant autonomy

Brancati (2006) discusses the influences of decentralization on ethnic conflict and secessionism. She argues that political decentralization, which means there are vertical levels of decision-making within government, can lead to a decrease in both. It can bring government and the people together which could better the opportunities for citizens to participate in government themselves. At the same time, decentralization can also work the other way and cause ethnic conflict and secessionism because it can motivate the enlargement of regional parties. These are parties that run elections in only one specific region of the country, and enlargement means that they will become more dominant and will have more to say in their region, which can lead to the idea of wanting to become a separate state and thus increase chances of secessionism.

This can also be an explanation for why a parent state would choose peaceful or forceful reintegration. With peaceful reintegration, the chances that de facto states get some kind of autonomy and can participate in government is higher. So they could choose to act on this if they are convinced that this will ensure less conflict. But if they assume it will work the other way around, namely making the de facto entity even stronger, it is more likely that the parent state will stimulate the use force to make sure they gain full control over the entity leaving it with no autonomy whatsoever.

Also, if one looks at it more generally, if the parent state accepts that the group that created the de facto state needs to be represented in the government of the parent state in some way, the likeliness of peaceful reintegration is greater, because the relationship between the two must remain good. From this follows the second hypothesis.

H2: If the parent state is willing to grant autonomy to the de facto entity, the parent state will use a peaceful form of reintegration.

Fragmentation

Florea (2017) is one of the few scholars that explores a very similar topic to the research of this thesis. Florea (2017) has a hypothesis that is interesting to also consider in this research and thus to include in the theoretical framework. He claims that if there is more fragmentation, this increases the chances of forceful reintegration. Research from Bakke, Cunningham and Seymour (2012) shows that often the leaders of a de facto state act as if they are very much unified to the rest of the world, while in reality there are often multiple branches within such an organisation, with multiple visions.

The hypothesis from Florea (2017) is thus quite assumable because when there is a lot of fragmentation, it is easier for the parent state to conquer the de facto entity. If the de facto state is more unified, its position is stronger, and the chances are higher that the parent state has to decide on negotiation because it will not stand a chance otherwise. From this follows the last hypothesis that will be tested in this thesis.

H3: The higher the level of fragmentation in the de facto state, the higher the likeliness of the parent state to decide on forceful reintegration.

3. Method

To tackle the question of peaceful and forceful reintegration of de facto states I conduct qualitative research. This suits this research better than quantitative analysis because it focuses on telling the history and development of a case. I do this to pay more attention to interpreting social and political aspects of the texts, ensuring that not only relations between factors and outcomes are presented, but also to provide insight as to why these influence each other (Vromen, 2018, pp. 249-250). Of course, also in this thesis, the aspiration is that the chosen case studies, Krajina and Eastern Slavonia, provide a basis that could be generalized to other cases, but it is not automatically assumed. Qualitative analysis is also more fitting than quantitative because every (de facto) state is different. Although there may be similarities, it is close to impossible to rule out factors since it could be that they are influential in other cases. At the same time, it is close to impossible to assume that one significant aspect leads to the same outcome in all situations.

The cases are analyzed by looking at their history. It is important to focus on historical evidence, because for a research question like the one in this thesis, a controled experiment cannot be conducted, since variables cannot be removed or added (Kolstø & Paukovic, 2014, p. 312). Scholars that use historiography are specifically interested in explaining real-world outcomes, using history as an analytical tool, and they are strongly interested in the ways in which institutions shaped political outcomes (Vromen, 2018, p. 250), which is also the goal of this thesis.

Therefore, in this thesis, a case-study analysis is conducted. The study is based on three hypotheses to see if these can be accepted or rejected. The decision made to select two de facto states and compare them improves the quality of the study. The comparison shows whether theories apply to a broader range of cases (Vromen, 2018, p. 284).

The cases selected for the analysis are Krajina and Eastern Slavonia. This thesis follows the list of de facto states and their outcomes of Florea (2014). According to his dataset, there are just six cases of peaceful reintegration and six cases of forceful reintegration between 1945 and 2011. Of these twelve cases, Krajina and Eastern Slavonia provided the best qualities to make a comparison. The de facto states have similar characteristics. The de facto states both claimed a region that was within the territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia. They both existed in the 1990s. The leaders of the de facto states were Serbs, who felt repressed in Croatia. The international conditions were also quite similar since they only got supported within former Yugoslavia by other Serbs. The reintegration of Krajina into the

Republic of Croatia got paired with force and military actions. However, the reintegration of Eastern Slavonia was rather peaceful. The established similarities ensure that these factors are not influential on the outcome. This makes it a good study to generate theories that are to be tested against other cases as well.

Data is gathered in the first place by looking for articles on the specific cases of Krajina and Eastern Slavonia in general. After that, the search term also included forceful and peaceful reintegration, and other terms that are synonyms or can be associated with the hypotheses that are formulated in the theoretical framework. These search terms were used in the library account of the University of Leiden and in Google Scholar. Such an effort led to a collection of articles and book chapters on Krajina and Eastern Slavonia that are analyzed to see if they can show which elements have an effect on the type of reintegration used by the parent state.

Finding data on Eastern Slavonia that is fitting for this research has been a bit more difficult than finding literature on Krajina, because most scholars do not consider Eastern Slavonia to be a de facto state. This is important to take into consideration for the validity of this research, because it is harder to get into depth on this case than on the case of Krajina.

4. Analysis

This section focuses on a historical context and examining the established hypotheses on the specific cases of Republika Srpska Krajina and Eastern Slavonia to see if the theoretical expectations can be accepted or rejected.

History of the cases

It was not until the 1990s, with the division of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of Yugoslavia, that the international law concerning the recognition process of states changed drastically. Before this happened, it was considered normal to offer recognition to entities that carried the characteristics of a state (Von Steinsdorff, 2012, p. 205).

During the collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991, the Republic of Croatia was reestablished. Croatia did not get recognized by the international community immediately and fought an independence war for four years. During this process the Croatian state also faced an internal problem: it dealt with a secessionist movement led by Serbs that lived within the Croatian legitimate territory (Kolstø & Paukovic, 2014, p. 313). The Serbian National Council declared independence of this territory, called Krajina, on the 16th of March 1991, which was followed up by the proclamation of a new state, Republika Srpska Krajina, on December 19th of the same year (Petricusic, 2008, pp. 135-136). The self-proclaimed state had a well assembled organization and even its own military force, but lacked international recognition (Eskin, 2013, p. 38). Because of that, Krajina came to be known as a de facto state. The creation of Krajina was initiated because its leader claimed it to be a 'safe haven' for Serbs living in Croatia, which formed a minority. The leaders of the group argued that Croatian nationalism was predominant during the Tuđman regime, causing the Croatian Serbs to feel unsafe because of incidents that happened during the Second World War. The Croatian Serbs were afraid of the reoccurring of mass murder and displacement (Pavković, 2011, pp. 302-303).

The de facto state existed for five years, after which Krajina was reintegrated in Croatia with the most important operation being the Operation Strom in August 1995, when the Croatian army defeated Krajina (Kolstø & Paukovic, 2014, p. 312).

When in 1995 Krajina was reintegrated, a small region, called Eastern Slavonia, remained autonomous. It existed quite short since in 1998 it was also reintegrated into Croatia. This process of reintegration was peaceful, and the reintegration was established through negotiations. The reintegration was led through the UNTAES (United Nations Transitional Authority for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium), which goal it

was to make sure the situation remained under control so it would not escalate into armed conflict (Šimunović, 1999, pp. 127-131). Klein (2003), who was an American diplomat and the leader of the UN mission, explained that

The mission objectives were identified as the following:

- To bring the region, demilitarized and secure, under the sovereign control of the government of Croatia;
- To retain the multiethnic character of the region;
- To promote an atmosphere of confidence among all local residents irrespective of their ethnic origin and enable all refugees and displaced persons to enjoy the right to return freely to their homes and live there in security;
- To promote redevelopment and reconstruction of the region in harmony with the plans of Croatia as a whole, and;
- To organize free and fair elections no later than thirty days before the end of the transitional period (Klein, 2003, p. 205).

On the 15th of January in 1998 the UNTAES finished its mandate and left the region, which was now safe and demilitarized. The control was back in hands of the Republic of Croatia and the situation remained peaceful (Cordero, 2012, p. 35).

External patronage

Republika Srpska Krajina

Krajina's biggest sponsorships during their fight for independence came from Belgrade, the capital of Serbia. Intellectuals from the capital took an important part in the beginning, even before the independence of Krajina was claimed, in the establishment of political organisation of the Serb minority that lived in Croatia. This political organisation was the SDS, the Serb Democratic Party, founded by leader Jovan Rašković. After the foundation was laid, Serbian political and military leaders had a lot of influence on the politics because from them Krajina received rhetorical (strategic) and material support (military, economic) (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 622-623; Kolstø & Paukovic, 2014, p. 316). Without help from a patron state, Krajina did not stand a chance to survive. External patronage took for example form in Serbia directly paying the income of Krajina's military staff. Later Milan Babić, who was the leader of Krajina from 1991 to 1995, admitted that Krajina was completely reliant on Serbia (Kolstø & Paukovic, 2014, p. 316).

The fragmentation within the SDS and varying views of the strategic approaches of Krajina, which are more elaborately discussed further in this chapter, also had its implications for the external patronage received by Krajina. The relationship between Krajina leaders and Belgrade, especially the Serbian president, Slobodan Milošević, fluctuated rather a lot during the years that Krajina existed as de facto state (Caspersen, 2007, p. 622). For example, when it became clear that although one member (Milan Martić) of the SDS emerged as the new party leader, it was obvious that cooperation with Milan Babić, which was Martić's predecessor, was preferred over the influences from Belgrade, causing Martić to take some distance from Milošević, which leaders before him also had done. Of course, this meant that Belgrade's willingness to help the Serbs in Croatia also decreased (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 628-631). This distance could be taken because Krajina leaders enabled themselves to get a higher level of autonomy, so they became less dependent of Belgrade's help. The distance was wanted as the SDS and Serbia did not always have the same goals for the future of Krajina (Caspersen, 2007, p. 622). Plans for the future varied from integration into Serbia, to reestablishing Yugoslavia as a greater Serb state, becoming an independent state, and unification with the Bosnian Serbs (Caspersen, 2007, p. 631-632; Kolstø & Paukovic, 2015, p 314; Pavković, 2011, pp. 305-306). However, loss of authority always was held over the head of the Krajina leaders, because they knew that if they disagreed with the Belgrade plans, the resources could be allocated to another party member (Caspersen, 2012, pp. 57-58).

Because Krajina did not always agree with Serbia but was in desperate need of extra resources since Krajina's economy was in bad condition, Krajina also engaged in relationships with other actors, namely the leaders of the Bosnian Serbs and the opposition party in Serbia (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 631-632). Politicians thus were also actively lobbying by other parties for external patronage.

The disagreement with Belgrade was also present in 1995, when there was a plan made by members of the international community (United States, United Kingdom, France, Italy and Russia) to reintegrate the territory of Krajina into Croatia, called 'Z-4'. According to the plan, if Krajina cooperated with the reintegration, they would in return receive increased autonomy in specific regions of Croatia where they formed a majority. Serbia thought of this as an acceptable plan, but Krajina's leaders were not as convinced. Their decision to agree with the plan was made too late, and a day later Croatia started attacking Krajina using military force to reintegrate the region that in their eyes was rightfully theirs (Pavković, 2011, pp. 305-306).

Eastern Slavonia

Eastern Slavonia had a very different relation with Serbia than Krajina. One prominent politician was Goran Hadžić, who was also the president of Krajina from 1992 to 1994. He was close with Milošević, because the territory of Eastern Slavonia is close to Serbia and because there was a higher number of Serbian paramilitaries on location, in contrast to other previous territories of Krajina (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 628-631). Most of the resources that Serbia sent to help the Serbs in Croatia, was addressed to Eastern Slavonia (Caspersen, 2012, pp. 57-58). This was a tactical choice of Belgrade, since this region was rich in natural resources such as oil reserves and favorable agricultural land (Šimunović, 1999, pp. 126-127). Because of that, the Serbs had more control over the region and as a result there was automatically less autonomy for the local leaders. Thus there was a stronger connection to Serbia, and a bigger role for Serbia in the decision-making process too. The Erdut Agreement, which started the peaceful reintegration process of Eastern Slavonia into Croatia, actually stemmed from negotiations between the Serbian president Milošević and Croatian president Tuđman (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 628-631).

Since the agreement on reintegration into Croatia was practically already made by the Serbian government, the local leaders in Eastern Slavonia were in a much weaker position when entering negotiations. They had to settle for giving up their self-determination and recognize the territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia (Šimunović, 1999, pp. 132-134).

Concluding remarks hypothesis 1

In Krajina, all leaders distanced themselves from Serbia at some point when they wanted to achieve more autonomy for themselves, or Serbia took distance when it showed that failure was lurking for Krajina. This had negative influence on the resources provided by Serbia to Krajina. Leaders in Eastern Slavonia had less autonomy than in Krajina and were extremely dependent on the external patronage coming from Serbia.

Since Krajina was reintegrated in a forceful manner and received less external patronage and was even abandoned by Serbia in the end, while Eastern Slavonia had more external patronage and was reintegrated peacefully, empirical evidence points towards accepting hypothesis 1_b. Thus when a de facto state receives external patronage, the parent state is more likely to reintegrate the de facto state peacefully. However, a moderation of the hypothesis might be more fitting, because in this comparison it is not black or white, it is not about receiving external patronage yes or no, but it is more about the extent to which external patronage was received.

Parent state's willingness to grant autonomy

Republika Srpska Krajina

The 'Z-4 Plan' mentioned in the previous section, showed that it was mainly the international community that was keen on having a peaceful reintegration of Krajina into Croatia. This plan aimed to provide some autonomy for the Croatian Serbs when reintegrated into Croatia, but the Croatian president Tuđman did not fully agree with that, just like the Serbs thought this proposition was not good enough because they did not want to be reintegrated (Barić, 2016, p. 218). When it took the leaders of Krajina too long to respond to this proposal, Croatia did not hesitate to transfer to the use of force (Pavković, 2011, pp. 305-306).

Eastern Slavonia

During the reintegration process of Eastern Slavonia, the international community was more involved than at the time of the reintegration of Krajina. Because of the UNTAES operation supervising external states were aware of the situation in Croatia. The international community then made it clear that they had their doubts about the Croatian devotion to meet the Serbs halfway and give them rights and shielding (Šimunović, 1999, pp. 127-131). The opinion of the international community was of great importance to Croatia, because its leaders knew that how they handled the situation with Eastern Slavonia was of great influence on its credibility in future negotiations and alliances. They realized that the reintegration of Eastern Slavonia was not the only success they could achieve, it was also their chance to put Croatia in a good light on the international stage. That was of great importance because Croatia wanted to become more like western democracies and because they wanted to attract economic help and investments (Šimunović, 1999, p. 130). In short, how Croatia dealt with its reintegration of Eastern Slavonia, would show the international community their capabilities to build 'a multicultural society' (Šimunović, 1999, p. 130).

There were also international worries about what it would mean if the reintegration of Eastern Slavonia were to evolve into a violent conflict. The probability of escalation was estimated higher than during the operations in Krajina, and the number of refugees that was already reached (200,000 Croatian Serbs fled the country after the earlier operations) and would only increase if a conflict arose was also something that was kept in mind. Croatia kept these things all in mind when making decisions, because their goal was to become member of the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and those organisations valued these risks highly (Šimunović, 1999, pp. 132-134).

Based on a compromise between Croatia and the international community which both had preferences about the outcome of the reintegration of Eastern Slavonia, the Basic Agreement was drawn up. The ultimate goal of Croatia was restoration of the territorial integrity, and the international community thus pressed for good treatment of the Croatian Serbs that would be reintegrated. From that followed the agreement with a solution formed on the idea that Croatia would have full control over its whole territory again, in exchange for better circumstances for the Croatian Serbs than before and during the war. They would be good protected under international humanitarian law (Šimunović, 1999, p. 134).

Croatia was in the end thus quite open to granting some autonomy to the inhabitants of Eastern Slavonia, but this came forth from international pressures and Croatia's wish to join the international community. If Croatia would have been to decide on their own, the destiny of the Croatian Serbs would be very different. Derek Boothby, who was the Deputy Transitional Administrator of the region at the time, strongly had the impression that the Croatian government would not want to help Eastern Slavonia with for example reestablishing the economy of the region, because the government hoped that if the circumstances would be bad, the Croatian Serbs would leave the region as their 'own' decision, and this outcome was preferred (Smoljan, 2003, p. 43).

Petricusic (2008, p. 144) also concludes that specifically the integration of Europe, in the form of the European Union, was the push for establishing rights and autonomy for the Croatian Serbs of Eastern Slavonia when the region was reintegrated. When the European view became clear for the Croatian government, their policies regarding the Croatian Serbs instantly became more favorable.

Concluding remarks hypothesis 2
When the reintegration process of Krajina took place, there was some pressure on Croatia to grant autonomy to a limited extent to the Croatian Serbs, coming from the international community. This pressure was not yet influential enough. During the reintegration of Eastern Slavonia the influence of the international community increased because Croatia wanted to become a member of international organisations such as the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation which meant that they were more willing to cooperate with the demands stated by those organisations.

The hypothesis 'If the parent state is willing to grant autonomy to the de facto entity, the parent state will use a peaceful form of reintegration' thus is applicable, because Croatia was not willing to provide autonomy to Krajina and reintegrated it with the use of force, while

Croatia was open to grant autonomy to Eastern Slavonia and reintegrated that region in a peaceful manner.

Fragmentation

Republika Srpska Krajina

From the beginning there was rivalry within the party that provided the leadership of Krajina, namely the Serb Democratic Party. The founder and leader Rašković got resistance from Milan Babić, who was much more radical. Babić and his ideas matched those from Belgrade better, which meant that he received their support which opened Babić's way to successful leadership. The radical view also got increasingly more support from the SDS party and its members, because the Croatian government became more hostile to the Serbs (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 624-627).

Also during the time that Babić was in charge, there were moments of mistrust. When president of Serbia Milošević and president of Croatia Tuđman were talking with each other in early 1991, Babić felt the urge to remind Milošević that he was the president of Serbia and not of Krajina, of which Babić perceived himself to be the president. However, Babić was blindsided short after that. The Yugoslav People's Army got involved, functioning on the support from Serbia, showing that Serbia could provide the support Babić could not for this army (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 624-627).

The changing strategy of Serbia was due to the fact that there had been multiple military failures, international pressure, and because gradually the Republic of Croatia itself was becoming internationally recognized. Because of this Serbia saw the situation getting gloomier and decided that they would also settle for a settlement in which the Croatian Serbs did get a good treatment in Croatia, but they would not become their own state anymore or become part of a greater Serbia. This of course again was not good for the relationship with the local leaders in Krajina (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 628-631).

A similar thing occurred when the Vance Plan was drawn up, which would create United Nations Protected Areas, which was also accepted by Serbia. Babić was at that time still the president of Krajina, but he very much disagreed with this plan, because it was not in line with the aspirations of Krajina. The Vance Plan wanted to disarm the militaries of Krajina and it would take the option for Krajina to become an independent state away (Kolstø & Paukovic, 2014, p. 316). Other members of parliament however did feel for the plan and was willing to go along with Belgrade. Fragmentation about the Vance Plan then led to the

removal of Babić as president from Krajina (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 628-631). He was followed by Goran Hadžić, but eventually faith in him was also lost, leading to yet another removal of president and the appointment of Milan Martić. Later Babić made quite a comeback, which meant that the influence of Serbia was yet again decreasing, although Babić did not win the elections (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 628-631). Because all of this fragmentation in the top political functions of Krajina, Serbia was almost always able to have influence on decisions even if the actual leader of Krajina at that point was dissociated with the Serbian leader, Milošević (Caspersen, 2007, p. 633).

What also led to fragmentation was the fact that Krajina did not take its own population into consideration, because there was paid no attention to ensuring security for them and their property, and nation-building was also something that did not occupy the minds of Krajina's leaders (Kolstø & Paukovic, 2014, p. 319). There was also a division between leaders coming from military backgrounds and civilian backgrounds which ensured fractionalization and there was increasingly less control on the militaries (Kolstø & Paukovic, 2014, p. 323).

Eastern Slavonia

Like mentioned under external patronage, the relationship between Belgrade and Eastern Slavonia was better and more stable than between Belgrade and Krajina, because of its location relatively to Serbia and because of the interest of Serbia in Eastern Slavonia's natural resources (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 628-631; Šimunović, 1999, pp. 126-127). Because of the influence there was also less autonomy Croatian Serb leaders (Caspersen, 2007, pp. 628-631), and thus to some extent there was less fragmentation regarding Serbia and Eastern Slavonia than Serbia and Krajina.

However, since literature on the case of Eastern Slavonia is predominantly focused on the UNTAES, there is not much information to be found on the cohesion or fragmentation between the Croatian Serb leaders of the region.

Concluding remarks hypothesis 3

Based on read literature, it was easier to create an image to which extent there was fragmentation in Krajina than in Eastern Slavonia. What was found that Krajina was actually quite fragmentized, both the views differing from Croatian Serb leaders and from the Serbs providing them support. In Eastern Slavonia the Croatian Serbs and Serbs formed a more

unified front, but the analysis did not reveal whether the Croatian Serbs agreed on most issues. The hypothesis 'The higher the level of fragmentation in the de facto state, the higher the likeliness of the parent state to decide on forceful reintegration' therefore cannot be judged with as much conviction as the other two hypotheses but seems to tend to be true indeed.

5. Conclusion

In this thesis the topic of reintegration of de facto states has been examined. The objective was to find explanations for why some de facto states get reintegrated back under their parent state in a peaceful manner, while others get reintegrated with the use of force. The research focused on two de facto states, the Republika Srpska Krajina and Eastern Slavonia, that were reintegrated into parent state Croatia in the 1990s. Based on existing literature three hypotheses were formed, and with a comparative case study it was researched if there were empirical findings to support these hypotheses.

From this follows that hypothesis 1_b and 2, based on the findings of the two cases discussed, are to be accepted. Hypothesis 1b claimed that external patronage led to peaceful reintegration, which was also what was showed by analyzing the two de facto states. Krajina received less external patronage, and was reintegrated forcefully, while Eastern Slavonia received more external patronage and was reintegrated in a peaceful manner. An alteration would be in place here, saying that a greater amount of external patronage increases the chances of peaceful reintegration. Hypothesis 2 focused on the willingness of the parent state to grant autonomy to the de facto state, and it was found that Croatia indeed was more willing to do that in the case of Eastern Slavonia, which it did indeed reintegrate peacefully. Meanwhile, Krajina was not blessed with Croatia's willingness and was reintegrated with the use of force.

For hypothesis 3, regarding fragmentation leading to forceful reintegration, there is less convincing evidence, since existing literature on Eastern Slavonia was very much focused on UNTAES, and less on internal situations. It seems likely that this hypothesis can be accepted, but this thesis does not provide enough evidence for it so it would be interesting to look into in further research.

The answer to the research question (What determines whether a parent state reintegrates a de facto state peacefully or forcefully?) therefore is that external patronage and willingness from the parent state to grant autonomy, increase the likeliness of peaceful reintegration of the de facto state.

This research provides a foundation for other scholars to do complementary analyses. It establishes a basic assumption on which factors determine whether a parent state reintegrates a de facto state which can be tested against other cases of reintegration, and it can as well as be followed by looking for evidence for other factors that could explain the outcome. The comparison between the Krajina and Eastern Slavonia was very fitting

considering their similarity, but during conducting research it appeared that it is easier to find articles that focus on broader aspects of Krajina than of Eastern Slavonia. Therefore a comparison between two other de facto states or Krajina compared against another case, could improve and strengthen theory presented in this thesis. In this comparison it appeared that the evidence that led to the acceptance or rejection of one of the hypotheses was often closely interrelated with another hypothesis, so it will also be interesting to see in future research whether this is a coincidence or a connection between this evidence is actually grounded in all cases.

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