

Territorial Claims in the Extreme Right Politics in Eastern Europe

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Abstract:

This paper analyses and compares territorial conceptions of the extreme right in Eastern Europe and their political impact with the goal to explain how the historical legacy of the supposed territorial and border claims and injustices is important for the identity of the extreme right (or their parts) in contemporary Eastern Europe. It analyses the historical roots of extreme right territorial claims in East European area, the current situation in territorial claims and disputes, the impact of extreme right territorial claims on domestic politics, on extreme right politics on European level and on regional security in this area.

1. Introduction

The extreme right politics in Eastern Europe is accompanied by territorial claims of organizations and movements from this part of political spectrum. The extreme nationalists try to change the borders according to their historical conceptions. The clash about historical legacies and historical myths about territorial claims led to many disputes between the extreme right from various countries. Territorial claims have impact on the basic identity of some extreme right organizations and movements which enforce territorial changes. These issues are often an important part of their domestic political propaganda. This paper analyses important issues which are connected with territorial claims of the Eastern European extreme

right. As Eastern Europe we understand the former communist area in Europe defined in geographical sense (Caucasus is not included).

2. Territory and Extreme Right Identity

In European history territorial claims did not dominate only the extreme right politics. They were articulated and enforced by various political forces. Contemporary extreme right is often the only representative of open territorial claims towards other states. It articulates the territorial claims openly, while other political forces are in this field mostly only moderate or they resigned because of current international standards (UN Charter 1945, The Helsinki Final Act 1975, the Charter of Paris 1990 etc.) and values of the mainstream of the European political culture. In this sense the traditional international border disputes and conflicts in Europe (and with some exceptions also in Eastern Europe) were often transferred mostly to the extreme right part of political spectrum, at domestic, transnational and at European level.

Traditional extreme right identity is closely connected with territoriality, because territory is one of the most important elements of the national state. A strong national state is the highest value for most extreme right organizations in the modern world. Nationalism is one of the basic elements of extreme right identity.

The thinking of traditionally extreme right stays under the influence of geopolitics, in the sense of belief that “political identity and action” are “(more or less) determined by geography¹”. The great state is according to traditional extreme right a strong state. The traditional national interests – soil, natural resources, access to water etc. are important for extreme right propaganda. This was the main reason for historical extreme right expansionism.

Today the extreme right interest into territorial claims is often motivated by the position of the “protector” of the historical national legacy, which the extreme right claims for itself. Historical national struggles and in Eastern Europe also modern wars are interconnected with territorial disputes. A very important factor in the case of “great states” concepts (see below) is to unify the own nation in one national state.

In the first half of the 20th century extreme right demands were oriented not only to the restoration of national territory in subjective percept “fair traditional borders”, but also to expansionism and colonialism, mostly in regimes under the rule of extreme right movements

¹ Graham Evans – Jeffrey Newnham, *The Penguin Dictionary of International Relations*, London: Penguin Books, 1998, pp. 197-199, here p. 197.

(Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and the struggle for “*Lebensraum*” etc.). During World War II German Nazis organized the European fight against bolshevism or “World Jewry” with an imperial territorial dimension (such concepts are still important for contemporary neonazis).

After World War II and after the decolonization process most demands are connected mostly with historical territorial extent of some states (in the sense of national myth about “justified” territory for concrete nations). The traditional extreme right enforces its territorial demands with aggressive and intolerant rhetoric and sometimes with the use of violent methods. Disclaimer of such claims could be designed as an element of a tendency to moderateness, modernization or “*Salonfähigkeit*” of extreme right subjects in most cases

A part of the European extreme right tries to overcome the traditional nationalist disputes, mostly on the base of common European identity according to extreme right opinion, which respects the traditional nations. They want to defend European territory against various internal or external enemies. However, the traditional nationalist conflicts, mostly territorial conflicts and conflicts about the historical interpretation of various events cause complications in transnational extreme right cooperation.

The traditional spectrum of extreme right territorial demands, which is valid also for contemporary Eastern Europe, could be divided into:

a) annexation (territory of current foreign state is to be annexed to a the other state territory, the possibilities are the whole territory of one or more states or a part of territory of one or more states), which is as a rule connected with irredentism.

b) irredentism (territory with the population of the same nationality or religion is annexed to the state, where this nation or religion have a dominant position; irredentism is often closely interconnected with annexation; current extreme right irredentist organizations among ethnic minorities are often connected with expansionistic extreme right organizations in the states with dominant population);

c) separatism (in the strict sense of the word) or secessionism, in the sense of separation of the territory of more states or the secession of the territory of one state and establishing of the new state on this territory; extreme right separatist or secessionist organizations are only one ideological stream of separatism/secessionism, because there are many left-wing and other separatist/secessionist organizations).

Against all these demands extreme right subjects of other nations (which are threatened by such demands) formulate their counter strategies. Various forms of extreme right extremism

could be also a part of ethnic extremism,² on the other hand, the extreme right orientation of ethnic extremists is not a typical rule in contemporary Europe³.

3. Historical territorial changes in Eastern Europe and the role of the extreme right

The border changes are typical of European history. Many current border disputes between extreme right representations of various nations have their roots in deep history. Some areas were during various eras under the rule of various states and they have multinational population. It is impossible to find historical “justice” respected by all actors that are engaged in competition to gain a territory.

The main current disputes in Eastern Europe are connected with four historical eras. First of them is the development after WW I. After the “great war” and the breakup of great empires (German Empire, Russian Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire, Ottoman Empire) Eastern Europe fell into many local armed conflicts about borders (between Poland and Ukraine, between Czechoslovaks and Hungarians, between Romanians and Hungarians, between Austrians and Yugoslavians etc⁴.) or about political orientation (mostly left-wing extremists against other parts of political spectrum; the civic war and intervention in Russia after Bolshevik revolution and war between the Soviets and Poland in 1921 had a specific character). The small military or paramilitary units of the new or provisional state units were mostly under the influence of strong nationalism and a part of their members created base for new fascist and ultraconservative right-wing extremist movements.

The solution to territorial division of Europe in the Treaty of Versailles (with Germany), Treaty of Trianon (with Hungary), Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine (with Bulgaria), Treaty of Sévres (with Turkey) and Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye (with Austria) was not accepted by many people and politicians from the harmed nations, on the other hand, the winners of territories were strongly engaged against critics of the post-war settlement. The most visible critics of the territorial organization of interwar Europe were the extreme right politicians from leading nations of former Central Powers (Germany, Hungary, only partially Austria). However, also some other political forces with specific territorial claims tended to extreme right, mostly various separatist movements in new multinational states (Croatian separatists in

2 Raphael Zariski, Ethnic Extremism among Ethnoterritorial Minorities in Western Europe Dimensions, Causes, and Institutional Responses. *Comparative Politics*, vol. 21, no. 3, 1989, pp. 253-272.

³ Miroslav Mareš, Etnický extremismus a pravicový extremismus, in Vladimíra Dvořáková, - Andrea Heroutová (eds.): *II. Kongres českých politologů*. Praha: Česká společnost pro politické vědy, pp. 329-338.

⁴ Christoph Allmayer-Beck, Betrachtungen, in Arbeitsgemeinschaft Truppendienst (ed.): *Die Nachkriegszeit 1918-1922 Kämpfe, Staaten und Armeen nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg*, Wien: Verlag Herold, 1990, pp. 439-445.

Yugoslavia, Slovak separatists in Czechoslovakia etc.). Irredentist movements were connected with right-wing movements or (later) regimes in neighbor countries (a. o. German or Hungarian irredentism in Czechoslovakia). Anti-Bolshevik nationalists from Ukraine, Belarus and other areas occupied by communist Soviet rule tried to organize resistance in emigration or (in small range) on their own territories.

The second era began after the start of Nazi-German eastern expansion in 1938-1939 (“Anschluss” of Austria, Occupation of the Sudetenland after the Munich Agreement and later the occupation of the rest of the Czech Lands) and the Soviet expansion in Poland, the Baltic states, Finland and Bessarabia in 1939-1940. It continued during World War II. New border changes were realized. These things formed a base for some contemporary right-wing extremist important models (a. o. the shape of Hungary after Vienna arbitration in 1939). the Legacy of WW II is important especially for neonazis of various nations, because the territories from this era were part of “New European Order”⁵, which is a model for the current plans of the neonazi spectrum.

Also for nationalists of some nations is the era of WW II a significant part of historical traditions, because in those days their national states existed as (quasi)independent actors (a. o. the Croatian state, the Slovak state etc.). for the first time. Current nationalist propaganda often emphasizes the formal independence of such states on the Third Reich, sometimes with the use of territorial arguments. For example, Slovak nationalist historian Milan S. Ďurica wrote in 2000 that Slovakia in 1941 claimed small territories in “*Grossdeutschem Reich*” (in current Austria) and in the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia under German rule. This is for him an evidence of sovereignty of the Slovak state, because it was criticized as in Germany “unacceptable interference”. According to Ďurica it was a very specific case in the context of the WW II in Europe⁶.

After World War II came the third era of significant territorial changes in Eastern Europe, mostly in benefit of the Soviet Union (annexation of Eastern territories of former Poland, new occupation of the Baltic states, annexation of Carpathian Ukraine , which was to 1945 part of Czechoslovakia). A specific territorial change was transfer of Poland towards the East. Poland received former German territories behind the Oder – Neisse line.

⁵ Stefan Kestler, Nationalsozialistische Europakonzeptionen im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Darstellung ausgewählter Beispiele, in Armin Pfahl-Traughber – Monika Rose – Stahl (eds.): Festschrift zum 25-jährigen Bestehen der Schule für Verfassungschutz und für Andreas Hübsch. Brühl: Schule für Verfassungschutz, pp. 221-244.

⁶ Milan S. Ďurica: Vznik a trvanie prvého slovenského štátu (Slovenská republika v rokoch 1939-1945), in: Ján Bobák (ed.): *Slovenská republika (1939-1945)*, Martin: Matica Slovenská, pp. 19-36, here pp. 27-28.

These territorial changes were realized mostly without significant engagement of the extreme right, which was in post-war atmosphere mostly prohibited in East European countries. Only some small nationalist, often extremist guerilla units tried to fight in the second half of the 40's against the new rule (a. o. Ukrainian Insurgent Army UPA or some units in Belarus and the Baltic states), however, without significant effect.

The communist era and cold war froze the border changes in Eastern Europe as well as the significant activities of the far right on their territories. Only the far right in Germany claimed the lost territories behind the Oder – Neisse line, the far right in Italy claimed territories in Slovenia and Istria. Some far right separatists operated in emigration in western democracies, a.o. Croatian or Slovak separatists. Croatian separatists started also terrorist campaign against Yugoslav targets. A very important factor of the post-WW II changes was the fact that territorial benefits of some nations were connected with Soviet guarantee and the new territorial order was accepted and defended also within communist movements. However, territorial disputes existed also within the Eastern Bloc, mostly in case of Romania and its claims in Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina on one hand, and Hungarian claims in Transylvania on the other hand. These problems led to strong nationalization of Rumanian communism⁷.

The fall of communism and the (mostly violent) dissolution of former communist federal states caused problems with minorities and borders. The strongest conflicts were significant for former Yugoslavia as well as for the former Soviet Union. Russian minorities in new post-Soviets states, which are a specific legacy of communism, are after the break up of the Soviet Union in focus of Russian extreme right wing extremist propaganda. However, territorial and national conflicts are characteristic not only for post-Soviet or post-Yugoslav areas. Some territorial disputes and claims are typical of many extreme right subjects in Eastern Europe. Also the extreme right in former non-communist states (Finland, Italy, re-unified Germany) declares traditional territorial claims towards eastern neighbor countries.

4. Main Contemporary Territorial Claims of Extreme Right Subjects in East Central Europe

The current extreme right politics in Eastern Europe is characterized by various territorial disputes. The most sensitive are as a rule claims to “Great States”, in sense of struggle for unification of one nation in one national state. Various historical conceptions are used for the

⁷ Stephen Fischer Galati, Smokescreen and Iron Curtain: A Reassessment of Territorial Revisionism vis-à-vis Romania since World War I, *East European Quarterly*, Vol. XXII, Nr. 1, 1988, pp. 37-53, here p. 50-51.

rationalization of such demands. The other states understandably protest against the change of their national territory in benefit of foreign nations.

The concept of “Great Hungary” has its historical roots in post-WW I period, when the Hungarian territory was limited in benefit of neighbor states, and after Vienna Arbitrary in 1939. Current Hungarian extreme right supports the irredentism of territories with Hungarian minority in Southern Slovakia, in Ukraine, in Romania (Transylvania), in Serbia (Vojvodina) and in Croatia with the goal to create the Hungarian state in large scale, mostly in borders from 1920.

Most significant it is in the name of the organization The Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement (*Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom* - HVIM). Hungary before the Treaty of Trianon in 1920 had 64 counties, including the territory of current neighbor states⁸. However, also other Hungarian right-wing extremists tried to profile themselves in the field of territorial claims. The current position of the extreme right in Hungary is weak on the level of the political system (no extreme right party has parliamentary representation). There exists a relatively strong militant scene. A risk element is represented by the Hungarian Guard (*Magyar Gárda*), a paramilitary organization of the Movement For a Better Hungary (*Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom*).

Romanian extreme right opposes strongly against Hungarian claims, on the other hand it enforced its own concept of “Great Romania”. It means current Romanian territory plus territories of Bukovina and Bessarabia, which are currently under Ukrainian and Moldova rule. The complicated situation in Moldova strengthens extreme right Romanian demands. The most important representative of the above mentioned concept is the Party of Great Romania (*Partidul România Mare* - PRM). This concept is supported also by other extreme right organizations, including New Right (*Noua Dreapta* - ND) with paramilitary tendencies⁹. The state, which is the main loser of the post-communist territorial development, is Serbia. Its last territorial loss is the Kosovo territory in 2008. However, Serbian nationalists struggle for the establishing of the “Greater Serbia” on territories with Serbian population and in Kosovo which is claimed as historical part of Serbia.

The most important representative of the “Greater Serbian” concept is the Serbian Radical Party (*Srpska Radikalna Stranka* – SRS). Its goal is to annex Montenegro, Serbian part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbian Dubrovnik, Serbian Dalmacia, Serbian Kordun, Serbian

⁸ Gábor Bernáth, Gábor Miklósi, Cas Mudde, Hungary, in Cas Mudde (ed.): *Racist Extremism in Central and Eastern Europe*, London, New York: Routledge, 2005, pp. 80-100, here p. 87-88.

⁹ Michael Shafir, The Mind of Romania’s Radical Right, in Sabrina P. Ramet (ed.): *The Radical Right in Central and Eastern Europe*. University Park Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania University Press, pp. 213-232, here p. 218-219.

Banovina, Serbian Slavonia, Serbian Western Srem, Serbian Baranje and Serbian Macedonia to central Serbia. This party supported also the existence of Republika Srpska Krajina. This claim is aimed at contemporary Croatian territory¹⁰. The SRS is a strong party within the Serbian party system. Also many smaller, often militant subjects (*Obraz*, *Legion of st. Tsar Lazar* etc.) supports the idea of “Greater Serbia”.

A concurrence for Serbian claims is in the concept of great Albania, which is supported by Albanian nationalists. It means the creation of an Albanian state from all territories in Western Balkan with Albanian population, from Kosovo, a part of Montenegro, a part of Serbia, a part of Macedonia and a part of Greece. In contemporary Albania the idea of “Great Albania” is supported only by small extreme right parties (Party of progress and law – *Partija Lëvizja e Legalitetit* – PLL and National Front – *Ballit Kombëtar* – BR)¹¹, limited support has this idea in Kosovo, however, some guerilla and terrorist units are fighting for this concept in Macedonia, Serbia and Greece.

In post-Yugoslavian area are also several other extreme right subjects which try to use in their propaganda myths about a “justified” territory for their own nations. Slovenian National Party (*Slovenska nacionalna stranka* – SNS) uses in its propaganda, namely in the party logo, the map of Slovenia drawn in 1853 with current state territory and parts of neighbor countries - Austrian Carinthia, Croatian Istria and Italian Furlania-Julian Region¹². Border disputes existed also between Bulgarian and Macedonian nationalists. Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia is in a specific situation because Greece rejects its name and it is afraid because of hypothetical Macedonian claims in contemporary Greece territory. It leads to Macedonian-Greece disputes.

Also in other areas of post-communist Europe there exist border disputes and claims. A very specific claim was declared by the Association for Republic – Republican Party of Czechoslovakia (*Sdružení pro republiku – Republikánská strana Československa* – SPR-RSČ). Its leader Miroslav Sládek requested the re-annexation of Carpathian Ukraine to Czechoslovakia and this request he repeated also after the break-up of Czechoslovakia and

¹⁰ Maroš Sovák, Pravicový extremismus v Srbsku, in Tester, Vol. 5, Nr. 2, 2007, pp. 36-44, here p. 39, <http://www.rexter.cz/Upload/pdf/85.pdf> [accessed April 3, 2008].

¹¹ Věra Stojarová, Současné bezpečnostní hrozby západního Balkánu. Kritická analýza konceptu bezpečnosti Kodaňské školy, Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2007, pp. 184-185.

¹² Peace Institut, Tomáš Teplán, Slovenia, in Cas Mudde (ed.): *Racist Extremism in Central and Eastern Europe*, London, New York: Routledge, 2005, pp. 243-266, here p. 245.

creation of the Czech Republic, despite the fact that Czechs have no common borders with the claimed territory. However, at this time it was more curiosity than real struggle¹³.

Also Polish ultranationalist claims in Lithuania or in Ukraine or Slovak claims in Poland also have only a relatively limited strength within the extreme right spectrum today. No real claim has been declared by Slovak nationalists in south Moravian territory in contemporary Czech Republic (in contrast to WW II period, when some Moravian Slovaks supported it). However, some Slovak nationalist organizations and historians design Moravian Slovaks as a part of Slovak nation and this territory as a part of historical Slovakia¹⁴.

A specific dimension of territorial claims is the Russian extreme right struggle for the unification of Russia in one state. Russian minorities in the post-Soviet states outside Russia are under strong psychological pressure – from members of the leading nation of the Soviet empire they became sometimes second-class citizens of the new states. Pål Kolstø speaks about “post-imperial diasporas.”¹⁵ Their feelings are benefit for the extreme right propaganda within these minorities as well as in Russia. Paradoxically, in this context a part of the extreme right supports the re-unification of the Soviet Union.

The most influential Russian extreme right party – Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, has not only the goal to re-establish the Russian empire in former USSR borders, however, also the expansion of the Russian Empire to the Indian Ocean¹⁶. This party has also regional branches in various post-Soviet republic, as well as some other Russian extreme right groupings (National Bolshevik Party of Russia - *Национал-большевистская партия* – NBP, NBPR Russian National Unity - *Русское Национальное Единство* - RNE,)¹⁷.

Most active are such organizations in the Baltic states, in Estonia boundary dispute also plays an important role¹⁸. In Belarus the extreme right Russian organizations cooperate with pro-Lukashenko-regime political forces and with some Belarus nationalists¹⁹. However, the other

¹³ Miroslav Mareš, *Pravicový extremismus a radikalismus*, Brno: Barrister & Principal, Centum pro studium demokracie a kultury, p. 209.

¹⁴ Petr Bednář, *Moravská identita v krajní pravici po roce 1989* (Bc. Thesis), Brno: Fakulta sociálních studií Masarykovy univerzity, 2006, pp. 29-30.

¹⁵ Pål Kolstø, *The new Russian diaspora – an identity of its own? Possible identity trajectories for Russians in the former Soviet republic*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 19. No. 3, 1996, pp. 609-629, here p. 613.

¹⁶ Andreas Umland, *Neue ideologische Fusionen im russischen Antidemokratismus – Westliche Konzepte, antiwestliche Doktrinen und das postsowjetische politische Spektrum*, in Uwe Backes – Eckhard Jesse (eds.): *Extremistische Ideologien im Vergleich*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006, pp. 371-406, here p. 385.

¹⁷ Viacheslav Likhachev - Vladimir Pribylovskii, *Russkoe Natsional'noe Edinstvo, 1990-2000*, Stuttgart 2005.

¹⁸ Jevgenia Viktorova, *Conflict Transformation the Estonian Way: The Estonian-Russian Border Conflict, European Integration and Shifts in Discursive Representations of the „Other“*, *Perspectives*, Nr. 27. 2007, pp. 44-66.

¹⁹ Jan Holzer – Matěj Novák, *Republika Bělorusko*, in Petr Fiala – Jan Holzer – Maxmilián Strmiska (eds): *Politické strany a stranické rodiny v postkomunistických zemích. Ideově politický profil, pozice a role politických stran v postkomunistických zemích*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, pp. 43-64, here p. 58-59.

part of Belarus nationalists protested in the second half of the 90's strongly against the plan to unify Belarus with Russia (even underground the Belarus national liberation army fired in 1997 at the Russian embassy in Minsk)²⁰. Strong tension exists also between Russian and Ukrainian nationalists, a . o. because of the dispute about Crimean territory (more important are traditional historical tensions).

The separatist Transdnestrian Republic on Moldovan territory has a specific support from Russian nationalists. It struggles to be part of Russia because of strong "russification" of this territory. On the other hand, the Finnish extreme right claims contemporary Russian territory in Karrelia, because Finland lost this territory in the 40's²¹. This is unacceptable for the Russian extreme right.

Also the German extreme right has territorial interests in Eastern Europe. In post war period some territories of former German Reich were claimed by extreme right in West Germany. They are also claimed by contemporary German right wing extremists. The most important are former German territories beyond the contemporary border with Poland at the Oder Neisse line. The other claim is aimed at the Sudetenland in the contemporary Czech Republic.²² A broader demand of the German right wing extremists is the re-establishing of the German Empire ("*Reich*") in Europe, in which various European nations under German leadership should live. Such Reich is supported also by the strongest German neonazi party – the National Democratic Party of Germany (*Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* - NPD)²³. This idea is carried also by parts of the neonazi movement in Eastern Europe, however, strongly rejected by anti-German nationalist and pan-Slavonic extreme right forces. Since the break-up of former communist federal states - Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, there are no strong secessionist (in contrast to irredentist) movements. Existing secessionist movements (part of Crimean Tatars, Moravian movement, Silesian movement) have mostly a centrist or not ideologically clear profile. Extreme right identity is relatively rare (similar to Western Europe, where traditional ethnic separatists are mostly left-wing oriented as in Basque country or in Corsica, part of South Tyrol irredentism or Flemish separatism have right-wing orientation because of historical reasons). It is connected mostly with the interference in small parts of regional movement in Moravia and in Silesia from

²⁰ Žarinov, Konstantin V., *Terrorizm i teroristy*. Minsk: Charvest 1999, p. 129.

²¹ Kyösti Pekonen, Pertti Hynynen and Mari Kalliala, *The New Radical Right Taking Shape in Finland*, Helsinki: Finnish Political Science Association, University of Helsinki, 1999, <http://www.valt.helsinki.fi/vol/tutkimus/julkaisut/verkko/newright.htm> [accessed April 3, 2008].

²² Reiner Fromm, *Am Rechten Rand*, *Lexikon des Rechtsradikalismus*, Marburg: Schüren, 1994, p 46.

²³ *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, *Politisches Lexikon*, 2008, http://www.npd.de/index.php?sek=0&pfad_id=31&seite_id=30&vid=1106.html [accessed April 3, 2008].

German Neonazism with the aim, to incorporate these territories in the above mentioned Reich. Because of this it is mostly the land identity, not Slavic national identity that is supported. On the other hand, the Moravian movement was in the field of autonomous (not secessionist) demands supported also by the Czech extreme right²⁴.

In some states territorial re-ordering is connected not only with the extreme right. Somewhere it is the matter of extreme left propaganda. This is the case of the struggle for the renewal of the Soviet Union carried by Russian communists. Specific claims for their own religious territorial areas declares have recently been declared by some Islamist extremists in Eastern Europe (for example in Sandjak of Novi Pazar in Serbia). Djihadist in the world, including Eastern Europe, generally struggles for the establishing of local caliphates and later for “global caliphate”. Such concepts are rejected not only by the extreme right, but mostly also by other parts of political spectrum in potentially harmed countries.

5. Impact of Territorial Claims of Extreme Right on Politics and Security in Eastern Europe

After the processes of democratization, Westernization and Europeanization (in the EU member or candidate countries) the territorial demands for “Great states” were and are occupied by extremist forces. Only in specific cases some governmental bodies can be involved in the extreme right activities, mostly in non-EU countries of Eastern Europe (involvement of secret services in extreme right activity, international non-cooperation in policing of right-wing extremism, propagation support for some ideas etc.).

The political parties, movement organizations (including paramilitary or terrorist formations) or subcultural groupings²⁵ could be domestic political actors of the extreme right territorial claims. As a specific actor could be mentioned also the diaspora-organizations from the claimed territories (a. o. some organizations of Serbians from Srpska Krajina which cooperated with the Serbian Radical Party). Specific actors are also some German “*Vertriebenverbände*” or their parts interconnected with the extreme right. The model - “for-irredentist organization” in central state, irredentist branch (open or secret) of this organization abroad” – is typical of the concepts of great States (a. o. for branches of

²⁴ Petr Bednář, *Moravská identita v krajní pravici po roce 1989* (Bc. Thesis), Brno: Fakulta sociálních studií Masarykovy univerzity, 2006, pp. 32-33.

²⁵ Michael Minkenberg, *Der Europäische Rechtsradikalismus heute – Profile in West und Ost und der Vergleich des Unvergleichbaren*, in: Michel Minkenberg – Dagmar Sucker – Agnieszka Wenninger (Hrsg.): *Radikale Rechte und Fremdfeindlichkeit in Deutschland und Polen. Nationale und europäische Perspektiven*, Bonn: 2006, pp. 14-36, here p. 28-29.

Russian extreme right organizations in Baltic States or for branches of Hungarian branches of extreme parties in Southern Slovakia).

The impact of the extreme right territorial claims in Eastern Europe is very different. The most important factors are the broader support of such demands within the public and the position of the extreme right subjects with such demands within the party system. Both factors can be combined in various forms. If the extreme right is an exclusive representative of the territorial demands, it could strengthen its political position.

The trustworthy claims are needed to win public support. There is a great difference in the support of Great Serbia in context of Serbian political culture on one hand, and in the support of the annexation of Karpatian Ukraine in the Czech Republic on the other hand. The first case is an emotive question within the nation which lost its superior status in region, the second is a mostly provocative excess of one party (the other Czech extreme right parties did not support such claims). The real socioeconomic and cultural situation also plays an important role in the claimed territories or in states where the extreme right enforces the annexation of foreign territories (it was a. o. the reason for the tense between Russians and Estonians, including the extreme right in both countries).

In cases of states with strong national diasporas abroad there exists the tendency of the extreme right to enforce the idea of Great states. The moderate political parties are usually restricted only to general support of the national and cultural identity of diasporas, however, they cannot support the border change because of international stability reasons. This is the case of main countries in Eastern Europe (a. o. Hungary, Russia, Slovenia etc.). Specific limits and emotions in relation to Greece exist in Macedonian politics.

The open struggle of moderate or main systemic political forces for territorial changes (with the exception of small-sized changes) was typical only of some systemic forces at the beginning of the 90's. This is the case of Albanian politics, where the struggle for Great Albania was for main parties only temporarily limited.²⁶ Romanian official attempts for Great Romania were stopped during the process of Westernization and Europeanization. In Germany the resignation to territorial claims behind the Oder-Neisse line was a long-time process for the established parties (in Western Germany, not in the German Democratic Republic). It was ended at the beginning of the 90's.

The demands for independence in former communist federal states had broad support of political spectrum at the beginning of the 90's (independence of Yugoslav Republic outside of

²⁶ Věra Stojarová, *Současné bezpečnostní hrozby západního Balkánu. Kritická analýza konceptu bezpečnosti Kodaňské školy*, Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2007, pp. 181-185.

Serbia, independence of the Baltic states etc.). A specific case is a broad support of Kosovo independence in Kosovo (not support of the great Albania, this concept has in Kosovo only weak response). In some cases the former main supporters of independence occupied the extreme right positions in the new party systems, for example the Slovak National Party (*Slovenská národná strana – SNS*)²⁷.

The possible loss of territory is opposed by the main domestic political forces, as in the case of Kosovo in contemporary Serbia or in the case of Transdniestria in contemporary Moldova. Irredentist organizations on domestic territory and their supporters from abroad are seen as negative elements in East European states. According to domestic law such organizations are often illegal. For these reasons some organizations do not declare their real goals openly.

Neonazi movements usually operate on underground basis. They declare their support in favor of German or pan-Aryan territorial conceptions. However, as system actors they are weak, they have some specific strength only in several states within the subcultural scene (Germany, Czech Republic, Croatia etc.). The neonazis in East European countries are supported only by non-state international networks (of course they do not have direct support from any governments).

Extreme right territorial claims and disputes could be also conceptualized as external and internal security threat. The extreme right from both sides could radicalize ethnic tensions in some disputed territories (for example the Serbian – Hungarian clashes in Vojvodina). The results are also violent hate attacks. The existence of paramilitary units is a security risk for inter-ethnic relations, including hate crimes.

However, they are themselves not able to carry out effective military operations in contemporary Eastern Europe, including the Baltic states and the Balkan, with the exception of guerilla operations of Albanian and maybe some Serbian units. Also of some Russian and Ukrainian formations involved in Transdniestria have specific capabilities for small wars. The youth subculture spectrum, including neonazis in Eastern Europe, has no military capability. Right wing extremist youngsters have only potential to intensify ethnic tense and in some cases to complicate international tense. The start of the the new armed territorial conflicts with the involvement of the extreme right paramilitaries might be expected in “Great Albania” area and Transdniestria.

²⁷ Lubomír Kopeček, *Politické strany na Slovensku 1989 až 2006*, Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2007, p. 492.

6. Impact of Territorial Disputes in Eastern Europe on Extreme Right Politics at transnational and European Level

Territorial Disputes in Eastern Europe have impact not only on domestic politics, international relations and regional security in this area, but also on the European identity and cooperation of the extreme right at transnational as well as at European level. The traditional geopolitical rule “Your neighbor is your enemy – neighbor of your neighbor is your partner”²⁸ after the transfer into extreme right milieu determines currently many relations within the European extreme right, mostly in the Eastern part of the continent.

An example is the coalition against Hungarian irredentism, members of which are the Slovak Community (*Slovenská pospolitost’* – SP), Romanian New Right and Serbian movement *Obraz*²⁹. It has similar membership and goals as the international inter-state cooperation structure called “Small Agreement” (Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia) from the interwar period. On the other hand, the contemporary choice of extreme right partners from foreign countries is currently only sometimes result of strategy aimed against the concrete enemy. In many cases is it only a declaration of the possible extreme right cooperation.

The contemporary European extreme right rejects mostly the contemporary European Union on one hand (because of its “multicultural” and “antinational” character) and supports the European identity in the sense of cooperation of traditional independent European nations against liberal and new left values, against some internal ethnic enemies (Roma, often Jews) and against the immigration from the third world on the other hand. The motto “Europe for the Europeans” is typical of this struggle³⁰.

The European extreme right has tried for a long time to establish its own pan-European structures for ideological or pragmatic reasons (a. o. European financing), however, in several cases such attempts crashed because of nationalist tension, including territorial disputes. The German Nazis were in the 30’s not active in the international fascist organization Commission for Coordination of Settlement of *Universal Fascism* (*Commissione di Coordinamento per l’Intesa de Fascismo Universale - CCIFU*), organized by Italian fascists³¹. One of the reasons was probably the main interest of German Nazis into Eastern expansion (connected with

²⁸ Jerzy Holzer, *Polen und Europa, Land Geschichte, Identität*, Bonn, J. W. Diez, 2007, p. 8.

²⁹ Miroslav Mareš, *Transnational Networks of Extreme Right Parties in East Central Europe. Stimuli and Limits of Cross Border Cooperation*, Brno: ISPO MU, 2006, p. 17

http://ispo.fss.muni.cz/uploads/2download/Working_papers/ispo_wp_2006_8.pdf [accessed April 6, 2008].

³⁰ Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 158.

³¹ Jerzy W. Borejsza, *Schulen des Hasses. Faschistische Systeme in Europa*, Frankfurt am Main, 1999, pp. 260-261.

racial anti-Slavic attempts). The disputes about South Tyrol question between Italian fascists and right-wing extremists from German speaking countries complicated in the 50's the extreme right cooperation, as well as the existence of the Technical Group of European Right in European Parliament in 1989-1994³².

It is interesting that in the second half of the 90's in the Euronat, organized by Jean Marie Le Pen, were members of some parties with antagonist territorial interests. The concrete membership base is difficult to concretize unambiguously, because it has changed several times. However, in some lists³³ parties the Hungarian Justice and Life Party (*Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja* - MIÉP), Party of Great Romania and Slovak National Party (despite the Hungarian claims in Slovakia and in Romania) or the German Peoples Union (*Deutsche Volksunion* - DVU) and the Czech SPR-RSČ (despite disputes about the Sudetenland) were put together. However, the Euronat had a very free structure and it did not work consistently³⁴.

The territorial claims of the National Democratic Party of Germany on Polish territory have caused the division of the European National Front (ENF), the European structure of fascist and extreme conservative right-wing parties and movements. The founding member of the ENF, the National Rebirth of Poland (*Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski* - NOP) stopped regarding these claims and regarding various disputes about history its activities in the ENF with the NPD, followed by some organizations from Western Slavic area³⁵.

German-Polish territorial dispute was connected also with the creation of the extreme right group Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty (ITS) in the European Parliament in 2007. The main founder of the ITS, Andreas Mölzer from the Freedom Party of Austria (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* – FPÖ) tried to win the League of Polish Families (*Liga Rodzin Polskich* - LPR) for this project. He announced readiness to recognize the Oder Neisse line. However, the LPR rejected its membership in the group³⁶. The end of the existence of the ITP at the end of 2007 did not cause not any territorial conflicts, but clashes between Romanian and Italian members because of an anti-Romanian speech of Alessandra Mussolini.

³² Petr Fiala - Miroslav Mareš – Petr Sokol, *Eurostrany – politické strany na evropské úrovni*, Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2007 p. 174

³³ Petr Fiala - Miroslav Mareš – Petr Sokol, *Eurostrany – politické strany na evropské úrovni*, Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2007, p. 180.

³⁴ Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 174-176.

³⁵ Petr Fiala - Miroslav Mareš – Petr Sokol, *Eurostrany – politické strany na evropské úrovni*, Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2007, p. 179.

³⁶ Petr Fiala - Miroslav Mareš – Petr Sokol, *Eurostrany – politické strany na evropské úrovni*, Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2007, p. 178.

Specific “Euro-nazism” is rising in Europe as a specific subculture is rising in Europe currently³⁷. Mostly the German neonazis try to organize it and they support strong European identity (a. o. on the base of common fight of foreign SS divisions in WW II). However, this struggle for common European identity cannot stop traditional national disputes of activists from various countries (Hungarians vs. Slovaks etc.). The territorial claims are also important here. The German organizers of Rudolf Hess March in 2004 enforced in relation to Czech activists the recognition of the German claim to Sudetenland territory. Some Czech neonazis rejected these demands, on the other hand, others support the annexation of the Sudetenland to Germany³⁸. The neonazi spectrum in Europe is divided also in view on Kosovo question.

7. Conclusion

The major political forces in Eastern European countries have accepted the current borders and territorial situation, despite the fact that some of them sometimes use nationalist elements in relation to the “historical territorial injustices” in their propaganda. The most important part of political spectrum which puts the traditional territorial claims into the political agenda is the extreme right. Territory and territorial claims stay an important part of extreme right identity. In this sense it is an interesting object of extremism research in this area.

With respect to the importance of territorial claims for the extreme right part of political spectrum, the traditional historical, geographical or political science research into separatism³⁹ or irredentism⁴⁰ in this area should be in the future more focused on the actor-analysis of domestic politics than on the politics of the state as a whole. The threats of border disputes in security studies could be conceptualized in a similar context. However, the extreme right could be in some cases supported in various ways by governmental bodies and in this sense the traditional approaches in both disciplines are also possible and necessary.

The intensity of politicization and securitization of territorial claims and interconnected phenomena (paramilitarism, consistent violence etc.) is different in a large part of East European extreme right and in the mainstream of West European modern-right wing populism. The legacy of struggles for own territory is very topical mostly in post-conflict

³⁷ Miroslav Mareš, *Nové vývojové trendy v pravicovém extremismu ve střední Evropě*, Bratislava: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2008, <http://www.fes.sk/files/Mareš-Senec08-FESfinal.doc> [accessed April 6, 2008]

³⁸ Miroslav Mareš, *Terorismus v ČR*, Brno: Centrum strategických studií, 2005, p. 202.

³⁹ Metta Spencer (ed.), *Separatism*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, 1998.

⁴⁰ Thomas Ambrosio, *Irredentism: Ethnic Conflicts and International Politics*, Westport, Praeger Publisher, 2001.

areas and in areas where the outbreak of a new armed conflict is threatening (Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, Transdnistria).

The extreme right in its traditional form has a strong potential in Eastern Europe. The new wave of modern right wing populist parties, which are more focused on “modern” than a traditional enemies and which resigned territorial claims, is not likely to appear in most countries in Eastern Europe. Westernization and Europeanization of politics in Eastern Europe led to the resignation of enforcing of territorial claims at state level, not at the level of extreme right.

The extreme right territorial claims complicate the European cooperation of extreme right. On the other hand, it is likely that interest into cooperation at European level could moderate some extreme right territorial disputes, as well as the common struggle against “new enemies” (mostly immigrants from non-European areas) of European extreme right. However, in the middle-term perspective in most areas of Eastern Europe the legacy of traditional territorial claims will be typical of the extreme right, despite the fact that such claims in most cases are not realistic.