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BÖLGESEL DÜZENİNE VE VESTFALYA DEVLET SİSTEMİNE TEHDİT: ABHAZ/GÜNEY OSSETYA VE KOSOVA BAĞIMSIZLIK HAREKETLERİNİN KARŞILAŞTIRMALI ANALİZİ

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ABSTRACT

CHALLENGE TO THE REGIONAL ORDER AND WESTPHALIAN STATE SYSTEM: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ABKHAZIAN/SOUTH OSSETIAN AND KOSOVAR SECESSION

MARIAMI GACHECHILADZE

This study aims to refer to the two independent and rarely-combined principles of secessionism and the regional order. The content of the work emphasizes the world and/or regional order that have undertaken very significant changes with regard to the two main Westphalian principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention. It argues that these principles appear to be on the bridge of the gradual disappearance. The challenges appeared *qua* the speeches of Woodrow Wilson aftermath the First World War (WWI) in favor of the "people" posing right to self-determination. The concept was neglected until the appearance of decolonization in 1960s and massive independence and secessionist movements in 1990s.

Accounting the secessionism as a drive for changes in regional order the thesis makes assertions on 1990s - the Kosovar secession in the Balkans and the Abkhazian and "South Ossetian" secessionist aspirations in the Caucasus. As a result of comparative analysis of the historical background and the recent developments of these cases, the corollary of the study demonstrates the way how the question of domestic concerns becomes *internationalized*. As a result, it suggests that historically existing trend of secessionism, in fact, has a very significant impact that implicitly or explicitly drives to the maelstrom of either short or long-term regional political changes.

Keywords: Kosovo, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, secessionism, order

ÖZ

BÖLGESEL DÜZENİNE VE VESTFALYA DEVLET SİSTEMİNE TEHDİT: ABHAZ/GÜNEY OSSETYA VE KOSOVA BAĞIMSIZLIK HAREKETLERİNİN KARŞILAŞTIRMALI ANALİZİ

MARIAMI GACHECHILADZE

Bu çalışma birbirinden bağımsız ve nadiren bir araya gelen iki ilkeyi – bağımsızlık hareketleri ve bölgesel düzeni ele almaktadır. Çalışma, Vestfalya sistemin iki temel prensibi olan devlet egemenliği ve devletlerin iç işlerine karışmama açısından çok önemli değişiklikleri yaşayan dünya ve/veya bölgesel düzene vurgu yapmakta ve bu iki ilkenin iki ilkenin giderek ortadan kalkma tehlikesi ile karşı karşıya olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Vestfalya'nın iki prensibine yönelik tehdidin kökeni Birinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında Woodrow Wilson'ın ortaya koyduğu "halk" lehine self determinasyon yani kendi kaderini tayin etme hakkı konusundaki görüşlerine dayanmaktadır. Buna rağmen bu kavram, 1960'larda dekolonizasyon ve 1990'lı yıllarda bağımsızlık hareketleri ortaya çıkana kadar göz ardı edilmiş gözükmektedir.

Ayrıkçılığın bölgesel düzen üzerinde yarattığı etkileri incelemek amacıyla tez 1990'lı yıllarda Balkanlar'da Kosova'nın Sırbistan'dan ayrılmasını ve Kafkasya'daki Abhaz ve "Güney Oset" bölgelerindeki ayrılıkçı hareketleri ele almaktadır. Tarihsel geçmiş ve güncel gelişmeler üzerinden yapılan karşılaştırmalı analiz, ülke içindeki endişelerin uluslararasılaşmaya nasıl dönüştüğünü göstermektedir. Çalışmanın sonucu olarak, tarihsel bir trend olan bağımsızlık hareketlerinin aslında kısa ya da uzun vadeli bölgesel siyasi değişikliklerin oluşmasında bir neden olduğu vurgulanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kosova, Abhazya, Güney Osetya, bagımsızlık hareketleri, düzen

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MARIAMI-GACHECHILADZE

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ASSR	: Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
CIS	: Commonwealth of Independent States
CIS PKF	: Peace-Keeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States
CSCE	: Conference of Security and Co-operation in Europe
EU	: European Union
GA	: General Assembly
GID	: Geneva International Discussions on the Conflicts in Georgia
ICJ	: International Court of Justice
IR	: International Relations
KLA	: Kosovo Liberation Army
LDK	: Democratic League of Kosovo (Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës)
MNC	: Multinational Corporations
NATO	: North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OSCE	: Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe
P5	: United Nations Security Council Permanent Five Members
SSRG	: Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia
UN	: United Nations
UNMIK	: United Nations Mission in Kosovo
UNOMIG	: United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
US SC	: United Nations Security Council
USSR	: United Soviet Socialist Republics
WWI	: First World War
WWII	: Second World War

INTRODUCTION

The world political map has undertaken major transformations in the twentieth century. The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the USSR led to the emergence of new states in Eastern Europe, Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia, which in major cases turned into bloody conflicts and resulted in numerous casualties. The existing geo-political order that have lasted for hundreds of years appeared to be facing serious shifts. This was especially feasible as a result of the challenges appeared to the state sovereignty and territorial integrity. These concepts had dominated the disputes among the international relations scholars, on the basis of the Westphalia Treaty. A document signed in the year of 1648 not only ended the thirty-years of war between the church and the state in Europe, but it also brought the understanding of the whole international system to another stage. From that time the Westphalian order as such became dominant in the international politics.

Various academic works were published with contradictory assumptions on whether the Westphalian system was decaying, transforming or developing. There was firm evidence that challenges possibly caused by independence movements – secessionism as such – were on face. Accurate and valid justification of this claim essentially was buried in the recent trend of secessionism. However, major works of scholars lacked comprehensive reference to this single phenomenon that played very vital role. Despite numerous secession movements existing all around the world, there were few works appearing that approached this trend theoretically in relation to the Westphalian system and its context.

Unsurprisingly, similar precedent of lack of reference to the secessionism as part of regional political transformations was detected in the literature on the secessionism and the regional and/or global order. These two phenomena were put in a single context in minor cases. Demonstrating the existing question in the literature, the following study aims to focus on the impacts of the domestic secessionism and at the same time, refers to the bottom up changes in the understanding of regional and global order.

Apparently, the two most vital variables of the study – the secessionism and order – are considered from the state-centric level of analysis throughout the thesis. Therefore, it serves to briefly explain the major approaches to state actions and omissions. The study also offers the reversed approach, according to which the intra-state territorial problem, which eventually transforms into the secessionist movement, rises as the challenge and/or threat for the region and the world.

The secessionism, as political and social phenomenon has been a matter of concern for different political units for centuries and even millenniums. This means that secession is not a feature of the modern international politics, but it has always been an inevitable part of the intra and interstate relations. However, the way secession is considered in the study poses very *sui generis* approach. It is primarily viewed, as mentioned above, a *sine qua non* for regional shifts rather than a way of quarrelsome interaction between the group and the central government *per se.* Even though the only way to understand the phenomenon passes through the grasping of the secession cases, this does not implicitly mean that one should consider them with all its components and variables. Rather, it should be envisioned as the unity of different dimensions that create a single event on local, regional and international level and has either handful or massive implications on the politics, economics and social life.

As far as is known the independence movements throughout the history have ended up with various possible outcomes that were manifested as a result of the group's quest for independence. That is why the evaluation of each and every case should not deal with the single party of the problem. Nor it is accurate that the secession, if it occurs, is only considered on local (territory the group occupies) and national level (the state where secessionism takes place). For, the world we live in is no more a place of diverse nations conducting their political, economic and social deals on their own and at their convenience. This means that the question of secession has become rather a regional and in some context global problem. Therefore, the problem implicitly refers to

the threats of emergence of the similar movements in different parts of the world, as we live in a heterogeneous environment.

In order to cover the secession-related threats for regional order, the study aims to firstly consider the e*mergence of secession movements as more likely to challenge the existing regional order,* and secondly, the *emergence of secession movements as more likely to challenge the Westphalian understanding of the state sovereignty.*

As the claims highlighted, the study focuses on the secession-driven uprising and the possibility of having reshaped regional order. However, that does not implicitly suggest that conclusion of having local turmoil leads changes in order. It rather attempts to primarily consider those cases of secession that actually drew significant attention for either their success or the clashes of interest over the regions these cases took place. Here, one might question whether process of striving for independence is ever successful for either the secessionist group or the central authority. Well, in referring to the successful secession, the study aims to demonstrate the outcome in two extreme and plain dichotomies; as mentioned above it sounds in the following way: whether the group achieved independence or not. Still, this explanation might raise question, related to the level of independence, as the states have their own criteria to recognize the political unit. Thus, to mitigate the confusion on the concept the study implicitly considers the possible outcome of secession as *de facto* and *de jure* independence. Hence, to account for the possible implication of the secessionism on the regional order it will evaluate the cases of the successful efforts resulted in international recognition, in a way. This is the only way for one to endeavor on making assumptions and evaluate *post-secession* order.

In the main chapters of the study some examples will illustrate the bloody conflicts that have triggered incorporation of different actors beyond the officially recognized territories of the state. That is the most important concern of the study. It not only aims to observe the role of emerging turmoil domestically, but attempts to observe the level of awareness and interest of other states. Thus, it keeps focusing on likelihood

of the foreign actors to be involved in the intra-state conflict. From realist perspective, it is truly believed that once the territorial integrity is questioned (especially when it deals with the claims on specific territory, regardless the basic assumptions[1] the claims rely on) different actors are involved in order to fill the power vacuum that might appear as a result of domestic problems and turmoil. Subsequently, it more likely will lead to the gradual changes in the Westphalian system. Furthermore, it will directly target the understanding of state sovereignty, as the secessionism in any region likely causes international intervention (direct or indirect), which implicitly or explicitly questions the sovereign rights of the *host state* (one facing the challenge of secession). For apparently, once other/third state intrudes into conflict they in either way are concerned with the politics there. Hence, whatever happens on the territory is part of their consideration as well as their interest to take the lead in the post-secession arrangements.

Nevertheless, the priority of the study does not lie in understanding the purpose of interference of any state *per se*. Rather, it is vital to apprehend the chain of the causation of variables that eventually leads to the claims above. Hence notoriously, referred theoretical approach to justify the interference might vary. However, the main purpose here lies in the importance of the alternation in the political balance within the state, as a result of which the regional order might be threatened *qua* possession of challenges vis-à-vis the sovereignty of the *host state*.

To understand whether the secession changes the regional order or not, the study will consider one of the key paths. It will evaluate the observation on the phenomenon through various lenses, including the actors involved directly (sending assistance to either side, conduct supporting/challenging policies etc.), or indirectly (through speeches, strengthening or suspending the economic and political links etc.).

All in all, the skeleton of the study considers secession and its effects as a phenomenon with multidimensional perspectives. It does not aim to find ways to mitigate the problem, nor does it explicitly seek the parties (actors on domestic and

[1] Basic assumptions might rely on arguments from geographical, historical or psychological perspectives.

international level) fomenting the conflicts. Rather it proposes that much ado on the secession cases throughout the world is less likely to be about nothing. However, it has extremely crucial consequences on the regional and global order in long-term.

In order to shed light to the secession, the study ceases considering it as a fact. In the following parts the reference to this word will have association of the phenomenon *per se*, as something abstract, which has already occurred and depicted certain level of success in virtue of independence or vice versa. In addition to this, it does not aim to judge the possible sources and/or background the secession was emerged. For it offers the secession in the virtue of a tool to caveat the possible threats it might loom vis-à-vis the system of the states neighboring and even beyond.

That said, the first part of the study demonstrates the role of theoretical approaches to the Westphalian Treaty. It, in fact, makes the literal reference to the principles that appeared at the core of the concerns in international politics only after the Treaty of Westphalia was signed. Furthermore, the principles like territorial integrity and sovereignty of states and balance of power between states were the primary triggers which significantly reconsidered their essence of states on international level. Consequently, it appeared to be the most significant stimulus of the new order – the Westphalian order. Here, the supremacy of state would be challenged by neither the religious bodies nor any other power-seeker actors.

After brief introduction to the topic, the first chapter precisely dives into the understanding of the world order and considering the challenges if there exist any. Starting with the assumption of Hedley Bull, the thesis shapes the understanding of order in general terms. Furthermore, it also briefly refers to the concepts that are related to the order, including the theories of liberalism and neorealism. It is followed by the references to the works of Buchanan, who is assumed to be one of the prominent scholars in theorizing the secession and related processes.

In the second section the study will demonstrate three basic approaches to the features of the interaction between states on international level. Subsequently, it will be followed by illustration of specific cases and adjustment of the theoretical preconditions of secession to the practical cases. Referring to the secessions of South Sudan and Bangladesh and secessionist aspirations of Quebec and Nagorno-Karabakh will aim to illustrate the struggle for independence responded in different ways. However, in its very core these cases will briefly emphasize and encompass the possible challenges vis-à-vis the regional security (realist perspective), economy (liberal perspective) and intra-societal deals (constructivist approach).

When it comes to the third chapter, one might view it as an introduction to the case studies. In the beginning of the chapter, the researcher makes brief methodological overview related to the ways of analysis. Therefore, the first section of the chapter aims to create the background of the understanding of technical details on the basis of which the outcome of the study becomes clear and reliable. After the methods introduced, the study will deeply focus on the historical background of the regional politics in the Balkans and the Caucasus. These highlights will be followed by the formation of statehood of the two states that faced the domestic insurgencies starting from the 1990s. Georgia's and Serbia's political developments will be demonstrated in details. This will serve for further understanding of why these two states became the *host* of the secessionism and dragged into the maelstrom of the conflicts that even today maintain to be the spotlight of the world political affairs. The last section of the third chapter will specifically focus on the emergence of turmoil in Georgia and Serbia, their development and their impacts on the *host states.*

Last chapter of the thesis will deal with the whole puzzle of secessionism and its impacts comprehensively. In its sections the final chapter will focus on the two cases again. It will emphasize Kosovo as more or less successful case of secession, unlike the Abkhazia and so called "South Ossetia". This chapter will primarily include the historical background of the cases selected. It will emphasize the process of formation of

single political unit, if it had ever happened, after numerous changes in the regions. While, later on, the study will demonstrate the peculiar features of both cases and will rather analyze the outcomes (politico-economic and social consequences) of conflicts and the situation in the region in the *post-secession* period.

In the end, the conclusion part will sum up all the approaches and perceptions. It will once again focus on the question based on explanations of multiple interests of the secessionist movements, the likelihood of shifting attention from the group to the central government and even beyond. And in the end, it will make few predictions related to the domestic secessionism and regional order.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ESSENCE OF WESTPHALIA AND STATE SOVEREIGNTY

Throughout the history of mankind, the process of transformation has been the only trend that was detected constantly and firmly. Myriad documents kept in the old archives and museums all over the world maintain to be invaluable sources of the world history. In virtue of these resources today one can deal with parsimonious cases that only hesitantly affected tiny parts of any inhabited area at any period of time. While on the other hand, part of these sources shed light to the hallmarks that triggered fundamental changes vis-à-vis numerous peoples all over the world. The Treaty of Westphalia is one among those that deserve comprehensive attention while making state level analysis of the international affairs starting from 1648 up until now, still arguable though. Therefore, the Treaty of Westphalia is one of the most important milestones of the history of mankind. Hence, undoubtedly, the discussions on the role of this Treaty in the international relations have always been one of the most predominant focuses in the studies of social and political sciences.

While considering the Westphalian Treaty, the arguments have mostly dealt with the major transformations the Treaty caused. Even today, the evaluation the changes predominantly take place on the basis of Westphalian order. Hence, it has become the source of comparison when one deals with the principles and notions Westphalian order framed.

That said, the following two sections of this part focus on the formation of the origins of the concept of Westphalia and its adjustment to the leading international system since the year of 1648. Subsequently, the study will consider the emerging discourse on the challenges to the Westphalian order, which drew the attention of the major international relations scholars all over the world. Consequently, it will create the groundwork for understanding the process of theoretical development of the concept and its practical implementation on the basis of recent challenges.

1.1. ORIGINS OF WESTPHALIA AS A CONCEPT IN IR

It is no more surprise that a single international document or agreement – the Treaty of Westphalia – between several political entities has created a great and endless impact on international politics. However, the most surprising fact is related to the impact of the Treaty *qua* the most gargantuan binding source for "not signatories" (Scharf, 2001) in inter and intra-state affairs throughout the world. As in very general terms the primary goal the Treaty served was *raison d'état* or the reason of state, which included all the possible principles that modern society might associate with today's state, in order to lead the state to welfare conditions. Kissinger's assessment of the Treaty and more specifically the principle of *raison d'état* and comprehended "national interest" was assessed as something "representing not an exaltation of power but an attempt to rationalize and limit its use" (Kissinger, 2014). Hence, together with its principles (will be mentioned below) the Treaty highlighted its precisely supportive implicit notions on *diplomacy*. The point made here implies to the situation that if any nation disputed with other, it would be the treaty, or a mutually and commonly agreed document that would assist in arranging the conflict and deescalate the tensions. Kissinger in the World Order (2014) referred to the same assertion, according to which the representatives of different countries settled in the capitals of other countries to "regulate relations" (Kissinger, 2014).

Thus, the argument on the universality and still validity of the Treaty is no more obscure. For, it managed to address explicit, comprehensive and wide-range political units *per se* all over the world. In addition to this, there were notorious highlights related to some basic and *sui generis* principles that are still applicable nowadays and furthermore, maintain the dominance over the international relations.

The principles that were shaped after the Treaty of Westphalia were framed in the following way. In the beginning it was the principle of *territorial integrity* of political unit, the principle together with the defined territorial boundaries referred to the absolute monopoly of power and legal order for the primary purposes. Secondly, it was ensued by

the principle of *legal equality* including the distribution of equal rights among the population. While thirdly, the principle of *balance of power* concerned on international system, or system of states, where there has always been the constant power struggle (realist perspective). Hand in hand with these principles fourth one – *sovereignty* – became "a political fact of supreme power over a certain territory" (Morgenthau, 1948). The latter was the most crucial principle which actually deserved the notorious attention at its core. For, the principle from the very initiation relied on the flexible foundation, according to which the internal (central government enjoys free choice of their political deals) and external sovereignties (no superior actor on international level) turned out to be liable to some overlaps on sort of state deals.

That said, as the predominant tendency that was emerged after the Treaty, implicitly or explicitly led to the system of full sovereignty and independence of states that implied to the utmost authority over specific territory with inhabitants there. The concern and target of the study in every respect is the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. This is especially notorious while dealing with the narratives on the possible changes in regional order and inter-state relations after secessionism appeared as a question of worth dealing in the Balkans and the Caucasus. However, before specifying and narrowing down the topic it is better to consider the general overview of the historical background on the concept of Westphalia.

The Treaty of Westphalia, which in fact was the combination of two main treaties – Münster and Osnabrük –, was one of the most significant outcomes the Thirty Years of War ended up with. Sometimes the Treaty is called as the "Peace of Exhaustion" to refer to the decades-long struggle of more than two parties for reasons that are even today disputed, as it includes almost all possible justifications including political, economic, social and primarily religious basis.

It was 1618, when Holy Roman Emperor, Ferdinand II conduct policy of bans on religious consciousness, which apparently was condemned by the people other than Catholics. Thus, Protestants in England, Denmark and the Dutch Republic opposed the

decision of Ferdinand II and asked for help. This turned into serious and severe conflicts, in fact, direct struggles between Roman Catholic and Protestant states.

Eventually, the representatives of the Holy Roman Empire – Ferdinand III, France – King Louis XIII and Sweden – Queen Christina agreed upon meeting on conference and shape the terms and conditions for the "Peace of Exhaustion". However, 1648 meeting did not bring the direct military conflict to the end, hence the group once again met to reconsider the agreement and make the confrontation complete. As a result of final agreement the Swiss gained independence from Austria, while Netherlands – from Spain. While German principalities managed to maintain autonomy, and France – control over Alsace-Lorraine. However, the most important outcome the treaty shaped was not written anywhere. In fact, it was the inception of the new world, in which the religion and especially Catholicism would not be given chance to a say, implement and/or enforce the political units act in accordance with the interests of the church. Thus, it opened the door to the new alternatives that were ready to strive for their position and their say in political, economic and social lives of their inhabitants.

After tremendously brief highlights of the historical events recalling the period leading to the signing of the treaty, the study, apparently questions the possible challenges to this order; and shifts that has become a matter of discussion in the changes related to the international system that 1648 Treaty of Westphalia framed.

It is no more surprise that the fundamental changes of 20th century literally caused increasing criticism vis-à-vis the existing understanding of the international politics. The number of references within the works on the international/global order has significantly expanded especially since the 1960s. The academia was highly impressed by the works of Hedley Bull, who was one of the prominent theorists to start discussion about the Westphalian order[2]. Later on, the collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War

[2] Bull, as it will be mentioned in the following section as well as referred in the case study chapter, is a very vital figure for his works in international relations theory. The most considerable part of his judgments are represented through the conceptualization of the events, as they are the most acute terms in understanding the system of states and that of an international society. The concepts he coined are mainly

triggered the enhancement of the works on order in response to the arguments Bull had provided. Noteworthy, the major trend in literature maintained the scales of traditional IR theories: realism and liberalism. Hand in hand with the development of the literature on order, in 1990s the writings and discussions on secessionism just started emerging. This part of the study aims to refer to the works and discussions on the global order and the nation state.

Before understanding the current mode of the international order, one should propose the understanding of the "order" as such. A very solid definition of the concept was offered by Sørensen. He viewed order as "a governing arrangement among states, meeting the current demand for order in major areas of concern". In his article he attempted to find answer to the basic question of what kind of order we have (Sørensen, 2006). In response to which, Sørensen highlighted the importance of the institutions that actually assist in arranging the inter-state relations. This liberal perspective had a very significant impact on the order studies, as it offered a pure state-centric explanation of the international system. However, what raises the interest is the interconnection between the Sørensenian liberal understanding of the order on the one hand and well-known realist perspective on the order. The interconnection laid in the fact that Sørensen made significant notions on the maintaining role of nation state.

Similarly, Ikenberry underlined the importance of the institutional arrangements while considering Westphalian sovereignty through the understanding of the inter-state relations (Ikenberry, 2014). He found three factors of (1) power, (2) legitimacy and (3) functionality as dominant in measuring the stability of the current order. These factors are extremely significant to adjust with today's reality. However, one should remember that the world is not a homogeneous place. Disparity among states exists, even if we perceive them *qua* Westphalian model. This is the most crucial fact that led many scholars to start thinking about the change in order. How Sorensen found the way out of this challenge is worth mentioning. He stratified states in the international system in

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represented as following: *international order, international (or state) system, international society* (society of states), and *world order*.

three layers: (1) prosperous nations went into the group of postmodern states (including Western European, North American and East Asian states); (2) “modernizing” states, (Russia, China, Brazil, India and some others) and (3) “post-colonial states”, so called “the south”, economically under-developed, poor states (sub-Saharan Africa etc.) (Sørensen, 2006). Eventually, as a consequence of his analysis the US turned out to be favored. Similarly in Ikenberry’s works it still maintains the dominant role in the world order (Sørensen, 2006).

All in all, Ikenberry’s studies revealed that the current order is still state-dominated. The changes that we face result in the appearance of gaps within and between the nation-states. These gaps are primarily related to the level of dominance and authority among the political units. However, when it comes to the “institutional arrangements”, they contribute in the inter-state cooperation, keeping the state-level decision-making process vital. Thus, to overview the role of the state in the international politics one should consider various variables that are likely to contribute from different perspectives. Apparently, the deal with Westphalian model of state is changed as it predominantly incorporates the perspectives and features of the state model in its very essence. Consequently, in the following part of the study already mentioned principles of Westphalian state are accounted. In addition to this, the various attitudes to the international order are compared with the challenges it might be facing. Eventually, the missing parts in the literature that would distinguish already framed perceptions on changes in global order and state sovereignty on the one hand and impacts of secession on the other are exhibited. Hence, the narrative of study will still continue reflecting the trends in academia on the *sui generis* global and regional order and secession *per se.* Subsequently, it will assess the effects of the latter through recognizing the behaviors of the states while responding the question independently.

1.2. CHALLENGES TO THE WESTPHALIAN STATE SOVEREIGNTY

Major political, economic and social changes after the end of Cold War and the collapse of the USSR led to significant transformation in the understanding of the international politics. Many scholars started arguing on the developing order. The inception of the discussions mainly lied in the emerging intra and interstate conflicts. The apple of discord became those threats that for some challenged the existing order, while for others were parts of the political transformation. As the study is dedicated to depict the estimated changes in order it considers almost all prominent discussions on the order related state-level disputes. Considering the secession *qua* threat to the existing order, the research is conducted on the basis of the existing literature. As the study will exemplify the claims and the main assertions through considering the cases of Kosovo and Abkhazia/South Ossetia secessions, it beforehand offers comprehensive approaches to the questioning of Westphalia in the paragraphs below.

As mentioned in the previous section, Hedley Bull was the prominent figure in the academia, who was puzzled with the changes going around even decades before the end of the Cold War. For him, it was not the global or international order prior to consider, but the social order, as *sine qua non* to the understanding of the global order in general. Interestingly, Bull started with reference to the Hobbesian state of anarchy, which is rather the explanation of, as he associated with, the state of disorder (Bull, 1977), where the un-established environment is the natural condition. Thus, to overcome and cope with the challenges of unstable and unarranged interaction, Bull listed the primary needs of all societies in order to survive. These needs included the following areas - (1) security, (2) promise and (3) property (Bull, 1977). Here, security referred to the guarantee to be prevented of any kind of bodily harm that might lead to the end of the life. Promise stood for the idea of interpersonal agreements and contacts on various matters that have fundamental importance. While - property was a need to have possession on something unlimitedly, concrete and abstract things both included wealth on the one hand and social status and freedoms of a human person, on the other. For

Bull, these three needs were primary sources of the society to exist. Moreover, these three bullets areas were the ones that predominantly keep the existing order preserved, for Bull. In case any of them precariously faced a handful challenge, the balance in the order would more likely to emerge that would pose threats to the system in wider scales. Eventually, it would galvanize further changes than it could be hesitantly predicted. Thus, their significance lied not only in their contribution to enrichment of theoretical approach, rather in their notorious hallmark on the practicing the social order from individual perspective as well as community and state level developments.

Bull's work, *The Anarchical Society*, offered the way of understanding of the order from political perspective. He used the dichotomy of order into two - international and global. The international order, Bull defined, is an arrangement of activities and interaction within the *society of states*. Hence, there is no doubt that Bull aimed to refer to the primary goals of the societies and states from single point of view. If this is what Bull implicitly mentioned, than one might understand the realist view of the international system that relies on the primary purpose of survival, or security as Bull put it. What follows are the international agreements, treaties and contracts of the states on various issues including the borders as *uti posidetis*. It is intrinsically interconnected with the property, as borders explicitly maintain the status of state possession. After all, it should also be mentioned that Bull's international order, similar to the order of society is unstable; as the changes occur in the needs they reflect on the arrangements and transform the outcome, too. That is the basic mechanism how the international order might face some shifts.

That said, on the other hand, Bull found distinctive approach to the world order. For him, it relies on the "disposition of human activity that sustains the elementary goals […] of social life among mankind as a whole" (Bull, 1977). What is quite clear is the fact that unlike international order that consists of states in separate sense, world order focuses on the people of the world, without distinguishing their origins, nationalities, ethnicities etc. For Bull, this is order in which different political systems have occurred for hundreds of years, in which there has never been the universal state of political

interaction. However, its characteristics have changed throughout the history and it is no more surprise that after major shifts of nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the new wave of changes on possible global political system might come to the stage.

A very significant review of Bull's work was made by Gilpin in *The Global Political Order*. In his work, Gilpin's reference to practical understanding of global order played significant role. He managed to offer the understanding of the global political system *sans* the US dominated society of states (Gilpin, 1990). Contrary to which, apparently, Bull strongly supported the idea of US supremacy. Gilpin's efforts did not turn out in the refusal of this idea; however, he touched on the issues related to the role of Europe. The main point on the European balance of power system was related to the lack of successful efforts to unite Europe and create a single empire (Gilpin, 1990).

What makes Bull and Gilpin stand on the same side is the political realism they supported. In Gilpin's argument of balance of power, the state-centric understanding, which is similar with Bull's explanation, notified the role of political realism starting from the beginning of even sixteenth century, following with the Treaty of Westphalia. Later on, First World War, which destroyed the European political order (Gilpin, 1990); and following events deepened strictly supremacy-based understanding of the states' relations.

Supporting the state as being the primary unit of the interactions in the international politics, Bull and Gilpin implicitly rejected the idea of any possible shifts in order. Furthermore, they highlighted specific states that enjoy the capability of the ordering the "society of states."

Similar but not same state-centric arguments are maintained in the works of Barry Buzan, too. He recognized the role of states. Besides, his discussion shifted the attention to the possible threats and challenges to the existing order. Primarily, Buzan managed to contribute in the security studies. His explanations provided first disciplinary history in the international security studies. In his book, *The Evolution of the*

International Security Studies, with his fellow Lene Hansen, the main argument laid in the questions related to the (1) appropriate reference of security, (2) principal threats to the referent (whether they are internal or external), (3) limits of security (whether they extend beyond the military realm, traditional understanding of security) and (4) affiliation of security with threats (Bellami, 2010).

In the process of seeking changing trend in the security understanding, which goes beyond the theoretical and methodological preferences, Buzan managed to follow up with the changes in post-Cold War period. As the focus in the international relations studies undertook drastic shifts, Buzan started questioning the discourse on the Westphalian state system.

To understand whether the Westphalian international order undertook changes or not, Buzan with Little marked few questions to consider the traditional interpretation of the high politics, the dominant unit and the nature of the international society (Buzan & Little, 1999). Buzan and Little found the democratic principles and economic interaction vital in the process of diminishing role of the high politics of military means. As a result of which, they affect the dominant unit in the international system, where intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), transnational corporations (TNCs) and other regional/international communities of states and individuals come to the spotlight.

For Buzan and Little, any kind of change related to the units and actors in the international politics has significant impact on the nature of the international society, too. Calling the emerging society as postmodern, the authors demonstrated the role of state "as the ultimate source of political authority" (Buzan & Little, 1999). Hence, the change, they emphasized, does not refuse the role of the state in the international politics *per se*, it rather transforms the means of the interactions among states. This process occurs hand in hand with the emergence of the non-state actors, or the actors on the level of international legal bodies, like ICJ, European Court of Human Rights, International Criminal Court and etc.

What Buzan and Little endeavored to defend actually leads to their conclusion on globe division into “two worlds”, zone of peace (post-modern, post-historical world) and zone of conflict (historical world) (Buzan & Little, 1999). In this dichotomy, both authors aimed to reconsider the history and group the regions in a way that they more or less represent either peaceful areas or places with constant disruption and tensions. Despite vague segmentation of the world states, this approach sounds a little bit predictive. What the authors implicitly aimed was to refer to the globe in the upcoming decades that will turn into two different worlds or “darkness” and “light”.

Apparently, the latter suggestion on the understanding of emerging order hesitantly builds links with Sørensen’s argument about groups of states. However, unlike Buzan and Little, who approached the order from the realist perspective of power politics, Sørensen suggested the division on the basis of the economic prosperity. Thus, several shifts that have depicted together with the diminishing role of the states as the only actors in international politics have also caused changes in the considerations vis-à-vis various issues.

Contrary to the arguments that deal with the change within the order from different perspectives, there are some claims on the significant shifts in the essence of nation-state. Reason for referring the following works on the nation-state is strongly related to the understanding of order; as nation-states were the mostly believed as inevitable part and *sine qua non* for the Westphalian system. The following review of the works on the nation-state should be assumed as part of the studies that global or world order refers to. That’s because, nation-state, as a subject, is one of the most significant and inevitable parts of the state-centric discussions regarding order-related disputes.

When it comes to other related questions regarding the issue the article under the name of *Comprising Westphalia* by Krasner attempted to refer to the existing loopholes in the Westphalian model. He proposed claims on the basis of misconception of the Westphalia as such. For him, the concept is highly exaggerated as the historical flux of

the concept lacks very basic features. In this regard Krasner strongly believed that there has never been any golden age of Westphalia. Hence, unsurprisingly, Westphalian principles of state sovereignty, territorial integrity and the rest are less likely to come true (Krasner, 1995-96). This argument sounded very close to the one offered by Caporaso, who noticed that the ideal understanding of the Westphalian system had not been used in practice fully (Caporaso, 2000). Unlike Krasner, Caporaso focused on the relation between the growth of nation/nationalism (in eighteen and nineteen century) and development of Westphalian system to find the justification of the vital issue on the Westphalian system. He argued that the clash between the church and the king, which is assumed to trigger the new political order, had started much before that of the 17th century, hence treaty of Westphalia should not be *sine qua non* for the beginning of new world order (Caporaso, 2000). While Krasner's contribution lied in his assessment of two characteristics of Westphalia state: territoriality and autonomy. For him, the discrepancy occurred with regard to concept of "autonomy". The fact that "autonomy can also be transgressed […] by external actors, or if more powerful actors impose institutions, policies, or personnel on weaker states" (Krasner, 1995-96) Krasner exemplified the way fake authority might exist.

Some other authors referred to Krasner's work from different perspective. Schmidt is one of those, who argued in favor of Krasner's major assertion. In his study, Schmidt made straightforward and at the same time vague definition of Westphalian system that is "about international politics limited to the supremacy of state sovereignty and territoriality" (Schmidt, 2011). Schmidt's arguments are in a way similar with Krasner's, as he, too, emphasized that (1) there has never existed ideal system the Westphalian order had offered. Thus, the (2) actual system is progressing in different ways that lead to the "post-Westphalian" state affairs in some cases.

When one considers dismiss of the order, the target of explanation is primarily represented in the transformation of the role of the nation state. The following paragraph goes beyond the political explanation of the puzzling order of Westphalia. In this sense one of the innovative approaches portrayed the "impersonal forces of world market" *qua*

the superior actors over the state governments, where the state authority is unintentionally seized (Strange, 1996). This argument did not fully dismantle the role of the state. According to Strange the increasing power of the market, decreased the level of the decision-making process in all spheres of the central government. Hence, the state as the supreme body in international politics is no more dominant or active.

Economic links and market forces were also considered by Ohmae, however, from different perspective. Unlike Strange he considered the possible outcome of the dysfunctional nation-state. According to the predictions Ohmae made, the successor of a politically supreme authority of state (does not matter whether you put it as Westphalian model state or nation-state) is a "region state", which for him was a "natural economic zone that might/not represent the geographic-political borders of particular nations", however, is capable of the successful participation in global economy (Ohmae, 1993). In his arguments the most attractive and vivid justification seemed his reference to the redrawing of the attention to the economic units of the Multinational Corporations (MNCs). MNCs managed to increase their dominance all over world currency exchange market. In fact, one might argue that what Ohmae tended to say is simply the outcome of economic globalization. Thus, the global economic order, for many scholars, questions the state as sovereign unit with its territorial borders. Moreover, it drags the statehood to the maelstrom, where the once fervently supported principles of Westphalia is wearily pervaded or even faded away.

Hand in hand with the increase rhetoric on the economic integration throughout the world, some demonstrated the role of the nuclear weapons and climate change (Falk, 2010). What Falk argued here was primarily the critique of "ill-equipped" state system to cope with challenges in security of state. The challenges here implied not only the arms race and developments of military facilities. But also factors that sporadically remind that beyond the politics there are the deals the society of states, as Bull put it, need to scrutinize in advance. As these are challenges and concerns pertain to the global population. Thus, the steps that should be taken require cooperation on global level, too. This is especially significant in the period of the increasing human, drugs and weapon

trafficking (Matthew & Shambaugh, 1998), as these threats no more recognize borders and state authorities. Here, Matthew and Shambaugh, similar to Falk, adjudicated the fact that the recent challenges were no more as parsimonious as the threat of foreign invader (internationally), feudal taxes and/or church (both domestically) *per se*. They both, similar to Buzan, demonstrated that the subject of the security threats is reconsidered. There appeared the threats that should be considered in wide scales by major actors internationally in the virtue of at least regional cooperation.

Another important sign of the diminishing the nation-state and changing understanding of the Westphalian state is related to the appearance of the modern warfare. There emerged claims that the Clausewitzian type of the "total" war is radically changed in the last century, it is strictly "de-institutionalized". The concept implied that the traditional actors of medieval warfare, the states, are no more the concerns of the military conflicts, but intra-state groups that have local, regional or global impact (Holsti, 2004). Furthermore, the change in the purpose of the war was depicted from time to time. "Weakening" or "destroying" the enemy by freedom-seeker nationalists or barbarian aggressors, is now partially replaced and today different factors become *casus belli* including the economic (natural resources), social (religion or ethnic origins) and psychological (fear of insecurity) conflicts among societies. Mandel was among those, who argued about the mercenaries that are being hired mainly by third world states to fight against intra-state conflicts (Mandel, 2001). The role of mercenaries undoubtedly alarms the scholars to consider the place of state then. For, in case it is the group of highly-trained solders hired to protect the territory of a state from foreign or domestic threats, then the state as a body of security provider is no more on the political floor. Rather its role is transformed into the middle stage or platform, conventionally, between the population and the non-governmental and non-state actors who are deemed to have *sui generis* role in different parts of the world, where they are whistled up.

The above given arguments strongly contribute in the questioning of the existing order. They demonstrate that the legal understanding of the state sovereignty within Westphalian system is challenged. For, the following principles of legal sovereignty:

non-intervention, ideological superiority, state-dominated non-hierarchical international order, common values and state borders, as a tool to maintain security, are in a way or another challenged and decayed by different emerging players (Zacher, 1992). That "pervasively unsettling process" of transformation impacts the once existing Great Divide between "international" and "domestic" deals of state. Thus, the dichotomy of state affairs into domestic and international is being vanishing. As a result, what the world faces is that the states no more remain the most significant actors in the international system. There appears the "middle ground" between the deals related to domestic and international politics (Clark , 1998).

What Clark aimed to refer is gradually vitalizing. His perspective on the vague differentiation of the domestic and international politics backs the idea that once domestic disorder and conflict is more likely to develop in at least regional challenge and disorder. Hence, the states are supposed to reconsider their understanding of threats, as it is no more state level issues, but rather individual or group level in number of cases. The question of secession probably would be one of the concerns the states are supposed to deal with domestically as well as internationally.

Allen Buchanan endeavored to contribute in the theoretical approaches to the secession. For him, "secession is a form of refusal to acknowledge the state's claim on authority" (Buchanan, 1991). Buchanan puzzled in understanding of the liberal political theory on skipping the secession that could be assumed as political right to refuse the existing authority. In considering explicit reference to the secession among the theoretical studies Buchanan started with Rawls and the theory of justice. For this work, the author emphasized, neither offered sufficient approach to the secession, nor a single assumption that secession might be possible in the hypothetical social contract/community which is supposed to find the principles of justice (Buchanan, 1991).

The article is very crucial for the only reason; it offers very useful differentiation of the reasons why particular groups seek for secession and independence, and what

follows, why the central authority rejects their bid for secession. All in all, Buchanan might be criticized as he failed to fill the missing parts and find the appropriate theory on the secession.

On the other hand, the problem in the theoretical background is not a puzzle for Pavković. In his article under the name of "Secession as Defense of a Political Liberty: A Liberal Answer to a Nationalist Demand" Pavković considered the issue from the liberal political theory as being clashing among the parties of the secession. The author aimed to understand that "if a seceding entity aspires to be a liberal democratic state, why in the matter of its unilateral secession, but not in any other similar matter of constitutional change, does the majority principle fail to apply in the parent state or its non-seceding part and why are, consequently, only some citizens in the parent state [the state hosting the secession] – at best those inhabiting the seceding territory – granted the right of political self-determination?" (Pavković , 2004). In other words, secession, which is justified by the right of group to self-determination is strictly unilateral and serves the interest of secessionist group, while the rest of the population is simply withdrawn from their political right of the same claims. Pavković concluded the puzzle by claiming that unilateral secession can only be justified if it serves the liberties more significantly than the economic interests of individuals. But if the consequence of the unilateral secession is incapability of parent state to protect those citizen rights which it protected before, then we face strictly unacceptable case of secession.

Pavković's individualistic approach vis-à-vis the problem contrasted with the state level analysis on border issues which was demonstrated by Carter and Goemas. As they argued appearing new international borders represent the "previous administrative frontiers" (Carter & Goemans, 2011). In fact, the collapse of the USSR and emergence of new political units on the map was the repetition of the previously demarcated zones. Carter with his fellow illustrated their assertion by referring to the secession of Kosovo from Serbia. Furthermore, they also remind the case of Ossetia and Abkhazia as a counter example of their claim, for it was strictly Russian dominated case of invasion and violation of the norm of *uti posidetis.* The authors also argued that internal or

external “borderization” of the political unit triggers less territorial disputes in case it follows the previous administrative frontiers. It is more likely to avoid the serious conflict and in major cases militarized confrontation.

This state level approach to the secession increases the need for viewing the problem on the global level. However, when it comes to reconsidering the secession movements and their correlation with the Westphalian order as such, it becomes an issue. The literature keeps skidding in conventional approaches to the order-related consequences of secession. The problem is the handful works that explicitly deal with outcomes of secession on the regional politics. In case one critically reviews the works there might be some implicit notions on the secession and political shifts in the region. However, the ado on secession related issues serve for the political crisis and in most cases the economic and trade links. Therefore, the pages long review of the regional and global order-related literature aimed to reconsider the causes of the political, economic and social transformations, to unmold them and assert the secession from completely different lens.

That said, this part was *ad rem* the political order in the post-Westphalia world. The arguments that were referred emphasized the basic existing trends in literature. Now then, the forthcoming section will narrow down the study boundaries and deal with the specific practical approaches to the secession and the related cases.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPT OF SECESSION AND ITS FORMATION

The previous chapter aimed to reconsider the Westphalian system of international politics. It reviewed the approaches to the basic principles as well as the process of their formation. The second section predominantly demonstrated the approaches that are accounting challenges to the Westphalian sovereignty and regional and/or global order. Apparently, it aimed to ground the basis for the second chapter, as the literature review continued in this part will allocate the arguments related to the secessionism. Obviously, these two chapters combined represent part of the ultimate goal on bringing the two phenomena of regional order and secessionism under a single umbrella. Thus, this part could be implied as the second fulcrum, of the study, which, one way or another, facilitates the understanding of the phenomenon of secessionism as parts of the global politics.

2.1. EMERGENCE OF CONCEPT OF SECESSION AND ITS LIMITS

Together with many other reasons the second half of the twentieth century was meaningful for the changes it brought in the approaches to the secessionism. Primarily, the Cold War created the environment that caused various political shifts. Not only were the US-USSR relations the source of primary concern in bipolar international politics (Gilpin, 1987), but also *intra-polar*[3] affairs that appeared as crucial deals of worth noticing. One of the most important events was the growing number of secession movements in the colonized regions like Africa, East-Asia or Latin America. Hence, the concept of secession has mainly been related to the process of decolonization. However, it was not only decolonization (a top-bottom process between the colonizer and colonized during which the primary actor is colonizer), but also the right to *self-*

[3] *Intra-polar* term is author's own attempt to conceptualize the reference to the issues within the two polar (two camps – Capitalist and Socialist-Communist) during the Cold War

determination that motivated the subordinated nations to awake from the lethargy and resist the colonial rule.

The concept of *self-determination* appeared amid attention for two times: (1) soon after the end of the World War I, when Woodrow Wilson appeared the pioneer to promote the right of the people against the suppressive powers. And (2) following the World War II, as mentioned above, the period of decolonization (Emerson, 1971). In the following section, the study aims to draw the basic frames of the concept *self-determination* concept that has been the most significant term in the discussions related to the secession. Starting from the Wilsonian understanding of the concept, the upcoming part will also cover the legal approaches through the perspective of international law.

2.1.1. Concept of Self-determination in IR and International Law

Wilsonian Self-determination

Many scholars argue that the principle of self-determination emerged long ago in the second half of 18th century referring to the American and French Revolutions (Velasco, 2014). However, more significant claims are related to the development of the principle soon after the end of World War I, when the President of the US Woodrow Wilson actively supported the rights of the "people" to decide who will govern them. This part of the study will emphasize historical background and understanding of the Wilsonian self-determination from different points of view.

In the process of building world peace then President of the US, Woodrow Wilson referred to the colonized nations and their claims as a matter of significant consideration. Putting the principle of self-determination on the fifth place of his Fourteen Points speech made in early 1918, Wilson actively supported colonized nations rights to choose their destiny.

> A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined (Wilson, 1918).

Many scholars have argued the role of the Wilsonian "self-determination" (most favorable expression of which was "self-governance" for Wilson (Pomerance, 1976)) in the US foreign policy construction. It is useful to assert the role of the self-determination in the 20th century US foreign policy to understand the general trend in the state the concept was originated. Hence, to illustrate the tendency Pomerance (1976) differentiated the concept by introducing "idealist", "realist" and "radical" perspectives. The author referred to: *interregnum* between WWI and WWII applicable for the "idealist" perspective (Pomerance, 1976). While two decades after WWII and post-Vietnam War period would match with the "realist" and "radical" perspectives respectively (Pomerance, 1976). One of the problems related to this concept was significantly illustrating the importance of "whose claim to "self-determination" is to be favored" (Pomerance, 1976). Comparing the last two phases the author argued that "radicals" would not view the US as a supporter of integration of the states, because strictly speaking integrated states would not like to cooperate with the US anymore. The only reason for this kind of action would be rational attitude vis-à-vis prospect trade partners, while the "realists", according to the Pomerance, would argue contrary and support morality in constructing foreign policy priorities.

Despite Wilson's strong support to the right of self-determination the Covenant of the League of Nations did not include the principle *qua* human rights; however Nawaz discussed the importance of the article 22 of the Covenant, which challenged the state sovereignty for the humanitarian purposes. Thus, this has become the very first precedent in the international law concerning the prevailing the human rights related issues over the state supremacy and sovereignty (Nawaz, 1965).

After all, beginning of the 20th century significantly changed the tendencies on the right of the people. Wilson's claim on self-determination was a trigger for the number of people to clutch it and view as a tool for the independence. Although the principle was not explicitly highlighted in the Covenant of the League of Nations, it drew significant interest from the people that saw the vivid opportunity for future recognition.

Self-Determination after the World War II

In the second half of the 20th century the concept attracted huge attention from theoretical as well as practical viewpoint. Despite existing misunderstandings the principle of self-determination gained various meanings during the UN era, as the term moved beyond the anticolonialism is (Kirgis, 1994). This part will discuss the legal continuation of the conceptualization of the right to self-determination and developments in the codification of it.

There is no doubt that despite talks had emerged on the issue from the establishment of the League of Nations the understanding of the principle of self-determination was still vague. However, significant contribution was made initially by the United Nations (UN) Charter that mentioned the importance of international peace and security. However, some argued that the Resolutions of the General Assembly of the UN on general principles do not automatically create international law (Emerson, 1971). Though, apparently the acceptable reference which enjoys amid attention is the principles accepted by the General Assembly of the UN. Building links between "peaceful and friendly relations among nations" and the concept of "self-determination" article 55 of the UN Charter actively exclaimed to bring the nations together to respect the agreed principles. Hence, *sine qua non* for international peace and security became "the right of self-determination of peoples" (Velasco, 2014).

The question of the self-determination became more and more significant starting from the 1950s and 1960s when the decolonization process all over the world spread. In this regard UN General Assembly (GA) Resolution 1514 (XV) carries vital role in saying that:

> All peoples have right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development (UN General Assembly, United Nations, 1960).

Hence, obscure and implicit reference to self-determination (between 1910s-30s) was substituted by comprehensive codification of the concept. However, many argue that these articles were not perfectly highlighting the notions of "people". Furthermore, they were unclearly dealing with the right of self-determination (Basic, Goetze, & Smith, 2003). Notwithstanding, this huge step forward has become the purpose and hope for suppressed nations that were under control of great empires of previous centuries.

The following step in the process of developing judicial approach to the concept was held when two covenants were signed. The International Covenants, one on Civil and Political rights and the other on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights were adopted in 1966 by the UN with 74 and 71 signatory states respectively. Today, the former Covenant has 168 and the latter 164 party states (UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 2014). Both of the covenants share the first paragraph of the first article in which the participatory states agree upon the right of all the people, who extensively pose right to determine their political, economic, social and cultural life (UN General Assembly, 1966). However, number of multiple sources on self-determination among International Bill of Human Rights did not facilitate the discussions vis-à-vis the right of the "people" of self-determination. More rhetoric appeared in the related discussions.

The discussions somehow lessened when the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People was adopted in 2007. The Declaration was another step forward in the process of specification of the obscure term of "people". This time international community consisting of 143 states agreed upon the issues related to the indigenous

people. One of the points highlighted was the right of minorities to self-determination (UN General Assembly, United Nations, 2007). Hence, the latest development is one of the evidences about the importance of the concept and the subjects to the right of self-determination.

In the second half of the 20th century the common attitude towards the self-determination changed through the efforts of the international community, which contributed significantly to adopt the international documents, binding and non-binding. Hence, codification of the existing Wilsonian "self-determination" raised interest of different people to pursue their rights. However, the matters related to the implementation of the term are still obscure, as it is unclear whether what the international law covers is just an "aspiration of some groups or putative governments" (Kirgis, 1994). In addition to this, the Kirgis (1994) even argued about the *quasi-self-determination* cases. This concept mainly refers to the reversed interconnection of the international recognition of the right and the scale of democracy in the state that faces the problems related to self-determination. The author argued that if the representativeness is high domestically the possibility of international recognition of the right to self-determination is low. This part has crucial role, as one might adjust the scheme to the secession and demonstrate that secession related issues (in democratic states) that rely on the right to self-determination are less likely considered and approved internationally. Kigris, however, mentioned that democracies do not directly reject the right of indigenous people to pursue their cultural practices. Here what matters for the author is the scale of destabilization that might be measured through the "plausibility of the historical claim" (Kirgis, 1994). The term determines whether the quest for secession is raised for the territory other than already settled by the group or not. The generalization of this perspective assists to have wider picture on the secession. Thus, when the conflict emerges on the basis of the quest for secession, the "primary question […] concerns the contested territory" (Wellman, 1995). This assertion dominantly leads to the zero-sum game between the secessionist group and the remainder state.

Despite various shifts and breakthroughs in the process of formation the essence of the concept, the general overview might still look vague. From the very beginning, Wilsonian understanding lacked adequate accuracy. Starting from the second half of the 20th century, the regional resistance in different parts of the world assisted to reshape and even enlarge the scales of the concept. Recently, the concept is understood from different angle; however, the decades long process of adjudication seems to be productive as significant number of the UN resolutions are dedicated to it. As a result, it increased the awareness of the people on the possible consideration of the concept.

2.1.2. Development of the Concept of Secession

Secession is assumed to be the non-legal issue. While the international law deals with the right to self-determination as the normative principle, the international politics face secessionism as the consequence of the right awarded to all the "people". The theoretical discussions on secession have emerged subsequently after the increasing number of precedents was detected. However, the success level for each of the cases has varied significantly among different fields normative and even moral studies. Thus, secession is assumed to be multi–disciplinary phenomenon that incorporates the factual, moral and judicial aspects of the problem.

The ideas related to the secession have been widely expressed by scholars of international relations and international law. However, as it turned out the conflicts that emerged domestically not quietly responded the theoretical basis of the secession. Furthermore, the conflicts that emerged in different parts of the world were not actually part of the secessionist movements. For the turmoil that was emerging was gradually transforming into the complicated and complex hostilities as civil wars of *bellum omnium contra omnes.* This precedent was demonstrated in cases of Biafra and in Eritrea, where the intra-state conflict was transformed into the civil war.

Nowadays, secession has quite negative understanding and is mainly related to either bloody confrontations resulted in frozen conflicts, or *de facto* independent regions within state. Hence, the *raison d'être* for referring secessionism in more or less negative way is that the outcomes of the secession-related issues are drastic for at least a group of people, if not the whole population.

The real struggle with the secessionism started in 1990s when the major political shifts took place that led Baltic, South Caucasian, Central Asian and Eastern European states fight for independence. As a result of which, fifteen states appeared on the world political map. However, Chechnya in the Northern Caucasus, for instance, was not that much successful case to take advantage of the collapse of the USSR and establish an independent state. Similar bloody conflicts underwent in different parts of Africa, former Yugoslavia and even in Georgia.

The existence of cases with different characteristics have puzzled and encouraged the political scientists and scholars to find the solution to the dilemma of territorial integrity and claim for secession of homogenous group of people within the state. Although the two principles pose inconsistencies, there is still a strong assumption that they both work in tandem and the complexity related to them are actually misinterpreted (Brilmayer, Secession and Self-Determination: A Territorial Interpretation, 1991). According to some claims, the two principles are subject to different assumptions. If the principle of self-determination is assumed to be a liberal democratic value and the secession an alternative of it, then the principle of territorial integrity is less democratic, feudal and oppressive (Brilmayer, Secession and Self-Determination: A Territorial Interpretation, 1991).

However, when it comes to the international law it does not have much to say, as the secessionist movements are essentially internal to the country, they configure strictly local and intra-state deals. On the contrary, the international law is a tool for originating, shaping, developing and observing the inter-state relations. Hence, secession conventionally is less likely to enjoy the consideration from the perspective of the

international law. However, that does not keep the latter beyond the issues related to the protection of the human rights. For the international law has approached to such a point, where the concepts of the territorial integrity and state sovereignty are questioned if and only if they threat the most basic principles of humanitarian law. Hence, there still exists the loophole through which the interpretation and multi-spectral approaches to the concept are free to be settled. Thus, the problem of interwoven and contradicting arguments is still matter of misunderstanding. The international law less likely has been capable of calculating the outcomes and preventing negative consequences.

In the discussions related to the implementation of the international law, the primary question deals with the state. For the state is the center of the international legal order. The birth and origin of which is the question of the fact or law. The secession of states becomes complex and complicated concept and the legal certainties become somehow illusive. It is the known that there is no clear agreement or précised meaning of the term of the secession. As sometimes it is used to describe the dismemberment or dissolution of states, too. In case of devolution a new state is created on the territory of one state. However, secession seems to be more complicated. The best definition for the concept would be the following: secession is the creation of the new independent entity through the separation of the territory and the population of the existing state, without the consent of the latter state.

According to the above mentioned definitions of secession and devolution, it is still complicated how to refer to the dissolution of former Yugoslavia in 1990s, was it dissolution or secession? In this sense the case of Algeria seems to be another example of complication. It might be a matter of discussion whether she seceded from France in 1958, or it was part of decolonization process when in 1962 France granted independence. These cases create the tools to limit the secession to the situations in which independence is achieved without the consent of the remainder people and territory. And if the secession is understood in this way it encompasses the creation of the majority states through the state level analysis. The international community itself is

enough to identify that the most of the cases cover the dissolution or decolonization of the majority states within America, Africa, even the Europe.

Turning back to the question of secession from the legal perspective, some argue that there is no law for state secession, and it is entirely governed by the international politics. In the International Court of Justice on the Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence from Serbia, the Republic Kosovo argued that secession is not simply regulated by the international law and the creation of new state according to this is purely the fact. This might not be a satisfactory justification as there are enough norms that actually attempt to regulate the formation of new state and its recognition. These rules might be contradicting, complex, however they undoubtedly exist.

The primary rules related to the secessionism cover premature recognition of seceded unit, the prohibition of use of force or aggression, requirement of statehood and etc. In order to avoid further complication, there should be made a balance between equitable cases. For primarily policy values that should be taken into account in the case of secession are not violated. One of these primary values is the need for stability in the international relations. The fragmentation of the international society threatens the world order. Could the presented world order cope with the problems of more than 100 states facing the similar dilemmas? Noteworthy, primary policy values are not the only concern, as it appears the question of fairness, whether a small minority group existing in the state should be given opportunity to form their own state or not. In this concern the only valuable one deals with is not fairness, as it also should consider the preconditions of the emergence of secessionist movements. It is considered whether they are discriminated against by the majority group or not. Then, the appearance of two principles of discrimination and fairness creates possible puzzle on their reconciliation. In the legal understanding it is difficult to discuss.

As mentioned above one of the concerns of the issue deals with the question of recognition of the seceding unit, as the recognition actually defines whether secession is successful or not. The history of recognition has also transformed throughout time. In

the past the recognition was always unilateral, each of the existing state was deciding the seceding entity to be recognized or not. However, today it is the UN which decides to recognize any particular unit or not. If the UN decides that the state violates the peremptory norms of international norm, then this process will more likely end up with the recognition of the seceding unit. The secession of Rhodesia or the establishment of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is the best examples of unsuccessful cases, when the UN did not recognize them. However, contrary to these cases, Israel managed to successfully secede from Mandate of Palestinian territory in 1948. The similar outcome was faced in case of Bangladesh seceding from Pakistan in 1974 and Eritrea from Ethiopia 1993. The recognition of Bosnia or Croatia, are also illustrations of successful secessions and not dissolution of Yugoslavia, as some argued.

After successful recognitions, there appear the cases of partly successful secession, when the secessionist units were not recognized by all the states. Hence, these units are not members of the UN today. Kosovo, for example, is recognized by over one hundred states, while the rest do not recognize her. There is reversed case of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which are recognized by only handful states, while a tremendous majority of international community disagrees upon recognition them. Hence, generally speaking, there is no single approach to the phenomenon, which would encompass different practices and create the image of attitude towards the problem.

However, the only common ground for different outcomes of the secession primarily lies in the fact that there is a clash between two major principles of self-determination and territorial sovereignty. On the one hand all the people have right to choose to secede from any state and exercise the self-determination principle, while on the other side, there is qualified state that would never allow any minority to separate as it would like to protect territorial integrity. Noteworthy, both of these principles have subject to qualification that permits certain degree of flexibility, either to find equitable solutions or to accept and recognize the claim.

It is usually thought from the conventional point of view that the territorial integrity is inconsistent with the self-determination. However, one might look at the instances of the self-determination and secession at the same time, this will help to find that in all the cases that appear there possess implicit or explicit territorial focus. Furthermore, the major secessionist movements involve the claims that territory has been taken from them. Considering the example of 1990s, and the collapse of the USSR, Caucasian states would be useful illustration for this assert, as there were three independent states that had existed years before the USSR and they were wrongfully incorporated within the communist regime of Soviet Russia. In the majority of the cases related to secession the situation is the same. However, this does not completely adjust with the decolonization, as the claim on territory that once was independent state is not truly applicable for those African nations that were granted the territories by few colonial powers drawing the borders on the map with the ruler. Anyway, these two cases are hardly considerable from the single lens as their geneses have different characteristics and the pre-conditions were quite different. To have more clear understanding of those primary principles; the following paragraphs will consider them based on the factual studies and legal arguments.

In case of self-determination, there have appeared some restrictions to limit the secession to more specific cases like: colonial rule, alien occupation (Israel-Palestine and Morocco-Western Sahara) and racist regimes (old Apartheid regime of South Africa). The UN Resolution 1514 on the granting independence to the colonized peoples or the Resolution 2625 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States adopted in 1970 are examples of these identifications (Brilmayer, 2016).

Turning to the territorial integrity is also fundamental principle and value in international legal order. Similar to the self-determination, the principle has many times been discussed in the Charter, Resolutions and Declarations of the UN. Furthermore, it is backed by the principle of *uti posidetis*, standing for the respect for colonial

boundaries. However, later on it was used generally, for defining the acceptance the existing territorial borders.

The principle of territorial integrity mainly is mentioned in two Resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly (GA). Resolution 1514 Declaration of the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples adopted in 1960 also refers to territorial integrity. It mentions:

> Any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations (UN General Assembly, United Nations, 1960).

Similarly, the Resolution 2625 refers to the right to self-determination, mentioned above and adds:

> Nothing in the foregoing paragraphs shall be construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States conducting themselves in compliance with the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples […] and thus possessed of a government representing the whole people belonging to the territory without distinction as to race, creed or color (UN General Assembly, United Nations, 1970).

Both of these quotes intrinsically highlight that the principle of the territorial integrity goes hand in hand with the self-determination. However, there is exemption for a state that does not reflect the right of self-determination of the people to have a government of their representation. A state that neglects the right of distinct people by "race, creed or color" loses its right to the protection of the territorial integrity. Here, Brilmayer (1991) identified the link between the democratic participation and the right to secede that in short might be called as denial of the internal right to self-determination.

There are two types of self-determination: internal and external. The internal self-determination stands for granting rights of participation in political, social, economic and cultural affairs within the state. It does not explicitly imply the secession, but in case this right is not fulfilled by the central government, then the case of external secession might come to force. The external self-determination refers to the quest for the secession from the state, which is only justified in case the group undertakes severe attitude from the state institutions. Briefly, it is the case when the central government violates its responsibilities and duties vis-à-vis the minority group to pursue their rights. This leads the oppressed people within the territory to disclaim the right to the territorial integrity, and struggle for the secession as remedy (Brilmayer, Self-determination: The Problem of Secession in International Law, 2016).

Judicial decisions on the cases of secession

There are different conditions under which the situation might be assessed as quest for remedial secession. According to international law, there are three possible cases to have the remedial secession: colonialism, foreign military occupation and the denial of group rights, when the definable group is not allowed by the government to pursue their political economic, social or cultural development rights.

When the question of Francophone community of Canada emerged, the Supreme Court of Canada primarily decided to consider the possibility of remedial secession. The Court recognized that in case of appropriate circumstances, the right to remedial secession might take part. However, relying on the facts found the Francophone community of Canada was not granted the right to secede.

On the contrary, there appear some other cases that are characterized with the decision of advisory opinion. One of the examples is related to the case of Kosovo, which is one of the two targets of the case study of this work. In 2010 the International Court of Justice on Kosovo practiced the advisory opinion. On this occasion the General

Assembly of the UN asked the Court for the advisory opinion for the question "is the unilateral declaration of independence by provisional institutions of self-government in accordance with the international law?" The Court preffered to give the narrow decision, specifically on the case of Kosovo, by claiming that the unilateral independence of Kosovo was compatible with the international law. Hence, the question was approached from the perspective of just one case. The Court explicitly rejected to avoid the question of whether the remedial secession was permissible or not. Furthermore, it found no answer to the question of Kosovo's statehood. The only thing found was that the unilateral declaration of independence did not violate any rule or norm of international law.

There are two important points worth discussing here: (1) secession violates peremptory international law, such as the prohibition of the use of force and (2) "the scope of principle of territorial integrity is confined to the sphere of the international relations between states" – hence, it found that the principle of the territorial integrity should be understood *qua* tool of interaction between the states and it should be the subject of the respect of one state vis-à-vis other state. Therefore, it does not order the groups within the state to respect the principle of territorial integrity. But if this is case, then why the numbers of Resolutions of the UN General Assembly condemn the efforts of within state groups to secede? The answer to this question might be increasingly depended on the specific characteristics of the secessions.

Hand in hand with the above mentioned question, there exists another less obvious finding of the Court on the concept of "people". The Court founded the Kosovo Albanians living in Kosovo constitute a people within Serbia entitled to exercise the right to self-determination. In so doing the court rejected the argument that only the population of the territory as a whole is entitled to the exercise the right to self-determination.

So there might be few conclusions drawn from all the state practices and the judicial decisions. Primarily it is important to make clear that it is almost common

agreement on Kosovo's independence, which was *sui generis* case. And the advisory opinion constitutes the leading and important precedent in the issue of group secession.

As to conclude, international law neither explicitly prohibits nor accepts secession. On the other hand, there are enough cases which clearly question the major consents on the secession. International law supports secession in case of decolonization or cases like breakup of the USSR or Czechoslovakia. However, the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia is uncertain, as it is occasionally portrayed as a case of dissolution, with the exemption of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, which are examples of secession. This simply emphasized how the secession and dissolution are entangled.

Then, there is consensual secession, in which international law makes no obstacles in the way of such secession. The illustration is the secession of South Sudan from Sudan, or Montenegro from Serbia.

On the final stage, the problem exists in case the central government does not give consent to the secession of particular group from the state. In this situation there are cluster of rules and principles to achieve the solution without violating international legal order. One case is very clear here; secession that violates the peremptory norm of international law will not be accepted. In case of Rhodesia, for example, the territorial claim of Rhodesia was not supported because it denied the self-determination of the majority of the people. Hence, not all the guiding principles were fulfilled.

For general summary, (1) on what we have clear consent is that the "self" of the self-determination or the "people" who are entitled to exercise the secession, are not containing the population as a whole. The groups of the people within the state, who share common identity related to the race, ethnicity, language, religion and occupy the distinct territory within the state constitute the "self" of the self-determination. This is ensured by the judicial decisions, including the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on Kosovo.

(2) The respect for territorial integrity prohibits another state to intervene, disrupt or interfere in the intra-state cases and violate the sovereignty. But this is not the case with the group of people within the state; their efforts to secede are not considered as the threat to the right to territorial integrity as in case of Kosovo. This is a very controversial finding that contradicts with the number of UN Security Council decisions that have condemned the attempts of non-state actors threatening the territorial integrity of the state.

(3) The international law shows the preference of the internal self-determination as the best way out to solve the conflict. The people should be given the right to exercise the internal self-determination to avoid any possible chance of the future uprising.

However, (4) if the state denies the internal self-determination and violates the right of the people within the state, then that people may secede as a fact of exercising the right to self-determination as a form of remedial secession, case of which is Bangladesh seceding from Pakistan in early 1970s. What raises interests on Kosovo preceding is the majority of western states that previously were not committed to the subject of remedial secession; however, they indicated clearly that Kosovo was entitled to secede from Serbia on this ground. In other words they just supported the remedial secession. This is evidence of practices of a state on the part of other states.

The Russian Federation attempted to justify her position in case of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by relying on the principle of remedial secession, too. However, this has not become the final resort of the problem, unlike the case of Kosovo. But of course it must be understood that the application of the remedial secession might only happen, when there is no possible way of negotiations that will give rise to internal self-determination of the people within the state.

That said, when it comes to the possible consideration of rightful perspective it is essential to consider the two concept of right to secession and territorial integrity on the same level. This might not be the complete solution and the receipt to let the problem go

away. For, everyone has their own interpretation of history on the possession of the territory. Hence, for them the struggle to secede is rather the "remedy for past injuries" (Brilmayer, Secession and Self-Determination: A Territorial Interpretation, 1991). But if we go beyond the subjective assumptions and consider the group of people as lawful to exercise their own rights, then we might think about the possibility to reexamine the question.

The stability of international relations demands a strict approach to secession. The international legal order cannot easily tolerate further fragmentation of the existing political order. But on the other hand, justice and fairness demand that the oppressed people must be permitted to secede, when the internal self-determination is denied. However, the matter is still left to the interpretation of the state, particularly when it comes to the recognition of the newly independent states or aspirant states. In any possible case, the international law sooner or later will manage to consider the issues related to secession *qua* single perspective covering different positions. This will lead to the fact that the future the actions of state will be more coherent and less politicized than it has been in the past.

2.2. Preconditions and Levels under which Secession Movements Tend to Appear

As the major transformations take places all around the world, it is a question why the justifications of the causes of secession related issues are hedged within the boundaries of international law. Notoriously, the debates that emerge on the problem are more or less futile, for they aim to approach the issue from mainly one perspective – legal, political or moral. In the virtue of this the scholars perceive handful arguments on the secessionism that encumbers development of a theory.

The major theoretical arguments and disputes in academia rely on another event that is seen as part of ethnic politics. Notoriously, the scholars in major cases shaped the development of the uprisings among the ethnic group as a part of domestic politics and

put it under the name of ethnic conflicts. Although the latter on the one hand and secessionism on the other could be understood as two sides of one apple, they will not be considered as the same events by the researcher. For, it is assumed that secessionism in its core, is a matter of regional and to some extent international concern rather than local ethnic conflict. The possible extents of secessionism were briefly introduced in their work on *The Political Regulation of National and Ethnic Conflict* by John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary. They considered secessionism ("partition" in their words) executable in three possible conditions – when the host state (central government) manipulates the outcomes of dissolution, when the break-up is agreed upon common basis, and when the dissolution occurs via outside interference (McGarry & O'Leary, 1994). Hence, the approach to the secessionism as matter of domestic concerns implicitly leads to bias results emerged from the cradle of the ethnic dissatisfaction vis-à-vis the central government.

The essential trigger for the ethnic uprising and secessionism Monica Duffy Toft assumed, predominantly lied in the quest of the territorial interests. The primary drive to disobedience within ethnic groups emerges on the above mentioned basis (Toft, 2003). Hence, the primary target and furthermore, the source of violence within the ethnic groups and their uprising, Toft argued, would consider the "indivisibility of territory." Her strong insistence on the piece of land as *a priori* for the ethnic groups reminds *real politik* that considers security dilemmas, violence triggered by old threats and hatreds and etc.

Viewing the problem from *real politik* is one of the reasons the outcomes of the secession are considered on the level of domestic threats. Certainly, putting the geography and/or territorial interests as the primary source of violence between the ethnic group and the central government of the state could be one of the possible ways in approach secessionism from theoretical perspective. However, the phenomenon of secession in international politics is less likely to grab theoretical importance, as it has become more issue-specific trend despite the critical and crucial outcomes of the

movements in different parts of the world (Wood, 1981). Here one might ask whether there is anything wrong with having case-oriented *ad hoc* explanations of the secession movements. Truly, the question seems confusing. In Brendan O'Leary's review of the arguments for and against secession and/or partition there were different cases considered in order to find possible trend in the already existing cases. As an outcome, the author aimed to list all possible claims with referring the partition cases as "record of history" (O'Leary, 2006). Hence, one might find the explanation appropriate for further studies on secessionism which lacks the theoretical approaches. However, it should not shift the attention from the importance of the theory; as theory helps to construct ideas, perceptions and expectations, furthermore, it is capable of providing possible predictions. Thus, taking appropriate measures vis-à-vis the possible threats of the movements seems to be more feasible.

Contrary to this, one might argue that having a single secession theory will not guarantee adequate response to any possible emergence of movements within state. However, it will reveal the possible variables and their interconnection, as a result of which the cases will be clustered and shaped under specific umbrellas that will facilitate the future steps with regard to the analysis of the cases of secession.

When it comes to the purpose of this study, it does not aim to construct a specific theory of secession. It rather targets the two purely political phenomena of secession and international order. According to which, the secession has emerged as one of the most vital and at the same time vexing principle amid international politics. That is why this particular study approaches the secessionism as a tenet in the understanding of the possible changes in the regional and international order.

The concept of secession has various definitions, one of which highlights it as "more specific term [than separatism], referring to a demand for formal withdrawal from a central political authority by a member unit or units on the basis of a claim to independent sovereign status" (Wood, 1981). More briefly, Tir (2005) defined secession "as an internally motivated division of a country's homeland […] territory that results in

the creation of at least one new independent […] state – with full sovereign rights and legal recognition by the international community […]" (Tir, 2005). In virtue of Tir's approach one might view secession as an illustration of zero-sum game. For, at first glance it seems that the secessionist group is mitigated *bona fides* by the gains like international recognition. While the remaining territory, or as Tir put it as "rump state" could more likely be incensed with the outcome of secession, as she ends up with diminished territorial borders (Tir, 2005).

Despite the possible speculations implied in the latter definition on secession, Tir highlighted that the guarantee for solving the domestic territorial dispute through secession might not be quite useful for solving the challenges (Tir, 2005). Hand in hand with this argument, Horowitz's position could be immediately referred. He strongly supported the idea that secessionism – once seen as the solution to the conflict between the ethnic group and the central government – is in fact an illusion and it in fact leads to more drastic outcomes for both sides (Horowitz D. L., 2003).

When the discussion emerges on the causes of the secession, many incorporate the nationalism, or furthermore, the use of nationalism as hedge for secessionist uprising. Apparently, it is not entirely adequate to consider nationalism and secession as rational and self-interested behavior (Hardin, 1995). Nor it might be assumed as the other extreme of the scale, as "irrational manifestations of some kind of primordial sentiment" (Dion, 1996) in virtue of which the dissatisfaction of the group vis-à-vis central government increases. Therefore, not only the existing definition is vital to deal with secession cases, but the adequate reference to the content of the movements is important.

Once the definition is clearly introduced, it is worth considering what possible causes of secession might be. In this regard, Wood argued that the primary goal is to keep the uprisings triggered by pan-ethnic, ethno-nationalist, ethno-religious etc. claims under the name of secession movements (Wood, 1981). This will be *sui generis* term that will serve to demonstrate the separations *qua* quest for independence. Otherwise

further segmentation of the term is more likely to pose threats and lead to unpredictable outcomes and complexities.

For many years, the debates on the causes of the secession have covered numerous speculations. The reason of this lied in the diversity of the cases, as mentioned several times in previous sections. However, Wood (1981) attempted to construct the most significant backgrounds that probably would justify the emergence of the turmoil within the heterogeneous states that are more likely to face the uprisings. For various reasons, Wood aimed to refer to the following pattern of preconditions as the most vital ones throughout the studies of secession movements. Giving priority to the *geographical precondition* Wood clearly highlighted the role of various geographical barriers that might cause the appearance of artificial borders initially. Later on, it might transform and manifest in the form of justification for secessionism (Wood, 1981).

The geographical argument to justify secession did not seem truly valid for Wood, as he implicitly and explicitly referred to it as one of the possible ways to understand to problem. Wood *bona fides* illustrated cases like Japan and New Zealand that are archipelagic states, as counter argument to the above mentioned justification. Hence, he also agreed upon the fact that the secession cannot be understood only *qua* geographical location. However, there are cases which demonstrate the applicability of the principle. Independence of Bangladesh (Merritt, 1969) would be one of the examples that verified the fact that secession is difficult to be justified *sans* geographical explanation. Furthermore, geography is a key determinant for the central governments, too. It plays significant role in conceiving nation's claims for "defensible borders" (Walt, 2017). Subsequently, it leads to the emergence of people calling for their extensive rights in the best case scenario.

Secondly, Wood argued on *social precondition* which is primarily related to the cultural diversity of a state. Social precondition demonstrates the perceptions of the ethnic or religious groups the members of which view each other as parts of a single unit. Through this understanding of each other, their perceptions are framed on basis of

“peculiar bond[s]” and make them distinguished from other (Enloe, 1973). Consequently, they form their own identification of “self” which precedes the forthcoming phase of psychological “otherization” (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). Therefore on this stage, the members of the group more likely become belligerent side deeming the central government as oppressor. Hence, their social identity might embolden them to wrench the independence from the “other”.

Social precondition might also include language as one of the explanations of emerging possible “otherization”, as it is a part of daily life of the secessionist group. Notoriously, language differences create sophisticated gaps among the population of the heterogeneous state. It has emerged as one of the hallmarks together with religion and ethnic diversities that galvanize the intrinsic characteristic of the “self”. However, this claim does not lead to the questioning of the status of groups within the state that pose their own language.

On the third place Wood (1981) considered possible *economic* benefits the secessionist movements might be targeting. Similarly, Horowitz (1985) argued the same while insisting that the economical backwardness or domination or any particular group might be a serious trigger for their claims (Horowitz, 1985). Secession movements in this case might be reviewed as the tool to escape and survive from the unbearable economic distress, in case of economic backwardness. In addition to this, some vitalized the size of the state, too. According to the assertions, the amount of area occupied by the state maintains the trade-off between the costs and benefits of her size (Alesina & Spolaore, 1997). This implies to the argument Alesina and Spolaore asserted (1997) that the equilibrium number of countries is regulated with respect to the increase of economic integration. For that reason, as the economic integration increases, we more likely witness the increasing number of secessionism in different parts of the globe.

This argument might be understood as contradicting with Wood’s claim that the secessionist movements emerge on the basis of economic crisis appeared in the parent state. However, the real target in Alesina’s and Spolaore’s claims (1997) was economic

development overall and not the economic collapse domestically *per se*. They did not specify whether the economic development attracts the secessionists or not. They rather attempted to cover the issue with the magnificence of economics that might assist to create the basis for the self-confidence among the secessionist groups and lead them to raise their voice. Some other assertions, like the one offered by Dion (1996) basically referred to two factors that have crucial role in emergence of secession movements. But, what Dion argued was limited by the cases of well-established democracies (which for him were the states "at least ten consecutive years of universal suffrage" (Dion, 1996)). Hence, it lacked the responses for cases beyond democratic regimes.

That said, Wood's argument on *economic precondition*, similarly with the two arguments above could easily be dismantled on the basis of the political, economic and social features of the secessionist group. It purely deals with the geographic conditions, but not the ones mentioned on the first place above. It rather raises the question of geopolitical location. Here, one might argue on the cradle of the movement as the geographical unit. In case the seceding region is land-locked, away from the regional or neighboring hubs, then it questions any possible economic benefit the secession might grant them. Hence, Wood's point that prospects of more prosperous and better economic conditions might be dismantled in accordance with the location of secessionist movements.

According to Wood, the stratification of the preconditions for the secession should also include *political* situation within the state (Wood, 1981). The concept intrinsically implies the realization of the political rights of members of secessionist groups. In the previous section, there were notices on internal and external self-determinations. The demand of any of these two rights implicitly refers to the possible causes of the movement. The denial of political rights of the group is likely to become the tenet of the dissatisfaction, which might lead to the deleterious consequences for both sides at the same time.

If none of the above mentioned conditions trigger the secession movements to emerge, then the *psychological* aspects might play the most vital role (Wood, 1981). As a result of appearance of any precondition above, the psychological aspect might add the fuel to the flame and cause the boost of the turmoil. The basis for the psychological aspect, according to Wood, might lie in the possible threats to their identity and security. Here, one of the illustrations could the possible repressions caused by the central government. However, one should realize that the repression in this sense does not refer to the government-triggered aggressive or bloody measures *per se*. Repressive actions would conventionally include the government policies that seems innocuous. At a glance handful steps of the central government to tighten control over the territory, may end up with questioning the political status and rights of the groups in the territory. The examples of it would be gradual takeover of the group's territory by the rest of the population, or foreigners. Similar cases took place in India and Bangladesh, for instance. Here, the ultimate goal of the central government might not be an intrinsic suppression and establishment of severe control over territory without consulting with the population. However, the way these types of activities are held more likely vexes the local groups. They start pursuing themselves as subordinated with undermined conventional independence.

Psychological aspects might also include the religion and language related issues. In earlier times, religion was assumed as primary concern of groups. However, this trend has changed since 1960s and linguistic differences have emerged as vital factors of fragmentation within state (Dion, 1996). For language was assumed as primary tool and "central component" of people's interest, furthermore, it was considered as a "powerful collective symbol" for the local groups (Fishman, 1973). Thus, the language was a very significant factor among the explanations on the basis of psychological precondition.

Another approach to the psychological precondition could be what we call the chain behavior. In this case, while one group of people is struggling to secede, the other group in the similar conditions is highly inspired and furthermore, provoked to secede,

too. Those scholars, who study the process of disintegration the USSR, highlight the secession of Balkan states in the lenses of this argument (Wood, 1981). According to this claim, the high psychological self-consciousness and envy led the states for active struggle to secede. It turned out that the efforts were successfully realized. However, one should not praise the psychological precondition solely as a tool to secede. The process of Balkanization was further more complicated case of secession, which included, almost all the five factors mentioned above. However, the unity of various reasons eventually led to the secession.

The five possible preconditions Wood framed in the beginning of the 1980s seems to be not sufficient. Wood himself argued that they are not enough to predict the possible emergence of secession movement (Wood, 1981). Furthermore, all of the aspects above might be vague to understand and realize the true incentives of the groups to strive for secession. The reason for this is the lack of single and direct correlation between one or more variables above and secession.

The questions related to the variable problems might also include other subjects, too. One of them Wood did not explicitly demonstrate is related to the role of the leadership. Here, one might depict the two distinguished illustrations of leadership. One of them would indicate the secessionist movement leadership on the local level, while the other would be superior one, on the national level. However, this assertion would not be quite appropriate, as the national level political affairs, including the leader-related issues were apparently mentioned in the *political preconditions* part. There, it would be inadequate, if one mentioned the local leadership, as it leads to the reversed interaction between the levels of study.

Some other evidences indicate that in particular cases the political claims are faced to emerge subsequently after the secession movements were spread. While other instances demonstrate that despite risks of possible economic worse-off the struggle for secession has emerged on the basis of psychological or social conditions. Therefore, more often there might be the reversed correlation that leads to the ambiguous

methodological explanations. In order to find issue-specific justifications one should consider numerous other variables that will frame the variety of the cases.

The normative explanations of the preconditions of secession in IR theories

Until now, whatever argument mentioned, theoretical or legal, drew the basic pattern that the secession movement should be justified if and only if it deals with the realization of the democratic right of self-determination of the people. Starting from the Wilsonian up until recent developments in the above mentioned phenomenon, the only corollary one might witness is endless disputes on whether different cases, quests, turmoil, movements or eventual secessions were right or wrong, legitimate or nonsense.

The position of states vis-à-vis each and every case has varied in accordance with the main actors of the secession. However, one thing has always been obvious – secession to whatever outcome it leads it does not guarantee the stability and reduction of ethnic turmoil or conflict (Horowitz D. L., The Cracked Foundations of the Right to Secede, 2003). Hence, the threat of possible escalation of the turmoil will keep prevalent.

Apparently, the aim of the study, as mentioned for several times, is not to find the trend or conditions according to which the states response to the movement. The work rather attempts to depict the possible links between the regional political order and secession, as two different phenomena. For this purpose this section aims to refer to the cases that appeared since 1950s in different parts of the world. It will also attempt to assess these cases through the lenses of dominant IR theories. Eventually, it will account for the existing problems related to the theories. Here the ultimate goal lies in defending the idea that the outcomes of secession and change of order are two parts of a single occurrence. It is indispensable to discuss about the secession movements emerging and disregard the world order. However, the crux of the studies that have been conducted

until now lies in the fact that they lack explicit reference to the role of secession that eventually leads to regional shifts.

In the following paragraphs the study will focus on the randomly selected cases, so as to illustrate the possible preconditions *qua* theoretical perspectives. Furthermore, it will deal with the process of evaluation and consider the impacts of secession on the regional order.

The numerous arguments that appeared in international politics might be adjusted to the specific cases either to justify or condemn the incentives of different actors in the conflict. In various discussions that were related to the domestic secession for independence and its impact on the state-dominated regional and international order, many scholars have argued from different perspectives. However, notoriously the general approaches vis-à-vis the secession could be related to the major theories in international relations, as they attempt to explain the state intentions in domestic and foreign interaction. For decades, these theories have attempted to find appropriate answers of the issues related to the state survival, economic development, cultural and traditional identity etc.

Certainly one of the claims on the existing secession cases were related to the interference of outside actors into the conflict. Apparently, these claims derive their roots from the pure realistic understanding of the international politics. Referring to the classical realism, the study aims to highlight the *real politik* as one of the predominant explanations of political events throughout the world.

According to realism, states' actions are driven by the sole purpose of survival. Hence, the international relations are based on the power politics that derive from national power capabilities (Padelford, 1949). From this perspective states seek to expand their power because it is their self-interest. Furthermore, the activities undertaken by the states are rationally evaluated beforehand; the states consider the costs and possible benefits of the cooperation or confrontation and only after that they step

forward (Mearsheimer, 1995). To look secession through the lenses of realist perspective, one might justify the state actions vis-à-vis the movement from the perspective of their survival. Whatever steps they take for or against the movement should be driven by the political considerations on the domestic and international level. The problem with this particular explanation on the state actions lies in viewing states, as the dominant actors in international politics, hence its response to the impacts of secessionism might be one-sided. As we consider the domestic factors like minority groups, ethnic and/or religious communities, the analysis should move beyond state-level explanations.

After diving into the realist school of thought, one obviously finds the notions related to the issues of territorial control. The prominent scholars of realism including Mackinder (1919), Spykman (1944), Morgenthau (1948) or Gochman and Leng (1983) in their explanations argued that the existing deals in international politics galvanize the single desire of countries to pursue power, which is obviously interlinked with the control of territory (Tir, 2005). While the interference in other states affairs could be provoked by different reasons including protection of ethnic minorities (i.e. Russia's bid after interfering in ethnic conflicts on the territory of Georgia), religious peculiarity (i.e. Jerusalem), territory historically inhabited by particular group of people (i.e. Hungarian's in Western Romania), primary concern for the actors has mainly been the control over territory.

The point one might obviously argue vis-à-vis realist approach deals with the fact that it only considers the politics *qua* state-level. Furthermore, it maintains ignorance with the issues considering religious, cultural, ethnical identity. For, what primarily matters for a political unit is – power. And states tend to enlarge and extent their spheres of influence on the basis of territorial struggles with surrounding nations or even further.

What realists also lack to consider is that of very crucial role of economics. It primarily stands as a guard to keep one's positions strong. To consider more variables

that deal with the implication of the secession on the order, one should highlight that it is not only the power politics that drives states, but state-to-society interconnection, too. In other words it covers the political, economic and social preferences of the people; group or the institutions within state that openly express their attitude and promote their interests to be pursued (Moravcsik, 1997). This approach gives opportunity to wider explanation of state actions on domestic level, too. Reference to Moravcsik assists in the state, group and individual level analysis that facilitate the process of detection particular impacts of the secession on the political order. It approaches the issue with basically materialistic perspectives, which in a way will contribute in further explanations and theories that take root from the liberal understanding of international politics.

Contrary to realist and Moravcsik's liberal perspectives, others argue against materialistic understanding of the politics: the so-called - "power politics". These claims deal with the social values that play vital role in constructing the systemic understanding of the politics (Holloway, 1997). This approach derives from proponents of the constructivism. According to them, shaped identities and interests of states are primary stimulus of their activities (Wendt, 1995). Hence, the secessionism and its impacts on the neighboring regions could be in a way part of identity politics, that might provide one of the valid explanations of the motives of the groups. However, the impact of secession on the regional order is still complicated issue with significant loopholes.

The approaches above draw more general and comprehensive view of the state's behavior vis-à-vis the possible challenge they might face. However, none of them provides explicit understanding and explanation on the *sui generis* secessionism. They in various cases skip the importance of inter and intra state economic and financial interactions on the one hand, while in cases when they consider them provisionally, give up other factors including culture, ethnic, religious identities. Furthermore, on international level the approaches above lack the consideration of the competition that international system is based on. Generally speaking, these arguments lack the factors that truly contribute in deeper explanation of the state's transformation starting from the first day of the emergence of secessionism to the final change in order (Dugard, 2016).

When one, even precariously, moves beyond the existing theories, there appear case-specific explanations on secession. The trend shows that the scholars have approached to the subject of secession from different perspectives. Some of them have attempted to consider the phenomenon through the lenses of international legal order, but not only; as the basic notions frame the explanations from international, regional and domestic politics. Furthermore, there also emerged efforts to construct the theory on the basis of political regimes. Dion was one of those, who were looking for the possible hedges surrounding the secession movements. His efforts basically relied on the "well-established democracies" where there is less chance of extreme secession cases (Dion, 1996). On the lessons learned from Canada and more specifically Quebec, Dion argued that the *fear* of the union and *confidence* in secession related activities are unlikely to appear simultaneously. For that, the secession movements are improbable to emerge in well-established democracies (Dion, 1996).

According to Dion two conditions above (fear inspired by union and confidence inspired by secession) affect the likelihood of secession in well-established democracies in the following way - he argued that once the fear inspired by union increases hand in hand with the confidence inspired by secession, the corollary would more likely be eventual secession (Dion, 1996).

What Dion called *fear* Wood persisted on it as a part of *psychological precondition* to drive the group for secession struggle. And the *confidence* inspired by the secession with Dion would most likely be part of the *political* precondition with Wood, which might also incorporate the leadership related issues. Hence, these two approaches more or less move towards the similar destination as the roots they derive from are same. And the problems related to these roots - the existing secession cases – are the primary hurdles that prevent us to approach the ultimate theory.

How Dion's approach was related to the case of the Quebec is another matter of dispute. As for him, the Quebec is a very *sui generis* illustration among the secession movements in the democratic regimes. It is different from the ones emerged in Europe,

including: Scotland and Catalonia. Dion explicitly emphasized that this peculiarity still shapes the perception that the possible independence of Quebec is far away. As for Dion, the factor of fear was predominantly reflected in the threat of cultural assimilation. This aspect includes concerns on linguistic diversity, which apparently, nourished the support within the secession movements in 1960s and seventies in Quebec (Dion, 1996). This was the period when the secessionist party under the name of Parti Québécois was established (in 1968) and won elections in 1976. However, hand in hand with the increasing disobedience among the locals highlighted the possible threats of secession among those who were against it (including the central government). And already in 1990s the electoral victory of the Party transformed the tendencies and suggested that the possible referendum on secession would end up with refusal of more than 50%. The primary causes for which would be the competing fear and confidence factors that were questioned by the non-francophone Quebeckers who strongly opposed any possible attempt of secession.

Unlike Quebec, Sudan is quite an opposite case where secession has become the only way out of the civil war lasting more than twenty years. Here, like in many African states, the problem of gap among the nation dates back to the period of colonialism. For more than a half century (1898-1956) the people of Sudan lived in constant dichotomy of Northern and Southern. Apparently, this division did not reflect the ethnic pluralism within Sudan (Abusharaf, 2013). The lasting confrontation between Northerners and Southerners was part of the Sudanese politics Under British colonial rule and afterwards, too. However, the situation worsened after Britain left the territory and terminated the control. When already in 1983 the confrontation erupted that caused exacerbation of poverty, marginalization and inequality, as the existing agreements did not satisfy the needs and claims of the Southern part (Abusharaf, 2013).

Abusharaf's study clearly aimed to follow the developments throughout the history. Hence, the study might not be assumed as the source or tool for further theoretical explanation, unlike the scholars' works above. However, in the end of the

article, the author conventionally referred to two different concepts that implicitly contain the links with Wood. Referring to the political *economy* and *class oppression* as primary sources of turmoil in Sudan, Abusharaf argued that it was not only the locals that failed to find common basis for agreement, but also international community that finds difficult to secure peace "in the wake of partition and secession in societies that emerge from civil war" (Abusharaf, 2013). Here, one might grapple on the two factors and implicitly relate them to the basic conceptualization of Wood's two preconditions among five. One of them would be economic precondition, the other – psychological one. Although Abusharaf aimed to find the "seeds of secession" in case of Sudan, his approach to the corollary of the decades-long civil confrontation contained unintentional reference to the theoretical understanding of the phenomenon.

That said, in case of Sudan Abusharaf managed to conclude the existing problems on the secession related issues especially in postcolonial states. His corollary notoriously contained the critique vis-à-vis the international community. For, the case of Sudan maintains a bloody spot throughout the history of secession movements to which there is no single approach the "society of states" would reply.

Wellman's article on A Defense of Secession and Political Self-Determination focused on more complicated cases. It covered the secessions or attempts for secession starting with the conflicts on political self-determination of the American Revolution, the US Civil War, the Lithuanian secession from the USSR, the Quebecois secessionist movement, the division of Yugoslavia and the US's intervention of Haiti. The justification for selecting these examples lied in the fact that there had been confusion in dealing with the peripheral cases of secessionism in lieu of crucial ones. For, they comprehend the importance of deepest level of theorizing for eventual understanding (Wellman, 1995). As a result of the study Wellman (1995) managed to conclude that hand in hand with the existing obligations of the states there also exist such aspects upon which statehood itself is questioned. In this case, the state aims to strive for survival in the expense of sacrificing individual and group rights. The illustration of such cases is

fiercely crucial when one deals with the liberal democratic regimes, where the question of to be or not to be is on the scale. The final decision on the dilemma is essential in considering the numerous possible outcomes.

On the other hand, it is not only the central government which is assumed to be the only responsible party in the case, but also the secessionist group. As the case as a whole deals with their existence as a single unit, they are also subject to mutual accountability with the central government and the rest of the population.

In case of Bangladesh seceding from Pakistan, the situation was not as obvious as mentioned above. Starting from 1947, when two different states were created as a result of India's partition, Pakistan acquired a territory non-neighboring her borders. In fact, that was the case of geographical precondition triggering the group of people to secede. However, when in 1971 insurgency emerged on the territory of today's Pakistan, not only they relied on the geographical hurdles, but it also covered almost all the factors Wood demonstrated (1981). As the turmoil caused by the social, economic, political and military subjugation of Bengali people by the central government. Hence, it was not only the geography, but social, economic and political conditions, too, affected the decision of East Pakistan to declare the independence on March 26, 1971, which later on, was followed by the guerilla moves of Mukti Bahini ("Freedom Fighters"). The international community only expressed concern as numerous cases of massive human rights violations were detected. In what followed, India played vital role and managed to "compel" Pakistan accept unconditional surrender (Akman, 2002).

The example of Bangladesh, is among the most drastic and bloody illustrations of secession movements. As a result of the conflict, many people argued from the perspective of the international law through the lenses of human rights, while others expressed quite different perspective by focusing on the role of external support, as it demonstrated the most decisive factor to bring the conflict to end (Paul, Clarke, Grill, & Dunigan, 2013).

Another illustration of the intensive involvement of foreign actor in the local conflict would be the still-simmering territorial and ethnic conflicts in the post-Soviet region of South Caucasus one of which is Nagorno-Karabakh. Apparently, the collapse (or dissolution) of the USSR fomented number of conflicts within the newly emerged states. It was no surprise that the ethnic groups that mainly enjoyed the status of "autonomous region" within the Soviet Union, emerged as parties with strong interest of independence. Karabakh, with majority of Armenian population (the number of whom increased as a result of conflict and people's displacement) declared independence in 1991, which was immediately responded with abolishment of the autonomous status of the region by the central government of the newly emerged Azerbaijan. However, the efforts of central government were completely futile as the tensions were galvanized in the following years. The raged conflict only reached to freeze on particular stage as a result of foreign support (including Armenia and Turkey directly and Russia indirectly) to both sides, after the ceasefire agreement of May 1994. However, the rhetoric of the two neighboring states – Azerbaijan and Armenia – has not alleviated, rather it reached to peaks for several times since 1994. The likelihood of skirmishes to be flared up is quite high, as there exist more actors than the local people and central government, but also neighboring state that insisting on the protection of the rights of Armenian people in the region (Usher, 1999).

The reason of recalling prominent international relations theories followed by the cases of secession above lies in the following explanation that they all attempt to respond the possible changes in international politics. And while the study primarily endeavors to demonstrate the possible reflections of the secession movements on the regional order, it is vital to consider these theories at least superficially. This was the only reason the study emphasized the primary approaches to the political affairs on the international level. However, this does neither implicitly nor explicitly refer to the fact that these theories will assist to understand the correlation between secession and the order. For, one of the targets of the study from the very first point has been to approach

to the question in order to illuminate the gap in which secession is loomed as a problem and international order as fixed way of interaction between states.

That said, the corollary out of the examples above would highlight the likelihood of even very basic and hesitant intentions of the groups to secede can turn into a huge challenge to the territorial unity and not only. The latter two cases of Bangladesh and Nagorno-Karabakh especially emphasize the crucial roles of actors beyond borders. They predominantly exemplify one of the claims of the study that the secession is no more the matter of domestic deals but regional concerns. Hence, amid the contradicting arguments on different cases above, only handful notions might be emphasized that hesitantly configure the links between the secession and its impacts on regional order.

Therefore, the chapter that follows, aims to make a very deep and at the same time comprehensive recall to the history of the two selected regions – the Balkans and the Caucasus. As the study refers to them, it highlights the most iconic developments to refer to secession related-issues from more critical point of view. Obviously, the emergence of the secessionism in these two regions, like in any other, puzzles the scholars for different reasons, but this very chapter targets to frame the approach of the study to the Serbian and Georgian dilemmas in order to avoid further complication of already entangled variables (the two concepts that apparently are noticed). Consequently, the study will consider and endeavor to highlight the correlation between them within the dominant issues of the disputes on secession and regional order.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EMERGENCE OF SECESSION MOVEMENTS IN GEORGIA AND SERBIA IN 1990S

Calling the collapse of the USSR as the "greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century" (BBC News, 2005) president of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, aimed to assess the political shifts of the previous century as disastrous. Indeed, the collapse of the Soviet Union was one of the most significant political transformations from different perspectives, one of which has become the concern of this study. Hence, it will not deal with all changes appeared in the end of the last century, as it rather aims to focus on the specific outcomes including emergence of new political units on the world political map through secessionism.

The fifteen more republics that appeared as a result of dissolution of the USSR have withstood with significant matters of internal disobedience. They *inter alia* came across with the problems related to the domestic insurgency caused by ethnic conflicts. The two regions of Balkans and the Caucasus were not the exemption as they were one of the most heterogeneous regions within the post-Soviet area.

This section of the study aims to briefly focus on the historical background of the Balkan and Caucasus regions before and after the 1990s. The pre-1990s period will be briefly reviewed, while the developments after 1990s will enjoy more attention as the study's prior concern is the emergence of the secession movements after the formation of new political units in the regions soon after the collapse of the USSR.

However, in the beginning of the chapter the researcher briefly introduces the methods part, in which it is, discussed the process of selecting the cases. In addition to this the following section on methods emphasizes the ways how the study reaches to its purposes, what possible technical tools as well as analysis are employed to respond the core questions of the thesis and etc. following the section on methods the study will

move back to the historical background. It will serve to better understanding of the claims of central governments on the one hand and the secessionist groups, on the other. Starting with the history of more than a millennium-old Georgia, the second section will emphasize the efforts of formation of statehood and the hurdles amid it. However, it will only occupy the handful part as the most significant attention will be drawn on the basic problem of emerging secessionism in the 1990s and development of the conflicts. It will be followed with the similar dimension of basic notions on historical development of Serbia as a former Yugoslav republic and development of Kosovar secessionism.

3.1. METHODS

As it was mentioned for several times above and will be numerously addressed in the following section, this study examines the questions of changing order and secession as two interlinked variables. It aims to find links between these two phenomena and demonstrate the connection between them. It is an explanatory study relying on the small-N comparison analysis, in which the cases are deliberately selected. The study focuses on two cases of secession, Abkhazia/South Ossetia and Kosovo, in the framework of the comparative method. Research design targets pragmatic outcomes. For the fact that it emphasized the most vital cases, it lacks the generalization. Hence, this study attempts to consider the existing theories, in this specific case the theories related to the Westphalian order and state sovereignty and secessionism. Subsequently, the thesis study will attempt to find the significance of already existing approaches to the secessionism and its outcomes. Therefore, the work utterly relies on the deductive reasoning. In this type of approach existing theory is used as guidance for the subject of observation – here the secessionism. It helps to find out the existing pattern – already emerged cases of secessionism in two regions and their outcomes – and consequently, compare it to the theory. For, the deductive study starts from the outside layer of the explanation, hence, from general one, and moves inside (narrowing down to the theory), this study, too, tracks the similar path.

The previous sections aimed to find out the existing pattern in the studies initially on the world order, and later on narrowing down to the regional one. Therefore, the researcher constantly emphasized the secondary sources including books and journal articles that are most prominent in the field of theorizing the phenomenon of order as such. Notoriously, the secondary sources are not useful for the literature review only but for the findings, too, for they cover the dominant sources of the process of emerging and developing secessionist movements in Georgia and Serbia.

When it comes to the cases of Abkhazia, so called "South Ossetia" and Kosovo the selection process was extremely mindful. They were very carefully considered on the basis of the "the most-similar design" (method of difference) of the comparative method (Ebbinghaus, 2005). The independent variables of change in order explicitly maintain to be domestic political instability of the *host states*, economic integration (economic globalization), membership of intergovernmental organizations and secessionism-driven international military intervention. After considering the general variables adjusted to the cases of Abkhazia/South Ossetia and Kosovo, it turned out that the only difference between these two cases appear at the point of direct military intervention, which leads the secessionist groups claims for independence in case of Kosovo – positive, while in Abkhazia/South Ossetia – negative. Hence, the claim that the study constantly refers to is illustrated.

As it is the feature of the "most-similar design" the secession cases and the host states of these cases were decided on the basis of their significance and similarity, one way or another. Here, one might question the differences in the geographical location the cases of secessionism occurred. Despite, the different places the movements flared up, one should still argue that they share similar background. As the roots of both conflicts date back to the 1990s and develop in 2000s. The reason of conducting study on Abkhazia and so called "South Ossetia" from post-Soviet South Caucasus is because of the regional importance of the Caucasus. For, it led to the inter-state conflict nearly two decades after the collapse of the USSR and independence of Georgia and became the concern of the states beyond the region.

The similar trend was depicted in case of Kosovar secessionism. The confrontations on the basis of ethnic dissatisfaction emerged with the central government of Serbia. The 1990s was extremely bloody, and it was only in 2000s when the conflict lasted by recognition of Kosovo as an independent state by the majority of the nations, hence successfully for one side; and unsuccessful frozen conflict of Serbia over its territory, for the other side. Thus, it is the outcome of both conflicts make them this much similar and worth determining for further research, especially through the lenses of their impacts on the regional order.

As the study focuses on the quite immense field of the international relations, it requires very careful conceptualization. When it comes to defining the variables, the work uses the existing conceptualizations. In case of *order* and related terms, including *global/international/world order* the study, widely discussed in the second chapter, refers to the mostly accepted definition offered by Bull (Bull, 1977). However, that is not all, and it also uses additional illustration of Gilpin, who has very crucial references to Bull (Gilpin, 1990). Hence, the combination of the two definitions will make specific impression on the concept as such.

When it comes to s*ecession*, as it is the most vital focus of the study, it aims to consider the clear, as well as wide-spread definition. Therefore, it will make reference to the definition offered by Buchanan in his work, where he claims that the "secession is a form of refusal to acknowledge the state's claim on authority" (Buchanan, 1991). Undoubtedly, Buchanan being the prominent figure in the normative studies on secessionism makes worth considering assessment of the movement that has very critical responses in the world.

In the end of the case study, the work puts emphasis on the illustrations of the changes in the existing order as a consequence of the secessionism. On this stage the cases of the study represent implicitly and explicitly supportive arguments that in the beginning the existing order (in the Westphalian understanding that focus on mainly two principles: sovereignty and territoriality) faced some obstacles or challenges. Then, it

drove to changes. Hence, the researcher might formulate the results of the work in favor of changing trends in the means of the regional transformation. The changes, mentioned above, might be revealed in the form of shifting the borders, appearing of the new actors, increasing the dominance of the outside power or questioning the regional security. However, if that is not the case, then it is more likely to have other cofounding elements and/or variables that lead to regional insurgency. It does not have anything to do with the basic transformations.

When it comes to the significance of the topic, obviously there might be different justifications. However, first and foremost importance of the topic lies in how it proposes the understanding of the world order. While, the literature keeps skidding on the issues related to the theories of secession, it also lacks the interconnection of the secession and global order. The only way out is to consider the possible links between them and discuss the related details.

All in all, as a result of the study, it is determined to bring the different participles together and shed light to the puzzle. Noteworthy, it as a result of the case study it will reach to the valuable point that will contribute in the researches over the international and regional studies.

3.2. BRIEF HISTORY OF GEORGIA

As mentioned in the end of the introduction of this section, this part will represent the distinguished features of the tiny Caucasian country – Georgia. The demographic information and historical background in the beginning plays vital role, however not the decisive one, as there are some crucial externalities that deserve significant notions; especially when one discusses formation of new state by declaring independence from the already collapsing USSR.

While referring to Georgia, it should be considered that this country possesses her own alphabet, language and counts more than a thousand years of history. The

number of population of the country, according to January 2017 is 3,718.2 thousand (National Statistics Office of Georgia, 2017). 83.8% of population is Georgian, 6.5% - Azerbaijanis, 5.7% - Armenians, 1.5% - Russians, 0.9% - Ossetians and 0.8% - others including Greeks, Ukrainians, Abkhazians and Jews. Thus, this is quite a heterogeneous country in comparison to the territory it is spread on.

Political foundations on the territory of Georgia have appeared since IV-III centuries B.C. under the name of the Kingdom of Kartli ruled by Pharnavaz. Already in 8-9 centuries A.D. the western part of the territory of Georgia was united under King Bagrat III. Meanwhile, the development of educational institutions was extended. This process flourished especially starting from the 11th century, when in 1089 it was David the Builder, whose political activities became invaluable for Georgia for that time and long-run.

Starting from the period of fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the division of once united Georgia became inevitable because of domestic and international developments. And, already in the year of 1783 the King Erekle II of Kartli-Kakheti signed a document, the Treaty of Georgievsk with the Russian Empire. The treaty mainly comprised the assistance of the Russians in case of foreign invasion threat would emerge against the Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti. The Treaty explicitly disregarded any possible domestic interference of the Russian side for purposes other than protecting the Kingdom. However, the treaty of protection became a justification for the Russian Empire to intrude into the Kingdom's political affairs even when unnecessary. Eventually, in 1891 the territory of Georgia became totally subordinated to the Empire (Government of Georgia, 2014).

Notwithstanding, Georgia's constant bid for independence has never ended up. In 1917, when the Bolshevik Revolution took place in Russia, it was managed to establish the Democratic Republic of Georgia headed by the Provisional Government. On May 26, 1918 National Board announced the independence of Georgia, which was followed by Russian recognition on May 7, 1920. Despite official recognition, the Red

Army occupied the capital of independent Georgia and established new regime in February 1921. This is how the Soviets appeared on the territory. The history of Georgia in the following seventy years recorded various cases of resistance and disobedience, uprisings and revolts in different parts of the country. However, none of them was successful, in fact they all ended up with destructive consequences, including massive exile, deporting to Siberia, or in the worst case – execution. The period of Soviet domination was nothing but the history of one man-ruling regime of the Communist Russia that immolated hundreds of thousands of people, including the peasants and intellectuals, the youths and the elders. This was not only the case *sui generis* to Georgia, but the policy of Soviets all over the territory of their domination.

In the last years of its existence, when the Regime was staggering, Georgia became one of the prior countries that managed to overthrow the Soviet flag. In the elections conducted on October 28, 1990 Zviad Gamsakhurdia's party – Round Table - Independent Georgia – came to power. However, democratic secession from the Soviets took place on March 31, 1991, when as a result of Referendum the population of Georgia replied in favor of independence. Following it, on May 26, Zviad Gamsakhurdia won the presidential election and became Georgia's first ever democratically elected leader. However, the tensions emerged which grew into the civil war. And this is the period when the cards in the hands of different domestic and foreign actors appeared to be played.

Gamsakhurdia and his team left Georgia, as the tensions against them was significantly high. Instead the "Council of War", the military council came to rule the country (Government of Georgia, 2014) which was later headed by Eduard Shevardnadze, once the Foreign Minister of the USSR (The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica, 2014).

Not only political instability was the matter of consideration for the people of Georgia, but also the economic crisis, challenges in establishing rule of law, providing domestic social security and imposing democratic principles. All these, George argued,

were the “state limitations” that caused decline in the willingness to negotiate and find solution over the domestic ethnic conflicts and secessionist aspirations (George, 2009).

Anyhow, in what followed, Shevardnadze became the president of Georgia in 1995 and ruled the country until the Rose Revolution of November 2003, led by Mikheil Saakashvili, who later in 2004 became newly elected president. Saakashvili and his party lost the elections in 2012 and deprived from the majority of the seats in parliament. Since then, Georgia is headed by the government formed by the political party – the Georgian Dream. The upcoming parliamentary elections will be held in 2020 and it is still uncertain how the population will let the politicians distribute the people’s mandate, so that they accomplish their primary goal of serving the interests of Georgia and her population.

3.2.1. Historical Development of Abkhazia as a Political Unit

It was more than a thousand years ago when the United Kingdom of Georgia was established in the Western part of the country, which included today’s conflicted regions of Abkhazia and so called “South Ossetia” (a territory which is part of the Georgian Region of Kartli). While there exist enough evidence of no such territorial unit of South Ossetia independently existing within Georgia or beyond her borders, the academicians lack a single position about the Abkhazians appearing on the Eastern coast of the Black Sea or in Georgia (Andersen, 2009).

The first political unit under the name of Abkhazia appeared in the 8th century A.D. under the name of Egris-Abkhazia. That time the Kingdom covered the whole territory of today’s Western Georgia and part of the Krasnodar Krai (today’s territory of Russia), where the official language was Georgian and Greek and religiously dependent on the Patriarchy of Mtskheta (center of today’s Eastern Georgia) (Andersen, 2009).

In the following centuries Egris-Abkhazia was incorporated within the territory of newly united independent Kingdom of Georgia until 15th century. By then the Kingdom of the Imereti was emerged as a result of dissolution of the United Kingdom of Georgia. A century later, Abkhazia gained the status of the quasi-independent principality within the territory of the Kingdom of Imereti (Andersen, 2009).

In the following centuries the situation has changed. The primary causes of the shifts were related to the regional changes in power distribution. As mentioned in the previous section, the destiny of the South Caucasus and specifically once United Kingdom of Georgia was changed in the virtue of the Treaty of Georgievsk signed between the King of the Kakheti Kingdom (South-Eastern Georgia) – Erekle II – and Catherine the Great of the Russian Empire.

Article four of the Treaty obliged the Russian side to assist Kingdom to unite the territories of Georgia (including Abkhazia and North-Eastern and South-Eastern coasts of Black Sea) under the Kakhetian leadership. That was as some argued the primary source for the Russians to view the Treaty as consent of occupation and annexation rather than a request for protection (Gamakharia, 2014). For, what was followed revealed the hidden purpose in favor of extending the territories. It was in 1801 when Russia abolished and annexed the Kingdom of Eastern Georgia. The fact has become one of the most significant and crucial turning points in the regional politics of South Caucasus for the last more than two centuries.

Notoriously, the annexed territory of Eastern Georgia was called as "Georgia" and ruled by the Russian Generals. The importance of the title of the political unit lied in two basic purposes: (1) it would be a tool to "attract" the rest Kingdoms once parts of Georgia to become united under Russian Empire and (2) to fulfill the "obligation" of the article four of the Treaty of Georgievsk. The tenet of the 1800s events was the year of 1803, when Principal of Samegrelo (Western Georgia) Grigol Dadiani visited the Russian Empire and introduced himself as a "legitimate owner of the lands of Odishi, Lechkhumi, Svaneti and Abkhazia" who gained this title from his ancestors

(Gamakharia, 2014). The purpose of the visit was to accept the Western Georgia under the protection of Russian Empire. Soon after Dadiani's visit the Principal of Abkhazia, Giorgi Sharvashidze officially declared his acceptance to the Russian protectorate in 1810. This was the historical date, when the Abkhazian territory (as a principality was rejoined to the united territory of Georgia under the rule of Georgian deputies appointed by Russia) *de jure* became part of Russian protection (Gamakharia, 2014).

In the late period, especially in the end second half of the 19th century ethnic Abkhazians were massively deported and exiled from their homeland. The process was evaluated as a complete social turmoil through the replacement of different ethnic groups of the neighboring regions. The process was enforced regardless the ethnic and religious belongings of people. That resulted in massive "Russification" of the residents of the Abkhazian territory in the 19-20th centuries (Bakradze, 1978). This triggered the clash of the interests between the Georgian and non-Georgian population in the region.

After the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Tsarist protector of South Caucasus disappeared. This was deemed to be an opportunity for independence of the regional states while the turmoil and domestic skirmishes were raging on the Russian territory. However, this did not prevent the mobilization of the "White Army" of Southern Russia to put into motion to foment and flare the claims for the ethnic self-determination among the remaining residents of the Abkhazian territory in 1918-1919.

As a result of Bolsheviks' victory, Georgia was annexed and declared as Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR). Soon after that, in February-March 1921, Georgian and Abkhazian Bolsheviks declared Abkhazia as a Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) and aimed to bind it not to Georgia but to the Central Committee of Caucasus's Communist Party Governor of Caucasus Bureau, head of which was Giorgi Orjonikidze. However, even in this situation, Abkhazia was still connected to Georgia, as the head of Caucasus's Communist Party Central Committee was located in Tbilisi.

In December, 1921 a pivotal agreement was signed between Abkhazia and Georgia according to which the new constitution of 1922 (as Georgia at that time was struggling for independence from Bolshevik Russia) would include Soviet Socialist Republic of Abkhazia as part of Georgia. This regulation is notoriously included in the first Constitution of the USSR in 1924, and furthermore, 1926 Constitution of Abkhazia. The USSR Constitution refers to Abkhazia not as Soviet Socialist Republic, but as Autonomous Republic of Georgia. In fact, what happened was simply revision of the title of the region, but not the political authority of it (Gamakharia, 2014).

That said, despite some external factors that diminished and narrowed Georgian territory from different perspectives, Abkhazia together with Gori, Dusheti, Racha populated by the ethnic Ossetians were maintained as autonomous regions and parts of Georgia. In short, Abkhazia (as Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR)) and South Ossetia (as an Autonomous region) were parts of Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia (SSRG) till the end of 1980s and beginning of 1990s, when the major transformations turned the regional order upside down.

3.2.2. Appearance of South Ossetia and its Embracement by Georgia

The South Ossetia unlike Abkhazia lacks the history of rich and active political background. As the region was artificially formed as the place for Ossetians in South part of the Caucasus, the most dominant explanations are related to ethnic identity of these people and their confluence with the local population. Still, before making specific notions on the political status of the South Ossetia and its development, one should mention that the term *South Ossetia* came into use only after 19th century, when the concept “southern Ossetian” was first used. Some argued that it was the outcome of major efforts of the Russians in establishing this term in order to shape the perception of diverse ethnical group within the territory of Georgia (Totadze, 2008). This claim relied on the fact that in North Caucasus, the Ossetian inhabitants were intensively emigrating

to either Southern part of the Mountains or other places. And referring to the migrating groups through the perspective of their territorial belonging appeared to be the best way in formation of their and the host country's destiny.

The historical sources demonstrated the second half of 13th century as period of the first wave of massive Ossetian immigration from Northern part of Caucasus. However, then nomad tribes of Ossetians were forced to leave the territory soon in 14th century. And it was only in the second half of the 17th century that another wave of this time increasing immigration was conducted. However, already in 1860 the Ossetians were expelled from their homes and placed on the northern part of Georgia, in the Kartli Region (expect Tshkinvali, today's Administrative City of South Ossetia) forcefully, by then Tsarist Russia.

Starting from the 18th century similar with the case of Abkhazia massive Russification process was initiated. The process primarily relied on the misconception of the territories the Ossetians inhabited. Appearance of new reference to the people living in the mountainous region of Kartli, Georgia, caused long-run impacts on the political life of the region, as those misconception emerged as justification in the hands of the leaders of the later established Autonomous region to secede from Georgia and merge with the Northern Ossetia (now part of the Russian Federation) in the beginning and according to the recent claims - establish new independent state of South Ossetia. However, the evidence they find to rely on is misinterpreted, according to some. As when one refers to the sources on 1801 disposition of the Tbilisi Province (furthermore, by the time Georgia declared its independence in 1918) emphasizes the fact that the so called "South Ossetia" was part of Georgia (Totadze, 2008).

As mentioned above, the massive reconstruction of the population distribution was held in 19th century. One of the examples of which was a year of 1842 when the Russian Empire established the Okrug (district) of the Ossets as part of territorial-administrative division. However, even then the Ossetia was not a distinctive territorial unit of the Osset populated people. It was only after 1917 Bolshevik Revolution that the

Osset people organized and mobilized to occupy the territories of the northern parts of the Kartli region including Java and Little Liakhvi areas (Songhulashvili, 2009). Already in January 1918, the National Council of Ossetia submitted the plan on establishing the Unity of the South Ossetia. However, the latter was not an attempt to form the new state; it rather was a pre-stage for further independence and autonomy. Notwithstanding, the political status of the South Ossetia was not granted separately from Georgia. It happened only after Bolshevik Russia occupied Georgia in 1922 and established Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia including "South Ossetia" as part of it.

3.3. FORMATION OF SERBIA WITHIN THE BALKANS

The history of Serbs dates back to 6-7th centuries, when they were mainly the vassals of Byzantine Empire. The first it was Vlastimir, who attempted to establish political formation and somehow relate the Serbs identity to their statehood in 850 (Allcock & Poulsen, 2017). His efforts were completed successfully, although in the first years newly established political unit was still depended on Constantinople.

And it was only in 1168 when the principality of Raška (an affiliation of the Serbian state) was founded by Stefan Nemanja. The Nemanjić dynasty ruled the territory for more than 200 years. During this period, the Nemanjić domination and reign triggered vast development of the Serb's state. Furthermore, it managed to increase population, develop mining industries and spread on Balkans. All the developments caused significant shift and grow in Economy, too.

However, the situation changed when the Ottomans appeared on the territory. And it was 1371, when at the Battle of the Maritsa River Serbs lost. From that time on the Serbs native land became merged with the Ottomans, who established their control starting from the Adrianople (today's Edirne in Turkey), the Thrace and even deep inside the Balkans.

Starting from the 1800s the Ottoman rule on the territory of Balkans faced various challenges. The illustration of it was a successful revolt and uprising of the Serbs in 1804. Some argued that together with other reasons there were the strong national identity and well-mobilized social structure under the common purpose that effective drove Serbs to enter to the new century with gaining further autonomy (Dragnich, 1975) by the Ottoman government in 1830 (Allcock & Poulsen, 2017).

The 20th century for Serbia was as complex and weary as for the rest of the World and especially the European powers. Before the World War I it was the "Ten Years' War" flared up in Balkans that ended up in 1922 for the Serbian community, when the parties came upon agreement on the status of Albania (Allcock & Poulsen, 2017). Meanwhile, the intensive skirmishes were going on as part of the War between different European powers including Austria, Germany, the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain and etc. While the confrontation was pervaded throughout the continent, Croat leader Trumbic and Nikola Pasic of Serbia signed the Declaration of Corfu in 1917. This document was an initiation of new Monarchy uniting the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. That is how Yugoslavia appeared in the Balkans.

Unlike the consequences of the First World War, the Second World War resulted in drastic changes for the Serbs and their statehood within the Yugoslavia. In the postwar period Yugoslavia became the Communist state with highly centralized political and economic deals (Allcock, John B., 2017). The most vivid name of that time Yugoslavia was Tito who came to power as a Prime Minister and War Minister in 1945. However, the overall post-War political life of Yugoslavia was characterized as domination of the Serbian Communists. After the death of Tito, the situation was changed in favor of more nationalist attitudes promoted by Slobodan Milošević. Because of his "post-liberal" (Allcock & Poulsen, 2017) approaches to protests emerging on the basis of greater representation to the Kosovar Albanians, Milošević managed to rise up smoothly. However, his politics led to the decline of his and his party power. After the

disintegration of Yugoslavia, on the bridge of the 1990s, the Socialist Party of Serbia emerged.

3.3.1. Development of Political Status of Kosovo until the 1990s

The history of Kosovo, as an inhabited territory under the authority of different political unit dates back to the 6th century, when in 547-548 A.D. the Slavs managed to take control over the territory. Thereupon, it was the Byzantine Empire that established its authority there (Gashi, 2016). Between 850 and 1014-1018 years the Bulgarians were dominating the territory. But once the Emperor Basil of the Byzantine came to power, the control over the territory was once again regained by the Empire. However, by the year of 1389, when the iconic Kosovo Battle was held, Serbian Monarchy and Lazar (Serb Monarch) were deprived from the control over the territory and Ottoman Turks under the leadership of Murad I managed to hold control (Bunting, 2017). This battle is considered to be decisive in the history of the Balkans, as the outcome of the Battle imposed decades-long Ottoman rule over Kosovo and Serbia.

As a result of the Ottoman Empire taking control over the territory, the balance of the ethnic Serbs in the region changed. Many argued that the social shifts caused the changes in favor of Albanians, who inhabited the territory after the Serbs moved to the northern and western regions. This massive population migration resulted in the increasing number of the average Albanian speakers, who were detected to compose the majority of the population in the 18th century (Young & Allock, 2017).

Already in the late 18th and predominantly 19th centuries, the so called "awakening of the Albanian population" took place. This process overlapped with the *Tanzimat* that the Ottoman Empire undertook. People living on the Albanian territory that consisted four vilayets of Shkodra, Kosovo, Manastir and Janina, strongly opposed the reforms echoed by the *Tanzimat.* Furthermore, significant uprisings appeared to gain independence from the Ottomans between 1830s and 1870s (Gashi, 2016). However, it

was only in 1912 when Serbia managed to take control over the territory of Kosovo (Young & Allock, 2017). Eventually, after the end of the WWI Kosovo was incorporated in the territory of Kingdom of Serbia, Croats and Slovenes, which subsequently was entitled as Yugoslavia.

Notoriously, the destiny of Kosovo during the WWII was to bear Italian control while being united with Albania. However, after the end of Second World War, Kosovo gained status of Autonomous region within Serbia by the Yugoslav Authority. Loose and soft control of the central authority in the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s emboldened Kosovars to act more flexibly together with the rest of the Yugoslav Republics. However, it did not last long, as Slobodan Milošević came to power firstly as the leader of Serbia's Communist party in 1987 and Serbian Republic in two years. Soon after Milošević became the President of Serbia, the Autonomous status of Kosovo was abolished. Nationalist approaches of Milošević appeared dominant in almost all spheres of Kosovar politics. For, he conducted intensive operations that led to eradication of emerging a single possibility for further autonomous or political quests (Young & Allock, 2017). The final disappointment of the Kosovar Albanians was demonstrated after 1992, when the new Republic of Yugoslavia appeared *sans* considering the interests of the latter.

The developments on the Kosovo's political status undertook another stage of transformation in 1990s. Here, as in the case of the Caucasian turmoil, the events flew in a way that they caused significant and decisive impacts. These events became the apple of discord among the scholars of different fields and nationalities. The interpretation of facts was primarily driven in favor of gaining popular support. However, the roots these facts rely on were far more complicated and complex for a single discussion. In the following section, the study aims to prepare the base for understanding the causes of emerging secession movements in Kosovo, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It will precisely deal with the political developments of the 1990s in both regions and make introduction

to the process of the regional transformation that will be elaborated in the section of the case studies.

3.4. EMERGENCE OF TURMOIL IN GEORGIA AND SERBIA IN 1990S

Starting from the very beginning of this study it was several times mentioned the role of the secession movements in causing changes to regional order. One of the previous sections above loomed the causes of secession, although the concerns of the study do not cover them. They rather deal with the utter and ultimate outcomes of the movement that challenge the state sovereignty and hallmark the regional order. Hence, it might seem innocuous why the theoretical approach in the second section covered the causes of secession. Essentially, it aimed to shed light to any possible hesitant misunderstandings *ad rem* or *quasi in rem* the secession. Secondly, they serve to conventionally realize the deals of the following section. Hence, they created the fundament in virtue of which the specific cases of the following section are understood completely.

The following two sections make final remarks on the historical development of the conflicts in two regions of the post-Soviet control area. Secession movements in Georgia and Serbia are two independent cases that galvanize the question of secession from new perspective. Before diving into the impacts they actually triggered the sub-sections below will demonstrate the timeline of the appearance of the movements and their development in 1990s.

3.4.1. Caucasian Turmoil: Georgia on the Breach of Division

Abkhazian Crisis in 1989-92

It appeared that the concerns related to the secession movement retained one of the most crucial deals of the states, especially after the drastic changes in the late twentieth century. The fact that theoretical approaches (the causes, outcomes, conditional variables etc.) to the question of secession increased once again demonstrates how significant it was viewed. Some argued that negotiation to obtain regional autonomy is the most useful ways to solve the problems related to the secession in the Western and Third World states (Gurr, 1994). While others consolidated this approach and referred to the autonomy of the "self-governing intra-state region" as useful solution to mitigate even the most extreme cases of internal conflicts (Nordquist, 1998). However, the question of secession in the case of Georgia exceeds the boundaries of the quest for regional autonomy; it rather relies on the interests that implicitly and explicitly imply the independence of Abkhazia and so called South Ossetia.

After the collapse of the USSR, Georgia was one of the states that faced dilemma of redistribution of her authority on the territory recognized as part of Georgia even before the 1922, when the Bolsheviks established control over it. However, this effort faced challenge even before the USSR would collapse and consequently would lead Georgia to declare independence. However, the issues related to Abkhazians' uprising did not appear out of a blue with the speculations on the USSR collapse. One of the most significant deals emerged mainly in the last decades of the Soviet Union existence. Akaki Bakradze (1978) argued that the agitations from the Abkhazian side appeared in the end of the 1970s through their constant fear on the basis of ethnic degradation and extinction. In response to this, Bakradze demonstrated the distribution of the ethnic Abkhazians on the territory in the late two centuries through analyzing their "perished" possible threats. The justification they tried to clutch to request autonomy or independence in fact did not exist, for the Georgian affiliations, values, language and

etc. has always been vital on the territory and in daily lives of the locals even before the Russian Empire would take control over the territory in the 19th century or the Communists would abolish the independence of Georgia after the Bolshevik Revolution (Bakradze, 1978). Another argument that might dismantle the Abkhazians concern is the number of Abkhaz people living on the territory of Abkhazia. According to the 1989 last census conducted in the Soviet Union the number of ethnic Abkhaz people living in Abkhazia was 93.267 that consisted 17.76% of the whole population of Abkhazian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR), while the number of ethnic Georgians reached to 239.872 drawing up around 45.68% of total population of the ASSR of Abkhazia (Tagliavini, 2009).

Some argued that in order Abkhazians to cope with their problems and overcome threat of assimilation by Georgians they referred to the ways that predominantly expressed their frivolous attitude vis-à-vis Georgian elite and officials in authority. This concern, in fact, emerged when they relied on the policies of appointment of the public and government officers. The trend that appeared notoriously served to employ either middle or low qualified Georgian officers who had less competency and experience to fulfill their duty. As a result, they were unofficially detached from their responsibilities; instead it was Abkhazians who made decisions (Papaskiri, 2009). Hence, Papaskiri's approach predominantly relied on the psychological motives to in a way humiliate the opposite site.

All in all, the urgency of the problem for both sides was increased and galvanized as a result of the Likhna meeting of March 18, 1989. On the meeting there were around thirty thousand people to request reestablishment of the judicial status of Abkhazia. It was supported by the "Aigdilara" (Solidarity), Abkhazian national movement, which was established a year before the Likhna metting, 1988 (Tagliavini, 2009). And already in 1989, kaleidoscopically, on Likhna meeting the participants emphasized that the "tragic mistake" was committed in 1931, when Abkhazia was not let to join the USSR as an independent political unit. In lieu of independent status it

gained became the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR). The primary figures of the meeting including the authority of the Abkhazian Autonomous Soviet Republic (AASR) together with the First Secretary of the Abkhazian Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia – Boris Adleiba – and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Abkhaz ASSR – Valerian Kobakhidze – maid an unconstitutional decision, as they aimed to separate Abkhazia from the central government of Georgian.

This event became one of the most iconic historical facts, as it caused increasing tensions between the Georgians living in the region and Abkhazians who mainly supported the decision. The crisis aggravated among the academicians living and working on the territory of Abkhazia. The Georgian students and Academicians in the Abkhazia State University requested official refusal of the Decision by their fellow Abkhazians. As it revealed that their stance was notorious and they supported the decision, the Georgian side made decision to create the branch of the Abkhazia State University on the basis of Tbilisi Ivane Javakhishvili State University (Tbilisi State University - TSU) (Papaskiri, 2009). Subsequently, the Abkhazian side viewed it as negligence of their education system. This led to the emergence of direct tensions in July. Consequently, the skirmishes in Sokhumi (Administrative center of the Abkhazia) and in Ochamchire resulted in few victims and injuries.

If the latter case on the Likhna Decision expressed the eager attitude of the Georgians living on the territory, the previous one on appointer less qualifies Georgians, in fact, represented the “passive” role of Georgians living in Abkhazia, who were assumed to resist Abkhazian offences (Papaskiri, 2009) and attacks aimed to push Georgians beyond the territory of Abkhazia, so that they would easily mobilize and strive for their rights to self-determination. Papaskiri approached to the 1989 Likhna Decision and the following reaction of the Georgians living in Abkhazia as legitimate. For, until then, the decades-long negligence of Georgian elite vis-à-vis increasing separatism notions of Abkhazians was constant and this time it was to be responded

somehow. Papaskiri also emphasized the latest developments as crucial problem for the Georgians, as they were humbled under the intensified claims and emerging anti-Georgian attitudes (Papaskiri, 2009). Furthermore, Abkhazian efforts got more official image when the Supreme Council of Abkhazia adopted the "Declaration on State Sovereignty of Abkhazian Soviet Socialist Republic" on 25 August, 1990 (Tagliavini, 2009). The document did not have obligatory function or judicial power, however it demonstrated the pace of strengthening opposing and contradicting positions among the Abkhazian.

Another apple of discord in confrontation became March 1990 Referendum on whether to maintain being part of the USSR or not. On the one hand Georgians boycotted the Referendum by rejecting to vote, while on the other hand ethnically non-Georgians on the territory of Abkhazia (at that time 52% of population, including ethnic Abkhazians, Russians and etc.) participated by reaching 99% of consent to the question of maintenance. This legislative clash vitalized the issue of Abkhazian secession from Georgia (Tagliavini, 2009).

The active mobilization of Abkhazians' to represent their quests on sovereignty was notorious. Therefore newly elected Gamsakhurdia's central government of Georgia aimed to realign and cope with the separatism-secession related problems starting from 1990. Their policy primarily relied on the territorial integrity and the unity of Georgia (Gamakharia, 2011). Furthermore, for Toft it was the matter of "survival vis-à-vis Abkhazia […]" (Toft, 2003). Therefore, this much multicultural post-Soviet state arrived at a dilemma whether to accept more autonomy for Abkhazians. In order to avoid creating risky precedents Zviad Gamsakhurdia rejected the Abkhazian proposal on reorganization of the Local Supreme Council. It was in 1991, when the National Forum "Aidgilara" (Solidarity) appealed to create bicameral parliament including (1) the Republican Council (based on the rights of the citizens relying on the principles in accordance with the borders of the territorial units) and (2) the National Council (based on the equal principles of the rights of ethnicities in accordance with the borders of

territorial units) (Tagliavini, 2009). The claim implicitly and explicitly implied the idea of creating independent legislate body with full charge of political deals including the protection of the local ethnic groups and the territorial boundaries.

Despite different positions, both sides came upon agreement to appoint 28 and 26 Abkhazian and Georgian Deputies, respectively, while the rest of the ethnic groups would enjoy 11 seats for their mandates. This and some other reforms together that were undertaken in the legislative body served for the two basic purposes: (1) protecting ethnic Abkhazians from declined quotas and (2) at the same time secured Georgians from unnecessary or inappropriate constitutional changes (Tagliavini, 2009).

The normative resolution of the distribution of seats did not demonstrate sufficient resolution of the problem in practice. For, in the elections held on 25 September, 1991, out of 11 deputies (elected by ethnic groups other than Abkhazians and Georgians) split into two groups, part of which (7 deputies) joined the Abkhazian mandate, while the rest (4 deputies) – Georgian one. As a result, Abkhazians gained 35 votes out of 65 that granted them to provoke constitutional changes. The situation went worse as a result of the so called coup d'état that overthrew Gamsakhurdia's government in 1992. Subsequently, the deputies in favor of Abkhazian interest of independence declared on the basis of the 1925 constitution. This unilateral declaration led the Georgian Armed Forces to enter the territory of Abkhazia. This, at one glance unpredictable and frivolous act caused the significant impacts on the regional order for the following decades.

Armed Conflict in Abkhazia since 1992

Armed conflict on the territory of Abkhazia started on August 14, 1992 and temporarily concluded on May 1, 1994. Meantime, both, the separatists as well as Georgian central government faced significant cases of direct armed skirmishes, too. The timeline for the most significant events included the Peace Agreement of September

2, 1992, when the Georgian, Abkhazian and Russian sides together with the Republics of the Northern Caucasus signed the agreement. However, it did not led to complete ceasefire, as a month later the pro-Abkhaz forces together with the volunteers from the northern Caucasus conducted the attack to the Western part of Abkhazia, including city of Gagra, till the state borders of Georgia and Russia. The clashes would extend if not another "Sochi Agreement" of July 27, 1993 was not signed. As a result of the Agreement the United Nations Security Council established Monitoring Mission – the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) with 88 army observers.

As the Georgian Heavy Weaponry left the territory (as it was outlined in the Sochi Agreement) on September 1993 pro-Abkhazian forces renewed massive attacks on Sokhumi and few other points Georgian forces were settled. In addition to this, the supporters of the first President of independent Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, conducted operations in Samegrelo region of Western Georgia. However, their positions were soon defeated by pro-Abkhazian forces; unlike the battles in Kodori Gorge, where the intensive clashes continued until spring 1994 (Tagliavini, 2009).

In the following year of 1994, on May 14 was another iconic date. On that day, the third agreement on ceasefire was signed through the Russian and the UN mediation. The Moscow Agreement this time referred to the Peace-Keeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS PKF) together with the international monitoring mission. The presence of mainly Russian peace-keepers in the regions where Russia herself had vital interests was not truly welcomed by the few UN Security Council members. Hence, the newly adopted Resolution Number 937 (21 July, 1994) increased the UNOMIG mandate up to 136 military observers. This was followed by the meeting of UN and CIS representatives. Eventually intensive communication and endeavor to bring both sides to the agreement of ceasefire led the skirmishes end up.

However, some argued that intensive communications and efforts to appoint so called "Peacemaking" missions especially authorized by CIS (which consisted of mainly Russian contingent) was the "geostrategic enclave" and did not actually aim to bring the

conflict to end. For, it primarily aimed to keep Russians “in” the process of any possible development in the region (Gamakharia, 2011). Furthermore, what was notorious as the purpose of Russian peacekeepers in the beginning, eventually turned out to be only petty element of their ultimate goal. For, they galvanized the opaque policy of redistribution of the cards on regional political affairs. Gamakharia insisted that it was strategically important upper part of Kodori Gorge for which Russian aggressors permanently fought for. However, it was resisted by the local population (Gamakharia, 2011).

Russian attempts were fostered by the outcomes of the 1992-93 direct confrontation between the Georgian and Abkhaz people. The problem of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) burdened reestablishment of the old status for the region. Tens of thousands of people were enforced to leave their homes and seek for the save place during military operations. Although part of them were returned back (40 thousand people by 2002), almost the same amount of people kept living away from their homes (Tagliavini, 2009).

The most significant problem that embarrassed the IDPs was related to political status of Abkhazia. This became the most vital concern for both sides in the post-military action period. While Georgian side was thinking about autonomy, federation or confederation, the Abkhazian side was insisting on the historical arguments for the independence and final secession. In order to avoid re-escalation of the conflict then President of Eduard Shevardnadze aimed to sign the document that allowed the Russian military services keep their mission for the following 25 years. However, in 1999, Shevardnadze’s government in contrary requested the Russian armies to leave one of the military bases among four, on the territory of Abkhazia. The decision was made in 1999, on the Istanbul Summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe (OSCE).

Soon after this, in October, Sokhumi declared independence, which was followed by increasing reluctance of the Abkhazian side towards the participation of the UN organized peacemaking talks. The peak of the events was detected in 2001, when the

clashes re-emerged and the drop of the UN Mission airplane caused death of nine UN service officers. Apparently, this event led to more intensification of peace talks (Tagliavini, 2009).

In 2001-2003 years Russian and Georgian sides agreed upon rehabilitation of the railway passing through Sokhumi, Zugdidi and Erevan (Armenia) and ending up in Baku (Azerbaijan) (Tagliavini, 2009). This was a major infrastructural project conducted by the two sides and including all three regional (South Caucasian) states.

The political situation as well as the attitudes and approaches to the problems related to the conflicting regions (Abkhazia and so called South Ossetia) changed after newly elected president Mikheil Saakashvili and his government appeared to deal with the subject. The newly elected political power in Georgia did no longer supported Russian dominated peacekeeping mission and talks and preferred rather decentralized and internationalized negotiations for the claims of the Abkhazians and Ossetians (Tagliavini, 2009).

On 16 April 2008, the President of Russia denounced the decision signed in 1996, which referred to the Abkhazian side as guilty in military, political and economic turbulence in the region (Gamakharia, 2011). This was in fact a turning point, as from that date the Russia has become an inevitable actor of the conflict in the two regions of Georgia, including Abkhazia and so called “South Ossetia”.

Emerging of Turmoil within Georgia over the South Ossetian Claims

The developments within so called South Ossetia in 1990s were not less intensive than the case of Abkhazian turmoil. However, unsurprisingly, the perceptions related to the independent movements and their legitimacy varied. Starting from November 1989, South Ossetia Regional Council asked the Supreme Council of Georgia to change the status from Autonomous District to Autonomous Region within Georgia.

However, the addressed body did not accept the proposal. On the population level, the reaction was quite severe; Zviad Gamsakhurdia organized marching to the regional center of South Ossetia, Tskhinvali. However, the Internal Affairs Forces of Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia did not let them into the region.

When Zviad Gamsakhurdia's party won the elections in 1990 and Gamsakhurdia himself became the first president of the independent Georgia he abolished the Autonomous status of South Ossetia. On 17 March, 1991 when the Referendum on maintaining the USSR was held, the Ossetians similar to Abkhazians supported the notions on staying in the USSR. This event was followed by declaration of independence on May 29, 1992. However, when the request was sent to the official Moscow to be recognized, they neglected it. Meanwhile, the situation and turmoil increased, which was in a way interrupted by the 1992 Sochi Agreement on Georgian-Ossetian conflict settlement. The Agreement included the ceasefire and involvement of Northern Ossetian and Russian representatives or peacekeeping forces, to maintain the order and stability in the region.

In the interregnum of 1992-2008 it was central Government of Georgia that mainly maintained control over the territory of so called South Ossetia. Economic and political relations with the region have developed mainly since 1995-96 in which very decisive role was played by the international community, including international organization the OSCE (then Conference of Security and Co-operation in Europe – CSCE) and the European Union (EU).

In the end of the millennium, the situation in "South Ossetia" changed as the popularity of their leader Ludvig Chibirov diminished. However, they managed to take control as in *de facto* presidential elections they elected Eduard Kokoit, an Ossetian business man who was living in Russia. Tagliavini argued that from that period until 2008 the process of peace negotiations "converted into the one for conflict management" (Tagliavini, 2009). Hence, the primary target in bilateral meetings with more than a

single mediator shifted to other perspectives, as the parties of the negotiation apparently changed their perceptions on how they viewed the situation.

The latter trend was mainly revealed after the new government came to power as a result of the Rose Revolution and regime change in Georgia. The new Prime Minister, Zurad Zhvania led the negotiations in 2004-05. The significance of the negotiations lied in the ultimate goal to make the Ossetians accept the territorial integrity of Georgia. Subsequently they would be granted the liberties and rights they had requested in 1990s. However, Tagliavini assessed the 2004-08 period of the relations between the official Tbilisi and Tskhinvali region representations as unstructured and undefined, as they superficially aimed to highlight their commitment from the perspective of the international community, while on the other hand they reluctantly pursued their obligations in the region. Consequently, the trust among the Ossetians vis-à-vis the Georgian side of the conflict maintained diminishing meanwhile.

The situation burdened as in 2004 Georgia enforced establishment of the checkpoints on the territory where there was Ergneti Bazaar. Ergneti Bazaar was assumed as the apple of discord between the Ossetians and Georgians as it maintained to be the source of black market and hit the Georgian economy as a whole (Tagliavini, 2009). However, during the Shevardnadze period, it was assumed to be the only link that connected two different sides and created the single base for negotiations and trust.

The endeavors to intensify the control over the Ossetian territory by Georgian authorities were extremely criticized by the Russian officials. Furthermore, rhetoric from the Northern neighbor has never stopped since 2004. The discourse mainly shifted towards the possibility of “bloody” outcomes of the extreme politics central government of Georgia was conducting. The situation went to worse. However, on May 8, 2007 the Parliament of Georgia decided to create temporary administrative unit the head of which would be Dimitri Sanakoev for whom the future of the Ossetian people would only be bright with “democratic and stable Georgia” (Tagliavini, 2009). In response to which, *de facto* leader of the region Eduard Kokoit rejected continuation of negotiations in case

official Tbilisi would continue its actions against the will of the Ossetians (Tagliavini, 2009).

The latter development highlighted the way how the situation burdened in the region and beyond. The following events that led to the August War between two neighbors, Georgia and Russia, became the peak of the two conflicts (Abkhazia and "South Ossetia"). Consequently, there appeared various approaches on calling the incident as the Russian "provocation of undeclared war" (Crow, 2008) or "Georgian forces attack" (Reuters, 2008) to the territory of Ossetians in order to establish the control over the territory (Radio Free Europe, 2008).

The essential outcome of the five days August War 2008 is predominantly either covered or neglected. Apparently, hesitant approaches to the matter of the secession movements and their outcomes lie in the post-conflict period. The notions on them appear in the case study section, where the majority of the events will be once again recalled and analyzed from deeper perspectives through answering the question of why and how they emerged as the most superior matters of concern for this work.

That said, the following subsection aims to draw the attention to the historical development of the Kosovar secession. This part will also briefly refer to major events; however, it will rather consider the impacts on regional order in long-run.

3.4.2. Dissolution of Serbia: Kosovar Secession

At the end of the Cold War, when the USSR was collapsed and different parts of the world faced emerging challenges including increasing nationalism in domestically, the Balkans vied with the similar hurdles. Here, the matter of Kosovar independence became an apple of discord between regional and international actors including Serbia, Greece, Turkey, Russia and the US.

The year of 1991 became the turning point throughout the timeline of developments. For in the previous year, in July 1990 that Ethnic Albanian leader declared independence from Serbia, however official Belgrade managed to oppose their endeavor for secession and dissolved the *de facto* Kosovo government. And already in 1991 Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia broke away from the Yugoslavia and declared their independence (BBC, 2017). This event has become a very significant catalyst for the Kosovar Albanians to claim for further freedoms and even independence, as they viewed Slobodan Milošević's Presidency as nationalist, and thus menacing, and repressive.

Albanians aimed to organize themselves in a way that their claims on the independence would not be resisted easily. For this purpose they started with establishment of the political party called the Democratic League of Kosovo (Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës, LDK), which gained popular support in the first multi-party election held in 1992. Gradually, the political affairs the Kosovar Albanians conducted led them to create "parallel system" (Bekaj, 2010).

The situation worsened in 1993-97, when the ethnic clashes and armed skirmishes flared up in the region. The primary source of burdening the political process was triggered by disregarding Kosovo's efforts for independence, which revealed during the Dayton Accords meeting (which brought the war in Bosnia to end) and later on the recognition of Yugoslavia by the EU in 1995 (Hedges, 1999).

In order to actively resist the ignorance of interests of the Kosovar Albanians, Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was formed, that unlike Rugova's non-violent policies, appeared to be more radical in hitting Serb authorities through unlawful acts even organizing guerrilla movements. The KLA's aggressive and violent actions were expanded especially in 1998.

Because of causing massive disorder and chaos and having drastic implication on the central government as well as the local Kosovar Albanians the US Diplomat Robert Gelbard publicly called it a "terrorist group" in 1998 (Frontline, 2017). Meanwhile,

Ibrahim Rugova was re-elected as "president" of Kosovo through having the support from the 99% of the Kosovar Albanians. However, a very crucial date was May 23, 1998, when 95% of the people of Serbia simply denied outside actors' interference in the process of resolution of the clashes. This day was not only the historical date when people of Serbia supported their democratic right to solve their own problems, but rather it had superior essence. This event was *sui generis* in the history of secession movements. For, implicitly or explicitly it supported two primary principles of international law the previous sections reviewed comprehensively – the principles of territorial integrity and non-intervention. These principles were assembled among the 95% of population, who disregarded the role of international community. The population strongly supported the Westphalian principle of sovereignty which lies in understanding of non-interference in domestic affairs of state. Hence, the act of conducting referendum not on whether to accept the secession of Kosovo or not, but rather whether to let the international community tidy up the domestic mess, once again demonstrated the extreme role of statehood generally and principle of non-intervention *per se* for the whole population.

All in all, in the period between March and September, 1998, the open conflict between Serb police and KLA galvanized. It resulted in the brutal crackdown of Serb forces and massive exile of civilians from their homes (BBC, 2017). The political turbulence and violent movements all around the region created additional threat to the major spheres of live, including economic, social and cultural development. As there were possible further threats in September, NATO gave an ultimatum to Milošević to bring the increasing tensions on the Kosovar Albanians that led to foment much ado for aggressive politics of the central government (BBC, 2017).

In November 1998 an agreement on ceasefire was made. It aimed to bring Kosovo conflict of 1998-99 to an end. However, in the same year it was the Yugoslav army that conducted comprehensive attacks against the KLA. In 1999, NATO authorized aerial bombardment against Serbian and Yugoslav forces who had conducted

intensive battles against Kosovar Albanians. Some argued that this period was predominantly the illustration of the ethnic cleansing against Albanians in Kosovo. Subsequently, thousands of Albanians left their homes and became refugees in surrounding areas, predominantly Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro (Young & Allock, 2017).

As a result of NATO intervention the situation moved into the descalation mode. In 1999 soon after NATO completed military actions in the region, it conducted a program together with the UN. The project aimed to eliminate social crisis, decrease the number of refugees and bring the Kosovar Albanians back to their homes.

Ultimately, what was followed after the NATO's intervention of 1998 was drastic shift on the territory. Notoriously, Kosovar historical timeline of secession is different from the ones of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The outside actor here is NATO, while in case of Georgia it was Russia who actively "contributed" in directing the conflict to other extents. As the study focuses on the regional changes within political order, the intervention of NATO into the conflict is more comprehensive and apparently related to the case study content. Hence, the story telling part of the development of Kosovar turmoil might be completed there. For, dealing with the problem after NATO intervention requires serious analysis rather than hesitant timeline remarks. Furthermore, understanding the changes in regional order is almost impossible *sans* emphasizing the upcoming development of the regional affairs. Hence, in lieu of following the historical developments in the region, the upcoming section will rather focus on the implicit and explicit roles and implications of outside actors in the region.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF SECESSIONISM AND ITS IMPACTS ON REGIONAL ORDER

This part of the study essentially aims to conduct explicit explanation with regard to the already observed cases of secessionism in the Caucasus and the Balkans. Focusing specifically on the problems emerged on the basis of ethnic insecurity (as it is predominantly referred); this chapter of the thesis will approach to the case study selection justification primarily. The process of analysis of the secessionism in two different parts of the world – the Balkans and the Caucasus – is already made in the chapter above.

The section that follows aims to redraw the attention to the primary concepts like order and secession. Later on, the case study will implicitly and explicitly be dedicated to the analysis of possible changes in order. This will be, notoriously, assessed through the intervention of the intergovernmental organizations appeared in the region and the outcomes of their intervention[4]. While in seemingly the concluding part, it will sum up all the possible notions and stir it in a single pot to understand the problems driven by the secessionism and the questions emerging as a result of their appearance in the region.

4.1. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ABKHAZ/SOUTH OSSETIA AND KOSOVAR SECESSION MOVEMENTS AND THEIR OUTCOMES

The previous chapters aimed to refer to the basic changes and developments of the two regions – the Caucasus and the Balkans. Exhibiting their historical background and demonstrating the process of formation the statehood of Georgia and Serbia targeted to explicitly determine the political, social and cultural features of the regional states.

[4] As every single event possess capacity of influencing the order in one way or another, this specific section will attain to demonstrate the shifts of power distribution in the region.

For, to depict their value amid the process of flaring secession movements, it is necessary to consider the roots of the conflict. However, not only the historical background is important to understand the inception of the conflict in the region, but also the critical judgments and analysis of the outcomes are worth accounting. Hence, this section aims to reconsider the secession movements through existing perspectives and then enrich the approaches to the secession from different point of view. On the top of these perceptions the study accounts the regional order, as it is primary concern related to the gaps in the literature.

Initially, the reference to the regional order, worth notifying, should infer to the fact that the states, in most case – regional powers, have particular impact on the political processes overall. Hence, the consideration of regional order implies to the distribution of power and the level of other states being intruded in affairs beyond their borders. In this sense, the 1990s became one of the most significant turning points throughout the 20th century. The collapse of the USSR, forasmuch, became the cornerstone, as it led to the emergence of diverse case studies in regional politics. If the previous sections focused on the dissolution of the Soviet Union as the fact which triggered numerous transformations in their political lives, domestically as well as internationally, of once-consolidated states, this section will basically consider the event (the dissolution of the USSR) from the perspective of reshaping the role of regional actors in accordance with their responses to the secession-related questions in the Balkans and the Caucasus.

Before diving into the discussions related to the cases of secession, it should be defined the way of referring to them. The study will recall the cases of Abkhazia and so called “South Ossetia” from one perspective while comparing to the Kosovar secession. The reason of referring to the two Caucasian secessionist movements of Abkhazia and “South Ossetia” from single view is not their likeliness or identical nature; in fact, there might be several distinctions between them. The study rather aims to consider the two cases with slash, for, they both emerged on the single territory and the majority of actors

have remained the same. One might argue about the outcome of the two cases as independent from each other. The support to this argument would be number of factors that differs the cases from each other. However, in order to make state level analysis in which the study will consider the dominant actors, their responses and distribution of their political interests the study keeps unchangeable all the variables of secession movement unchanged and deals with them *ceteris paribus,* as all rest variables are equal. Thus, grouping Abkhazian and Ossetian efforts for independence demonstrate a single case, for the single outcome of their secession movements caused specific impacts on the regional order. While, on the other hand, Kosovar case independently would exemplify different factors and actors that predominantly that shaped the order from different perspective. Thus, to overview the study, it considers two cases, despite having three independent secession movements; they are grouped in accordance with their socio-political and geographical matches. This will facilitate to reconsider all three in more persuasive way.

As the two cases are already framed, they will be analytically judged from the perspective of their impacts on the regional order. Despite various rumors that emerged on the "legitimacy" of Abkhazian/Ossetian and Kosovar secessions, there still exit contradicting positions. Furthermore, there are states that still recognize neither their secessionist attempts nor a single possibility of their independence. Unsurprisingly, these states are primarily the host states of the movements – Georgia and Serbia. However, as the purpose of this study disregards the causes of the secessionism, it will not deal with deep and comprehensive explanation of the attitudes of the host states vis-à-vis the cases took place on their territory.

In order to understand whether there was detected any change in the regional order; it is worth highlighting the situation in both regions when the secessionist movements emerged. In the previous section, the flow of narrative appeared in the following way: it started with the Abkhazian/"South Ossetian" turmoil and then, followed by historical development of the emerging secessionist movement among

Kosovar Albanians. However, this part will not maintain the same order, as the case study predominantly incorporates both cases through analyzing them from single lens. Hence, in order to share the similarities and shape the flux of the section it will combine both cases of Serbia and Georgia at the same time and make the comparison analysis between the events of both secession movements.

The conflicts over the two contested regions in Georgia – Abkhazia and so called South Ossetia – and the other on the territory of Serbia – Kosovo, should once again be considered from the historical perspective. As it is obvious when one studies the secession and aims to make the analytical comparison between the two cases then it is essential to consider process of escalation secessionism as such. While there exist three different sides in both cases, including the *secessionist* (for Serbia – Kosovars, for Georgia – Abkhazians and so called "South Ossetians") or the *host state* (Georgia and Serbia) from which the group is seceding and the *interventionist* or the *third state/party* the common actor in both cases appear to be the latter variable. The *interventionist* in both cases was the US led forces (in case of Serbia it was NATO for the first time in the history, while for Georgia the US as well as the European Union (EU)) and Russian Federation. It is the matter of discussion to what extend they interfered and to what the outcomes of their intervention led.

The conflict on Kosovo has been relatively small, at least it was considered to be small, as no one regarded Kosovo as a serious issue or the prospective secessionist area. After the dissolution of Yugoslavia, when on the meeting of the representatives of different parts of Yugoslavia came together, Kosovo was not invited to the negotiations. It was after the Dayton Accords of 1995 when the peaceful demands for autonomy transferred into violance. And this happened because of a single reason, Kosovo has always been an autonomously ruled region within Serbia and later on Yugoslavia. And this very status was maintained until the end of 1980s and 1990s, when the Kosovar government was removed and the status abolished by the central government of Serbia. This led to the peaceful protest of Kosovars. In response to which the increasingly

repressive measures of the Serbian government was conducted. Undoubtedly, this led to the escalation of the skirmishes between the central government and the inhabitants of Kosovo. Eventually, the situation transformed to such a stage that the peaceful negotiations on the status of Kosovar Albanians could not even be possible to undertake. Hence, that was time when the outside intervention became crucial. And it happened in 1999 when seventy eight days long NATO bombing campaign was conducted against Serbia. As a result of which Kosovo managed to gain partial international support in the recognition of their statehood and independence.

As a result of bloody combats between the Kosovar Albanians and the Serbian government the UN peacekeeping mission was appointed to monitor the situation in the region. The UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is mandated "to help ensure conditions for a peaceful and normal life for all inhabitants of Kosovo" (UN Security Council, 1999) and not only. It also aims to assist in creating the appropriate standards for living and peaceful environment for the locals. However, it lacks the guarantee for the Kosovo state that she will not face future challenges. That is why the UNMIK is still on the ground observing the process of formation the Kosovar state.

That said, one might argue that the military intervention to solve the problem of massive repression or unlawful acts of the central government against the part of the population cannot be seen *conditio sine qua non* for solving the problem completely. For, the outcome of the intervention does not really satisfy the long-term needs and expectations of the population as such.

In order not to move away from the topic and the level of analysis it is worth noting here, that the military intervention in case of Kosovo in 1999 not only questioned the future status of Kosovo and the Kosovar Albanians, but it also posed the tool to review the role the political maturity of Serbia and the Balkans generally. This event once again raised the question of the readiness and responsiveness of the newly emerged regional states in Balkans and became future determinant of the issues, related to the problem of possible forthcoming dissolution. Similarly, the Ossetians uprisings in

Georgia demonstrated the possible outcomes of the collapse of the USSR and furthermore, the regional political affairs in the subsequent period.

Before Kosovo's question would rise, initially the target of the political examination in Balkans was Yugoslavia. The process of its dissolution explicitly questioned the regional political order. However, Kosovo's independence strive was within one of the states of the former Yugoslavia - Serbia. And hence, it posed more serious challenge to the newly established independent state. However, despite the existing question of dissolution, the case of Kosovar secession could not be viewed from the same lens with the Yugoslavian one. For, the preconditions of emerging Kosovar secessionism were absolutely different. Even the forthcoming events of NATO intervention and major support from the West made the case of Kosovo distinctive and peculiar, unlike the process of Yugoslavian disintegration.

Some significant notions are found related to the similar comparison of the secessionism in the Caucasus. It is no more surprise that as a result of dissolution of the USSR, fifteen new republics appeared on the world political map. However, not many scholars refer to the gradual process of gaining independence by the Republics as the similar cases of secession. One of the justifications could be the fact that the states that emerged after the collapse of the USSR had been independent political units before the Communist regime would take control over them. Hence, the fact that they isolated from the already collapsing Soviet Union was not secession (against which Soviets had to fight), but rather regaining their true political status. And secondly, in case the association of independence of post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav states to the secession would lead to further confusion and complication of the secession the practical phenomenon as such. Although Bartkus formulated the concept as following – "formal withdrawal from an established internationally recognized state by a constituent unit to create a new sovereign state" (Bartkus, 1999).

As an illustration of the above mentioned justification, the prior difference between the Georgian (and the rest fourteen Republics' independence) and Abkhazian-

South Ossetian bid for independence lied in the fact that Georgia was gaining independence from the political unit pillars of which had already decayed. Hence, there was no effective central authority which would argue against the independent movements within either Georgians or the rest former Soviet states. However, the case of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, similar to Kosovo composed the implicit and explicit resistance against the central government, which was supposed to maintain political and territorial integrity all across the borders. Thus, looking for justifications on why Georgia is not successor of the USSR but the one seceded from the Communist regime will not lead to the sufficient analysis, as for secession at its core is one of the prior cofounding variables within the understanding of the strength of the central government.

Once the agreement on the differences between the Georgian and Serbian independence, on the one hand and efforts of Kosovar and Abkhazian/"South Ossetian" secession on the other, is reached and defined the occurrence of the secession as such is worth considering. For, it managed to deal significantly with unpredictable political units in the surrounding areas but also beyond the region.

Without any excursus, the concerns related to the regional and international actors in case of Kosovar secessionist movements should be considered from different perspective. As mentioned above, it was predominantly related to the serious, heavy and systematic transformation that was going on in the region. More or less peaceful dissolution of Yugoslavia was considered to be the final arrangement of the regional order. No one at that time could imagine that the region would face another bloody conflict triggered by Kosovar Albanians, who were seen as the peaceful and calm part of the Serbian state and people. Unpredictability of the turmoil made it difficult to cope with the problems emerged aftermath. Furthermore, not only unpredictability burdened the process of responding the secessionism in the region, but also, the attitude of central government of Serbia, which seemed to be extremely reluctant in solving the problem through considering even the minimal requests of the Kosovars.

Considering the two major problems of unpredictability and reluctance, the *host state* as well as the regional states that composed the regional order by then faced a significant dilemma – either to accept the emerging political unit (that struggled for independence) or to reject their claims and mitigate the turbulence through different ways including suppression of the secessionists. Hence generally speaking, there might be the (1) subject of the secessionist movement, which refers to the minority group (wither ethnical, religious, cultural or etc.). (2) The central government of the *host state* is another crucial focus of the discussion, which strives to cope with the problem considering many significant variables. And last but not least, (3) international actors manage to bring the issue either to spotlight or vice versa, make the world draw their attention to somewhere less important matters.

Here, in case of Serbia one might clearly envisage the problems faced by the different actors/parties of the secession: (1) Kosovar Albanians, who claimed for independence at any expense, (2) the central government of Serbia, which aimed to maintain territorial integrity and (3) the neighboring states that had to consider various conditions before deciding which part to support. Thus, there is no doubt that the concerns emerged as a result of the secessionist claims of the Kosovars reshaped the political standing and notions of the states beyond the secession.

In order to consider the possible impacts of the above mentioned subjects on regional order, they should be perceived from the following perspectives. While demonstrating the (1) Kosovar Albanians, as inevitably significant actors in the process of regional transformation, one should also assert on the factors that have impact on the level of success of the secessionist movement, but not only. In the cases of independence-driven turmoil there might appear forces and/or actors that apparently take the lead in the process of shaping the claims of the secessionists and influence them. These actors in some cases become driving forces of the conflict as they implicitly or explicitly manage to influence the outcome through either direct or indirect support. Here, the former, in the best scenario, stands for either financial support, which is later

on used for grabbing attention and massive mobilization of the people in deal. While, the illustration for the worst scenario would be weaponry support that is extremely difficult to be depicted, as in major cases the source of supply is not publicized.

The situation with indirect support is quite different. It is more likely to incorporate various dimensions of political, economic and social aspects. Indirect support refers to *(i)* bringing the question of secession to the institutions that have either regional or worldwide impacts. Any political unit, which faces emerging concerns related to the secessionism beyond its border, is welcome to report the situation and persuade the international community for taking appropriate measures.

Seeking for justice in the UN, the EU or the regional intergovernmental organizations might not be enough or might be neglected by other states that share either same or different interests. Thus, it might refer to the *(ii)* political or economic pressure vis-à-vis the central government, which is dealing with the domestic secessionism. These pressures might include the embargo, establishing relations with the regional states that have poor or no relations with the *host state.* Or furthermore, they might cooperate with the surrounding states that openly support the secessionism in the *host state*. Thus, the tools for "punishment" are unsurprisingly high in number.

The situation does not change drastically when it comes to the (2) *host state* of the secessionist movement, which was Serbia in Balkans. In this case, the predominant focus of the problem is the central government. Hence, one might argue that the second possible party of the secessionism could be considered the one which controls the situation from top-down; unlike the previous case, in which in general terms it is the secessionist group. Here, the purpose of the study is not to measure the level of success of each and every actor, it rather aims to narrate about the very basic parties, who maintain on stage and are regarded as embodied parts of the secessionism.

While, the secessionist group struggles for more autonomy or in the extreme case – independence, the *host state* reconsiders all possible ways in order to convince the

group to stay in. The ways of convincement might vary from case to case. There might be various variables that have significant implication on the actions of the central government. Unsurprisingly, the attitude of the state vis-à-vis the secession might be either very peaceful or extremely hostile. There are number of illustrations for both – peaceful, as well as hostile operations. In case of Serbia, the conflict over Kosovars claims on independence flared the central government up and led to conduct massive suppressions, as if the threat would bring the population back together. The only thing Serbian government managed to gather was the international attention, in lieu of gathering the whole population including Kosovar Albanians. Hence, depending on the state position, (3) the international community might be triggered to interfere in the conflict.

Once international community appears in, the situation changes from each and every single aspect. Before, diving in the considerations related to the changes, one might argue whether international community has capability to interfere in the domestic affairs of the state. This study makes assumptions on this very problem, as the prior concern and the tenet of the study is related to the challenges that the secession triggers vis-à-vis the international order. Despite the existing Westphalian principle of non-intervention, the recent developments in different parts of the world lead some states even across the oceans to intrude in the conflict. Hence, for some states there appear some reasons that are considered as more superior than that of the state sovereignty. As in case of Serbia, it was the US and the UK that managed to increase the concerns on Kosovar independence, and aimed to gather the world society to respond the turmoil.

In order to refer to the case of Georgia and the emerging secession-related issues, there should be considered the situations and the conditions not similar with the Serbian dilemma. However, as the study aims to narrate the development of the secessionism from the perspective of three independent actors the following paragraph will consider highlighting them through adjusting to the case of Georgia.

For Georgia the dilemma and threat to separation started in 1989 with turmoil on the Tskhinvali region (today referred as “South Ossetia”). From then the changes on the regional and domestic levels started appearing in drastic and comprehensive way. As the forthcoming collapse of the USSR shifted the regional order it triggered the bloody clashes among the still non-established political units, one of which became the central government of the Republic of Georgia, and the other – separatist leadership of the so called “South Ossetia” and Abkhazia. Unlike Kosovo, the Abkhazians were alleging their claims to the autonomous status that they were assumed to be given in the prior years of the establishment of the USSR. However, the factual information and details related to this specific discussion are available in the previous section. According to the references to the sources on Abkhazians possible autonomous status it was turned out that such case was completely disregarded. Hence, Abkhazia and *a fortiori* “South Ossetia” unlike Kosovo did not enjoy the opportunities of the autonomous rule. As a result, the claims that predominantly are related to the reestablishment of their previous status are more or less non-sense.

However, the question here is not to assess the legitimacy of the claims against Georgian government, but rather to reconsider the actors that were and still are either directly or indirectly involved in the process of handling the regional turmoil. To start with the subject of the focus, the (1) Abkhazians, on the one hand and Ossetians on the other are both *sine qua non*. While their political struggle against the (2) Georgian authorities brought the question to the regional and later on (3) international community. Unlike, the awareness and massive mobilization in favor of Kosovars, Abkhazians and Ossetians could not manage to raise the concerns as the escalation of the political, economic and social instability in the region was accompanied with more or less organized cooperation process. Here, again unlike the case of Kosovo, the Russian Federation as the beyond border actor (or one might put her on the level of regional/international actor) was presented in the position of facilitator of the peace talks and negotiations that were conducted between two sides – newly emerged Republic of Georgia (which was suffering from the civil war in 1992-93 years and domestic

instability) and unrecognized political actors Abkhazians and Ossetians. Thus, to overview, the actors of Kosovar and Abkhazian/Ossetian secessions the actors as well as the level of their influence and the scales of their interference are quite different from each other.

By now, it was all about the actors of the secessionist movements on different sides. They dealt with the local, regional and global levels within which there are several differences. However, whatever the differences and peculiarities there might exist one thing will always be credible and true, and this is that they both are dynamic conflicts. The dynamism and the flexibility of them vary from different views, including ethnic, national, political and territorial perspectives of the political units of different levels.

In order to shed light to the explanations on the causes of emerging conflict in Georgia, the following iconic assertions will be referred, so as to understand the variety of the approaches to the role of different actors. A very significant assertion related to the possible emergence of the secession appeared in the works, where the argument considered the period before the August War of 2008. The argument explicitly dealt with the importance of the predictions that should have been made on the possible outbreaks within the South Ossetian in favor of the claims for independence. Here, the basic notions were made especially on the period after 2008. Fawn's study, which predominantly dealt with Kosovo, also demonstrated that Ossetia was underestimated in its bid for independence. Furthermore, the role of military interference in the emerging turmoil starting from 1989 and, predominantly intensified after the Rose Revolution of 2003 (after the Eduard Shevardnadze government was overthrown) and 2004 (Mikheil Saakashvili was elected as the third president of Georgia) led to development of the problem and escalation of the conflict in the scales that became less likely to be controlled (Fawn, 2008). As a result of this, the domestic/central authority strived with distinctive efforts leading to political percolation. However, the hurdles proliferated and spread all around the country in an extremely unbridled way. As the corollary, the situation afflicted the internal as well as regional affairs, by raising the need for

supporting either territorial integrity of Georgia or right to self-determination of the secessionists.

Keeping arguing on the secessionist movements in Georgia, one should consider the background of the emerging turmoil. In spite of dedicating whole section to the historical past of the both regions – Serbia of the Balkans and Georgia of the Caucasus – this section still requires a flashback to the development of the conflicts in the regions. For, the previous section, despite its reference to the civil war lacked sufficient determination of its role in the forthcoming domestic politics. Thus, reviewing the facts and the previous events will contribute in galvanizing the common terminology and understanding of the characteristic feature of the secessionist movement in this part of the world.

As mentioned for numerous times above there occurred two secessionist conflicts in Abkhazia and so called "South Ossetia". The former hosted the secessionist movements in 1992-93, after Georgia announced independence from the USSR, while the latter got into trouble few years before in 1989, even before any of the three Caucasian countries would be established independence from seventy years of Communist rule. The reason of recalling the dates of their emergence is to drive the narrative to the point where one might either face the criticism with regard to the Abkhazian and Ossetian secessionist movements being considered as one single case, or vice versa, approve the decision on accommodating them so as to represent the features of the secessionist struggles within Georgia. Those who would express readiness for objecting the consideration of Abkhazian and Ossetian secessionism as an example of single case would probably rely on either (1) the date of their occurrence, or (2) the characteristic of their causes or (3) the nature of their development. All of which could be accurate at some point. However, as mentioned many times, the purpose of the study disregards the deep consideration of the causes of the conflict as the basic variable of the analysis. Hence, the possible justification for exhibiting the Abkhazian and Ossetian secessionist activities as single case of political struggle would allege the following

bullets; they (I) both have common territorial claims against Georgia and thus, share the common target, the central government of Georgia, (II) they are both the heritage of the collapse of the USSR, hence despite the discrepancy in their occurrence, both emerged as a result of the political transformations in the region, and last but not least (III) they both are subject to the conflict between two regional states, Georgia and Russian Federation.

Notoriously, the political affairs within Caucasus since 1990s, after the collapse of the USSR is rather hard to be dealt with *sans* considering the successor state of the Soviet Union the Russian Federation. For Georgia, not only Ossetian and Abkhazian secessionist aspirations were the apple of discord between the two domestic actors (Ossetians and Abkhazians) vis-à-vis the central government of Georgia, but the social crisis that emerged in the *interregnum* of the two secessions – the civil war. It was the third conflict in 1991-92 periods when the coup against the first elected president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, was organized. Despite the lack of references in academia to the civil war, it is extremely important to mention as it constituted one of the pieces of the whole puzzle that was attempted to be solved by primarily Georgia and later on, manipulated by Russian mediation.

In order to recognize the changes in the region and accept the various challenges to the order, it is extremely crucial to understand how the first elected president of Georgia, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, is viewed in the latest history of Georgia. With his nationalist claims, including partial chauvinism, Gamsakhurdia's speeches firstly awakened the Ossetians from the lethargy and galvanized the question of their ethnic peculiarity. In addition, the nationalist mobilization within Georgia from the end of 1980s and in the beginning of the 1990s and majority voting for Zviad Gamsakhurdia as the first ever elected president of Georgia raised the notions about the status of the Ossetians. Unsurprisingly, one of Gamsakhurdia's primary goals was to dissolve the Autonomous status of the South Ossetian region.

Unsurprisingly, it revealed that the Ossetians' believes on having legitimacy of independence within the Caucasus as geographical region, and their historical background did not match with the claims of Georgian territorial integrity. Subsequently, this mismatch once again flared up in the form of the fruit of the collapsing USSR seeds. Hence, not only Gamsakhurdia, being a nationalist leader, made it difficult for the Ossetians to pursue their political destiny beyond the borders of Georgia, but also the decades-long propaganda on the "free Ossetians" living not *qua* under the united statehood of Ossetian nation, but independent from Georgia. Thus there appeared more than one condition that played vital role in the process of reshaping the concerns of Ossetians, whose primary purpose to survive was based on the hopes of merging with the Northern Caucasus republic of North Ossetia, which has been an official part of Russian Federation.

In the beginning of this maelstrom called as the Caucasian turmoil, Russian position appeared to be implicitly neutral. Notoriously, the similar attitude did the Russian authorities maintain vis-à-vis the Kosovar secessionism in late 1990s. However, the situation changed in 2000s. One also might argue that it transformed once the Autonomous Republic of North Ossetia became the target of the Southern Ossetians to unite. Russian neutrality was explicitly transformed as she became harnessed with the conflict. Apparently, Russian involvement lost its "façade" image of neutrality and reluctance as the turmoil emerged in Abkhazia, too.

The emergence of Abkhazian question relied on couple of different reasons, part of which could also be the threat of the nationalist Georgian government. However, Abkhazians should not have considered Georgian nationalism as their primary threat, for, the central government of Georgia, managed to conduct numerous efforts to maintain their intra-state autonomy and facilitate their existence within the territorial borders of Georgia. Despite numerous efforts, the war in Abkhazia started as the continuation of the military coup. Brief corollary of the struggle on political stability turned out by ousting Gamsakhurdia from the presidential seat. Subsequently, it was

Eduard Shevardnadze, once Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, who was invited to Georgia to handle the political instability. However, apparently, the war in Abkhazia for re-gaining it as the historical territory of Georgia was started. Consequently, Georgia hardly came to the 1995, with two regions under red alarm, thousands of IDPs, destructed economy, no stable political authority, social dissatisfaction and hopelessness.

That said, moving back to the question of the two regions of Georgia, the primary focus here should be the domestic politics. For, this is the only variable that is capable of incorporating all the three actors of the secession, mentioned above (Abkhazians and Ossetians, Georgian authorities and Russian Federation). Analyzing the domestic politics of Georgia facilitates to demonstrate the shifts of the political dimensions under three different leaders – Shevardnadze, Saakashvili and the "Georgian Dream" government (first under Ivanishvili, then Garibashvili and now Kvirikashvili). The analysis of the possible shifts in domestic politics will assist to assess the attitudes of central government and their steps to deal with the regions from new page. Apparently, unsettled political attitudes vis-à-vis the secession claims of the Abkhazians and Ossetians burdened the negotiation process. Time by time, the political stance of the local authorities changed in accordance with numerous approaches and priorities of different sides and political actors emerged within Georgia and in the region.

However, whatever one might say regarding the political crisis on 1990s in the region is all in vein unless it does not include the expectations of their emergence. The reason of this critique predominantly lies in the Soviet politics of the 1920s and 30s. The previous section has made significant references to the formation of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia and the status of the two regions within it. The question of their autonomous status, especially Abkhazians was one of the considerations even by then. And, there was no easy way to cope with this much heterogeneous region with a single policy. However, what went wrong was the process of viewing the region after the collapse of the USSR as parsimoniously as it was seen in the first years of its

establishment. Obviously, the question lied in reflecting the same mistakes of disregarding the ethnic heterogeneity of the region. While the states within Caucasus were gaining independence, the possible problems related to the status of specific regions was simply disregarded. There was no doubt that the ethnic differences were distinguishing matter of consideration as they dealt with the most sensitive questions of the identity. And while all three Caucasian nations fervently adjudicated their right to independence, they precariously aroused molded nationalist assumption of the Ossetian and Abkhazians (however, not only, as the region has another case of secessionist movement over Nagorno-Karabakh), which together with other conditions led to serious outcomes.

Apparently, the flow of the peace negotiations on the status of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia within Georgia moved to another stage after the Rose Revolution, when the former Soviet official, Eduard Shevardnadze was ousted from power after eight years of rule between 1995 and 2003. The Rose Revolution was one of the most essential turning points in the latest history of Georgia. The significance of the event was also noticeable in the problems related to Abkhazian and South Ossetia deals. As a result of new government, the development of the political as well as person-to-person relations occurred remarkably. The general attitude of all parties of the negotiations was more or less positive as well as promising in finding common ground of solution on the issue. However, the situation changed in a little period of time.

With strong commitment of the USA and the EU, Georgian political leaders felt a huge support that led them to raise voice against Russia, in accordance with their interests in the region. The latter claim does not aim to either blame or finger the West as the source of causing 2008 war between Georgia and Russia, as in fact the West was strictly opposing any possible clash between the two states, especially armed conflict. However, the situation became uncontrolled especially after the 2005-2006. For some, the basis of the changes in attitudes laid in the rattle of speeches of the incumbent leaders on both sides. For others, it was the outcome of the hidden belligerence between

the two states. Anyhow, whatever justification there might be, the outcome could not change, as the situation here was very complicated from the very first days of the independence. The reason for this complication lied again in the fact that starting with the first day of the conflict the CIS peacekeeping missions appeared in the region. In fact, they were predominantly Russian forces operating with the UN missions in Abkhazia, who apparently were monitoring the Russian monitoring mission. This was in a way aimed to have international policing machine in the region to keep the further escalation of the conflict.

Here a very important question might be raised, whether the conflict of ethnic Abkhazians and Ossetians is solely a conflict of their independence, or it is something totally different. Obviously, one of the sources of the conflict in its core is to gain independence and achieve international recognition. However, there might be found another approach that would move beyond the optimistic understanding of the "freedom-seeker suppressed people". This explanation would prefer the state level critiques relying on the centuries-long disagreement and clashes between Georgia and Russia, where the latter one managed to abolish the statehood of Georgia and subsequently gain control over it. Hence, the argument might refer to the disagreements between the two nations that instead of focusing on their apples of discord shifted their attention to the ethnic groups to make possible the most significant gain after all.

Moving back to the internationalization, apparently, the international patrolling mission of different political institutions and intergovernmental organizations promoted the process of internalization of the conflict. What this term leans on is very much significant from different points of view. Not only conceptualization of the post-conflict developments makes the question of secession crucial, but also the outcome of the process of internationalization itself. Here, one might consider whether the internationalization was occurred or not. Even though many viewed the conflict as a pure domestic one, it undoubtedly was entangle from the very roots of its appearance. As, the South Ossetian turmoil overlapped the most unstable and unpredictable political

transformation within the USSR. In addition to this, the struggles within all three of the Caucasian states were finding solid groundwork for independence. Hence, the fact that the Abkhazian and Ossetians claims were subjects of only Georgia and its authority would not be totally acceptable, as there were moderately different sided conflict from its rudiments. That makes the tensions and crisis in Georgia peculiar.

It is important to push for the cross-border relations to promote and provide developments of the inter-personal relations between Georgia, on the one hand and Abkhazians and Ossetians, on the other. However, this is only small piece of the possible proposals in responding to the events faced in the Caucasus in 1990s. Fawn (2008) relied on the highlights of the role of Montenegro's and Kosovo's independence as very crucial in triggering the secessionist movements in other parts of the post-Soviet regions (Fawn, 2008), where uncertainties were taking place with regard to the status of regions inhabited by the specific ethnic groups and/or minorities. This approach that referred to other international conflicts related to the emergence of secessionism in the region might matter together with other explanations on the causes of conflict generally.

However, this explanation could not gain enough attention if not other external factors that managed to take control over the preparations for the local clashes for independence in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Hence, the Kosovo precedent (as the Russian officials called it), implicitly triggered the emergence of secessionism in the regions, however it explicitly was not the justification to cover the deep roots of the centuries-long settled perceptions in the ethnic Abkhazians and Ossetians on the right to enjoy the status of independent groups.

Continuing with the same page, the disagreements extended in relation to the justifications of the South Ossetian representative to the Russian Federation, the reference to the "provocations" of Georgian government that were likely to highlight the coincidence with the latest developments in Balkans was included (Fawn, 2008). Similarly, the Balkan developments, and especially Montenegro's independence, would be a good precedent for Abkhazians and not only to clutch as the model that might be

followed for future developments. However, it is still a question, where and how one might place or adjust the role of the Russian Federation, which, in major cases, had very traditional approach to the state sovereignty. The evidence of this is the years-long disagreements in the UN Security Council on the meetings to deal with the turmoil in Syria. It has become an apple of discord among the permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council in their efforts to solve the problem.

In fact, seeking the role of the Russian Federation in the conflict will not lead to the palpable explanation of the question of the secessionism. Despite the fact that the actors for similar conflicts all over the world enjoy the huge variety, the most vexing fact in the investigation of the secession causes and outcomes is the lack of a trend, as all the cases are differentiated by at least one single variable that make each of them very specific. And yet, one should start from anywhere to approach the issues of Abkhazians and Ossetians and creative solutions to the question of the regional order.

In fact, once moved back to the question of the Caucasus and the Balkans a realist approach that was offered by Cornell disregarded any possible justification of the causes of secessionism (of the emerging secessionist problems in the Caucasus) other than the one that considered the "politicizing ethnicity" (Cornell, 2000). However, it is neither enough to find the possible answer to the problem, nor sufficient to refer to the actors related to the problem. Consequently, lacks the capability of contributing in the concerns of this study. However, undoubtedly, the subjects of the discussions are Abkhazians and South Ossetians, on the one hand, but it is not adequate to politicize the problem if there are no contradictory and even observer sides. The latter here, for some, was the one that attempted and contributed in the process of strengthening the group identities within the region (Cornell, 2000). The previous sections, as well as the paragraphs above referred to the Russian Federation as the political unit that contributed in the process of reshaping the attitudes of the locals of secessionist regions and not only. Subsequently, the attempts to supervise the matter of ethnic peculiarity increased

the concerns on the survival within the ethnic groups. To this, the solution might have been the regional integration, Cornell proposed (Cornell, 2000).

Undoubtedly, there emerged some contradictions to Cornell's position, too. In one of the reviews of his work, the mostly flared criticism dealt with the reference to the problem of the guerrilla movements which, according to Cornell, operated beyond the orders of the central government of Georgia. In contrast, Chirikba (2002) as the reviewer blamed the central government of Georgia in the latter actions and argued that it was them (the central government) having control over the guerrilla forces on the territory of Abkhazia (Chirikba, 2002). Thus, one might understand that the problem was not only the misinterpretation of the events amid the inception of them but also throughout their development. However, noteworthy, in some cases it also considered the details that were components of deals throughout the negotiations on descalation of the conflict.

With regard to the proposals in the process of negotiations that were undertaken in the beginning of the 1990s, Cornell's support to the Shevardnadze's (President of Georgia between 1995-2003) proposal – transforming Georgia into "asymmetric federation" in order to find solution for Abkhazia – was questioned by Chirikba. For him, the reference to it was implicit and vague, he responded to this possible suggestion in more or less expressive, short and subjective way by arguing on the misunderstandings related to the concept of "asymmetric federation", keeping in mind the fact that whatever proposals on solution exist if it brings the secessionist region and host state together under one flag will be hesitantly viewed. For, the purpose the people of Abkhazia, who faced "troubles" with the central government, strove for their own independence which essentially disregarded any possible reunification.

This is the point where the secessionism gains the value on regional level. Thus, it becomes rather complicated than before incorporating the regions that in the beginning were not deemed to take part in the domestic concerns of the Georgian government. As a result, it leads to the sides to engage with negotiations of the multi-political units, hence, to internationalize the domestic question, as mentioned above.

In the essence of internationalization of the conflict it is not only the incorporation of international actors and the gains of their support in the process of negotiations. But it also includes more comprehensive and indirect role that would occur in the virtue of serving Georgian interests in the international institutions. Furthermore, Georgia's efforts in international peacekeeping forces and NATO missions, or development of legislation in accordance with the EU law to facilitate the trade barriers and establish customs union and free market with the EU could be assumed *quid pro quo* for warming relations with the secessionist regions. For, increasing regional and global image and status of Georgia would be far more attractive. As a result, it will not be the question of secession that will be internationalized, but the central government of Georgia will contribute and galvanize the reforms in favor of further prosperity, for creating wider opportunities for the regions as *sui generis* in their secessionist aspirations.

On the other hand, one might argue in contradicting way and say that no matter how prosperous and wealthy Georgia becomes, the nationalist views will still continue to be dominant and will have impact over the decisions of the local ethnic groups. Then, the situation would continue spinning on the same variable, which is the threat. Hence, when the second section of the study dealt with the possible causes of the secession, the most essential thing there was the psychological perspective, which would be the most dominant, as both of the parties, the secessionists and the central government would have similar positions vis-à-vis the emerging claims for either more autonomy or secession.

It might be notorious from the paragraphs above that even the speculations related to the forthcoming developments between the central government of Georgia and Abkhazian and "South Ossetian" secessionists demonstrate how the secession leads to the changes in the domestic as well as the regional affairs. Georgia's intensive bid for the EU membership could be a very useful example of driving the regional politics to specific dimension. On the other hand, Serbia is also striving for the EU membership.

Hence, Serbian EU aspirations too are shedding light to the regional transformations. Here, the argument neither implicitly nor explicitly refers to the more intensive integration as an inevitable consequence of secessionism. However, it demonstrated how the politics are processed and the priorities revised after the governments struggled with secession-related challenges.

Moving back to Cornell's work, apparently it ended up with the assertion related to the region where the secessionism occurred – the Caucasus. He argued that the Caucasus has significant geopolitical and geo-strategic location the political turbulence in the region is unsurprisingly peculiar. The possibilities to final descalation of the problem are diverse in nature; however, they lack practical contribution in solving the conflict. As a result, it implicitly burdens the possibilities to overcome the turbulence. Hence, if we adjust this corollary to the main topic of the thesis, we can argue that the outcomes, too, of the Caucasian, and precisely Georgian, are very peculiar. They drag number of actors and hence, manipulations against already unpredicted outcomes.

The range of arguments is quite comprehensive and extensive when it comes to defining the Caucasus and Balkans and their secession. Undoubtedly, these questions of secession lack neither issue-specific nor field-wide theories nor related arguments. While the geopolitics-related theories have become the posit amid the major deals in the international relations, the secession, and especially its outcomes on the regional order lack even precarious references to geographical explanation of this much controversial subject in politics. Despite hesitant assumptions on the Caucasus as a strategic geopolitical unit, it might be argued that Cornell used the term of geopolitics as "façade" rather than the deep argument. Contrary to Cornell, this study strongly supports the ideational importance of Mackinder's work under the name of *The Geographical Pivot of History* in practical consideration of the situation in the regions of the Caucasus and Balkans as a result of challenges appeared.

The timeline of the events that followed the 1990s turmoil in the region looks very complicated. However, one might consider the gravity of Russian Federation in the

regional politics, including inter and intra-state affairs. The previous sections comprehensively described each and every aspect of the turning point that occurred in the regions; however, it lacked analyzing and interpreting them, while this section is explicitly dedicated to this purpose. The narrative that the study emphasizes relies on the highlighting the role of different regional and international actors in the regions.

What makes the two cases of Georgia and Serbia similar is the role of Russian Federation in the period leading the emergence of the conflicts. Holding her own peacekeepers in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the Russian Federation did neither question nor suspend her indirect military support to the separatist groups within Georgia (Stewart, 2003) against which, for Chirikba, Georgia was conducting guerrilla strikes (Chirikba, 2002), while for Cornell the guerrilla movements were independently fought against separatists (Cornell, 2000). All in all, the Russian interest in both cases of secession, Kosovo and secession attempts in Georgia, is extremely crucial. So if one decided to deal with the question of secessionism not generally but specifically in the regions mentioned above, then there should also be considered the role of Russia, as well as the reasons why Russia engaged with the domestic affairs so dominantly and was this much curious vis-à-vis the affairs beyond her national borders.

Fundamental justification, upon which the majority of states agreed, relied on the disagreements related to the sphere of influence. The ideational approach to the statehood is the one which regards the absolute right of countries in determining their alliances and partnerships, their direction in the world and the type of society there are trying to create. That, in fact, is the fundamental attribute of sovereignty. And, at the same time, that is the very point where the sovereignty as normative term clashes with the foreign policy strategy of a political unit which simply disregards and ignores the latter principle. However, there is one thing worth noticing in this aspect, it is related to the changes of the Russian policy vis-à-vis Georgia throughout the conflict. If Russian position was more or less reluctant and less intrusive in 1990s, their dominance intensified in 2000s. This might be caused by variety of the domestic politics of Georgia.

As it was already mentioned, the three different governments observed independent political dimension including the steps in resolving conflict over Abkhazia and "South Ossetia". If Shevardnadze was prudent and conducted flexible policies, Saakashvili's performance was mainly characterized with decidedness and sometimes arrogance. Consequently, the relations were deteriorating throughout the eight year period of the UNM being in power. Subsequently, the situation changed when Ivanishvili's team gained major seats in the Parliament. However, the period after 2012 (first victory of Ivanishvili's political party in the elections) did not enjoy significant and perceivable attention of the Russian officials on the regions with secessionist aspirations.

The reflections of the latter domestic policies were obviously on face in the Russian responses vis-à-vis the two regions within Georgia. One of the illustrations would be the subsequent developments of the direct skirmishes. As they somehow disappeared another question of the citizenship-related issues emerged. This happened only after the Russia unilaterally pioneered in the distribution of Russian passports among the separatists operating in Abkhazia (Littlefield, 2009). Hence, one might argue that the Russian domination over the Caucasus, one way or another, facilitated the process of awakening secessionist movements, in advance. Furthermore, it became a very supportive argument to "protect […] the Russian citizens living in [South Ossetia]" (President of Russia, 2008) and justify their counter-attacks against Georgian military power in 2008. It was in 31 May, 2002, when Russia adopted the "Law on Russian Federation Citizenship", unsurprisingly, the law facilitated the process of getting Russian passport for the citizens of the post-Soviet states. The process was extremely convenient especially for the Ossetians even unable to leave their homes. Hence, the points made in previous paragraphs aimed to shed light to how Russian actions were shaping domestic deals of Georgia into concerns related to ethnic politics.

The question of awarding the Abkhazians and Ossetians Russian citizenship might be assumed to be one of the most dominant concerns of 2000s. In fact, one might argue that Russia successfully pursued the soft power on individual level in the Abkhaz

and Ossetian societies. Hence, on the expense of state sovereignty of Georgia, Russia legitimized herself as capable and rightful to interfere in the domestic affairs of the regional state and the fate of the neighboring ethnic groups. Consequently, it led Russia to act on behalf of already "Russianized"[5] Abkhazians and Ossetians, despite internationally putative title of these people.

When considering the matter of "passportization" the latest developments are also worth highlighting. In the recent years, Georgian officials have been strongly criticizing and condemning the massive distribution of the passports among Georgian nationals in Abkhazia, especially. The amount of the Russian passports issued in Abkhazia, the breakaway region of Georgia reached around 70 percent of the total population locally (Mackinnon, 2017). In a way, the process of massive distribution of the passports from Russian officials became *quid pro quo* to lead to withering and significant deterioration of the relations between Georgia and Russia. That subsequently led to the immense reduction in positive attitude and trust vis-à-vis Russia, as possible mediator in the conflict. In response to the dwindling relations between Russia and Georgia in the first decade of new millennium, the member of Duma's committee on relations with the former Soviet republics, Anatoli Chekoyev, who is at the same time a Communist deputy, said in his interview that there was nothing wrong with the fact that Abkhazians in major prefer Russian citizenship. Furthermore, he viewed this fact as no *ad rem* vexing the inter-state relations (Mackinnon, 2017).

However, once broken relations continued keeping on strain terms. As a result, not only it led to viewing Russia as subjective actor in the conflict, but also increasing threat of more fundamental intervention in the secessionist process of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. As a result of the changes in perceptions Georgia has become more skeptical against Russia. Subsequently, the officials from Georgian sides reviewed their positions less productive *qua* resolution the secessionism. Thus, they started seeking for

[5] The term is direct translation of Georgian version "გარუსება" that stands for the process of assimilation of a person or population into Russian traditions. In short it stands for becoming Russian (Oxford Dictionary).

new sources of political support. Here, the most essential thing is that gradually, domestic secessionism drives the *host state* to open the boundaries of the conflict and let it spread, probably implicitly, to other political units. Hence, Georgia no more considers the secessionism as her concern only; she rather shapes the foreign policy priorities and reviews the responds developments accordingly.

Apparently, from the first days of announcing independence, Georgia has gained huge support of the major European states and the US. Subsequently, Georgia's involvement in the international political and economic regimes (referring to the intergovernmental organizations – the UN, the Council of Europe, the World Trade Organization and etc.), and complete commitment to develop her international image, led to further support of the West. However, Georgia's European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations never abated, vice versa, her bid to the final membership of the EU and NATO continued. Unsurprisingly, it is deemed and argued many times that the sporadic challenges and mishmash in actions of Russian Federation against the Georgia's affairs vis-à-vis regions of Abkhazia and so called "South Ossetia" were implicitly raged. This was revealed in her responses to Georgia's developments in the process of integration in European and Euro-Atlantic organizations. Thus, one might come up with the corollary that the Russian Federation has predominantly been concerned over the foreign policy dimensions of Georgia, rather than her domestic politics of ethnic groups.

However, apparently, the rupture over the Abkhazian and Ossetian secessionism between Russia and Georgia did not afflict the process of Europeanization and Westernization of Georgia, but rather, it galvanized the determination. As there is a fervent belief that, as mentioned above, this policies of Georgia will lead to further prospects of developing relations with the secessionist regions.

The situation with regard to the secessionism of Kosovo and its final independence is more or less similar if we consider the number of players and their roles in the conflict. To start the question; some argue that dealing with the Kosovar secessionism in Balkans would be very similar to the rest strives for independence in the

Balkans generally and former Yugoslavian states. Contrary to this, there exist a counter-arguments and it asserted that: there is a very common fact over the mechanism of the secession all over the world – it is the difference that exists between each and every cases. Starting with the emerging crisis in Yugoslavia in 1990s, which was led by the agreements for the once incorporated political units to be seceded, the situation moved to deeper complication. In the beginning it was the crisis over Croatia and Bosnia, which was only settled three years after they gained international recognition. Then, the skirmishes emerged in already independent state – Serbia – where the question of secession triggered irreparable damage to the ethnic Albanians and Serbs on the territory of Kosovo. Consequently, the process of Yugoslavia's dissolution was more painful, as it led to the humanitarian crisis and furthermore, the cases of genocide and ethnic cleansing.

The Kosovo War that happened in between 1996-99 was the crisis with long-term confrontation between the people in Serbia, as well as the states surrounding it. However, it was not the time when the struggle for independence truly began. Back in 1968 Kosovar Albanians rioted "the return of the national question to center state among Yugoslavia's problems" (Rusinow, 1977). This was followed by another crisis in 1981, for the same quests. However, both of them were unsuccessful and simply disregarded by the Yugoslav and Serb governments.

Then, already from the beginning of the 1990s the situation was intensified. In July 1990 Albania recognized Republic of Kosovo. Furthermore, then president of Albania, Sali Berisha strongly promised that so called "Balkan Wall" would be destroyed and Albania would be united with Kosovo (Jenne, 2007). Hence, the events above highlight the long history of Kosovar struggle for independence. Moreover, these events are accurate argument against the possible claim that the Kosovar secessionism emerged after violating, insulting and humiliating treatment of the central government of Serbia vis-à-vis Kosovar Albanians, examples of which will be provided in the forthcoming paragraphs.

Reviewing the facts pertain to Kosovo's decades-long quest for independence aimed to emphasize its unique characteristic. In fact, the third chapter on the emergence of the secessionism in Georgia and Serbia in 1990s, aimed to demonstrate the general and objective approaches historical timeline of the two cases. Moreover, the third chapter together with this chapter predominantly demonstrated how the two cases of Caucasian secessionisms are distinguished from Kosovo. In case of Abkhazia and so called "South Ossetia", there was no evidence detected pertain to the independence movements during the Cold War. Furthermore, unlike Albania's positive discourse over Kosovo's independence (Allcock, Young, & Lampe, Encyclopædia Britannica, 2017), neither Abkhazia nor "South Ossetia" enjoyed such a strong support in their struggle for independence. Despite the willingness of "South Ossetians" to unite with the Republic of North Ossetia (BBC News, 2004), there was no single evidence neither from North Ossetians nor Russians on including "southern brothers" into their borders.

That said, when the clashes emerged and continued intensively in Balkans, it was obviously aimed to achieve decision over the status of Kosovo, the outcome was still complicated and lacked any prospect of final resolution of the conflict. The reason for perceiving the events of 1996-99 as dramatic was that the central government of Serbia, which was willing neither to cooperate over the status of Kosovo with the international community (the US and some EU states), nor to let them (the US led NATO forces) intervene in the conflict and assist in favor of its descalation (Schwarz & Layne, 1999). Apparently, Roberts argued that the need for international forces to intervene was very crucial as Milošević was conducting wide-spread violations of human rights that caused numerous casualties. Hence, the NATO forces being intervened in the conflict was the best way out to prevent further dramatic consequences (Roberts, 1999).

The dissatisfaction of the Serbian government vis-à-vis the intervention was high. The principle of state sovereignty here, like in Georgia, was violated. However, despite possible similarities of the Serbian and Georgian strive for territorial integrity; the journeys these two states went through were distinctive. The differences between the

two cases primarily dealt with the features of the domestic violence, as well as the international intervention. If Kosovo enjoyed the support of the international community, especially the Western powers, the Abkhazian and Ossetian struggle for secession was only supported by Russia. More or less unanimous mindset of the European states and the US regarding the cooperation to intervene was criticized by the Serbs. As for them, there was the problem of confusing the "collective responsibility" that the NATO was serving for and "collective punishment" that the Serbian government became subject to (Draskovic, 1999).

Apparently, starting from 1990, in February 30 Albanians were killed deliberately in demonstrations. The spiral of violence was extending time by time. In the struggling process of the Kosovars against the central government, the only possible solution and the motive to reach the goal of final independence, predominantly, lied in unity of all Albanians over the Kosovars claims. The importance of their unity could be justified by the fact *psychological* factor the second chapter demonstrated. As mentioned there, psychological attitudes and perceptions might become the tenet as well as drive for different groups of people to act in accordance with their political as well as economic and social needs *(Wood, 1981)*.. Hence, in the process of shaping the destiny of the community the members implicitly and explicitly rely on group identity. This is what the Wood aimed to highlight, for the identity plays one of the leading roles in association of "who you are".

And, secondly, it could be a strong western support, either direct or indirect, for Kosovars to achieve their purposes. This aspect could be perceived as the *geographical* precondition offered by Wood. Here, geographical proximity of Europe to Kosovo is the determinant, but not predominant, as it is the self-identification of Kosovar Albanians that they were part of the geographical and political Europe. And hence, already designed Western principles and responsibility vis-à-vis the humanity would bring them "in".

Generally speaking, bringing Albanians under one umbrella could be organized more or less on the local means; however, drawing the attention of the West and adverting them to what was going on in Balkans could not be conducted only by the domestic actors[6]. For, the secessionism, as a matter of region-wide concerns was just emerging and developing. The gaps in various approaches vis-à-vis secessionism were detected not only in the practical understanding[7] but also theoretical. Hence, obscure and multi-dimensional formation of the concept in the international law, as well as the lack of practical evidence on international level were, one way or another creating hurdles for outside world.

Anyhow, in the beginning of 1990s, the stimulus of the Albanians in Kosovo was expanded as a result of the crackdown of Milošević (Hedges, Serbs Renew Crackdown on Albanian Villages in Kosovo, 1998). The Serbian leader conducted the policy as a result of which 120 000 people were kicked from their jobs, the Albanian schools were closed and all the Albanian teachers were expelled from their jobs, too. Not only education was the target of the policy of Serbia, but also health and finance, where some of the seats were occupied by Albanians. These events completely distinguished the politics of the Serbia, from the politics of Tito's Yugoslavia, where the rationalist politics were revealed even in appointing the cadres on different positions in accordance with the local ethnic or national majorities. One might argue that probably this could be one of the justifications of keeping number of Yugoslav republics together.

Moving to the later developments, in 1995 Dayton Accords come to political stage and triggered another wave of massive clashes with Kosovar Albanians. Despite its peaceful purposes that Dayton brought order for Bosnia, it had side effects. As mentioned in the previous chapter on the historical development of the conflicts, it vexed the Kosovar Albanians by disregarding the necessity of their presence during the

[6] Domestic actors here mainly refer to the subject of the secessionism, hence, secessionist group, as well as the *host state.*

[7] The author here refers to the state response to the secessionism, where not only domestic actors, but sometimes regional ones appear to take the lead.

consultations. Hence, it was dismissed from any decision-making process over the future developments of the Yugoslavia and Kosovo, precisely. In addition to this the final agreement, certainly, spurned the territory of Kosovo as a political unit.

The circumstances spinning around the Kosovar secessionism explicitly drew the attention of the major western states, as the massive human rights violations were taking place. In fact, it was not only human rights violations, but generally the region that maintained huge attention from the major countries in the world. The reasons for that were various, for some it was the problem of facing the similar challenge, for others – questioning their spheres of influence and domination. At this point the international organizations revealed to have the highest leverage. And the most significant exemplification of the latter claim on interference of the intergovernmental organizations would be the NATO intervention in former Yugoslavia and more precisely in the conflict over Kosovo.

The NATO intervention into the conflict predominantly reflected the concerns on humanitarian issues and protection of the human rights. It aimed to fight against Serbian insurgency against the Albanians. However, the intervention at the same time could be interpreted in accordance with the prominent scholars in the sphere of political realism and studies on the world order. Here, the first and second chapters should be referred, as the study explicitly employs Bull's judgments on the *society of states.* The reason this reference is important lies in the essence of the concept, which predominantly implies the contact and interaction among states on regular basis. And it occurs when there is a "certain common interests and common values" that bound them to each other in favor of establishing joint principles and act under the framework of commonly accepted norms (Watson, 1987). Obviously, this is what happened when NATO and the party states were mobilized by high endeavor of the US and the UK representatives.

Together with the references above, there was another side of the intervention related to the formation of the state of Kosovo, as it was a very crucial axis of the conflict in the process of extinguishing the humanitarian crisis. In case of intervention,

NATO had to account for the responsibilities in at least the formation of new state in the forthcoming events. While if NATO disregarded intervention, then the humanitarian crisis would enlarge and cause more drastic outcomes. Eventually, it was decided to intervene at all expense except further casualties. This event could be a very crucial illustration of Ikenberry's argument from the previous chapters, where he was referred for his claims on the importance of the institutional arrangements (Ikenberry, 2014). The NATO is part of international regime, which has created common basis for number of states. And while us considering Westphalian sovereignty through the understanding of the inter-state relations, one should make accurate notions as well as deep and conformable assumptions to the implications of the international level cooperation of states or as Bull put it the *society of state* or in another words – *international society*.

It is quite difficult to make an overview of the outcomes of NATO intervention in Kosovo, as it needs specific consideration from different perspectives. If it is asked to know whether the intervention was successful or not, then it should also imply the reference to something specific, comparing to whether Kosovo was successful or not. In practice one might argue that Kosovo was a successful case for the Albanians, who undertook numerous banes from the central Serbian government forces. However, in theory, the intervention and its forthcoming outcomes created such a precedent that became the justification for the different secessionist cases in different parts of the world. Moreover, the intervention triggered the majority of the similar cases and their actors to mobilize relying on the example of Kosovo, which in a way became hope for suppressed groups, as well as a huge challenge and threat for the central governments.

All in all, the majority of the Kosovar Albanians would be thankful for the US, the UK, and major European states for their strong supports. However, the question here is not the amount of support, but rather the ways through which Albanians became subject to the support. Once, the US led operations were conducted, nobody could probably imagine the outcome would be Kosovo's independence. Furthermore, without

any doubt, literary nobody would argue that it would bring Georgia and Russia to war in the following six months of the declaration of Kosovo's independence.

After the conflict was flared up in Georgia, the discussions regarding the chain reaction of the Balkan's turmoil was reconsidered (Toal, 2009). Notoriously, it was reviewed and eventually found the indirect connection between the two cases, which appeared to be the third actor. It might sound confusing; however, the most common deal in the question of the comparison between these two regions and their secessionism is the third party. In ordinary case the third state would be concerned if and only if the turmoil affects the lives of the same ethnic groups that compose the majority of her population[8]. However, in the more complicated cases, the third party might view the *host state* as aggressor and refer to her as a suppressor on the basis of concerns other than victims of same ethnicities.

All in all, there is a single understanding to both of the possibilities. Apparently, any kind of intervention that takes place as the response to the turmoil caused by the flared up secessionism raises question of further and more extensive changes. These changes do not only lead to the transformations on the local basis, but rather the regional as well as global. For, they are very likely to even implicitly target any other political unit within the state or beyond her borders that is liable to the secessionism. As a result, there appears the necessity of reviewing either domestic or international politics or in the combined scenario – both at the same time.

Ostensibly, the above paragraphs raise the importance of intervention as it was a predominant phenomenon and target of the studies on regional order. However, the apple of discord here is rather different. One needs to generalize the trend and view it from wider perspectives. The enlargement of the perspective stands for the wider and broader consideration of the facts throughout the historical. To make it more clear, the following section will briefly review the latter facts.

[8] It refers to the population of the third state.

The constantly modifying world political map has always been reviewed on the basis of the indispensable role of political interactions between the peoples and nations. Among the changes the trend highlighted less possible cases of advertent unification of two or more political units, then their dissolution[9]. This fact has explicitly and implicitly shaped the way of the changing territories and the possessions of different states throughout the centuries. Hence, if starting from 1990s it was the international political regime that strongly cooperated and coordinated the political changes in the world, it was the dominant empire in the medieval period up until the twentieth century, the city states – before the medieval period, the tribes and communities – before the city states and etc. And the chain could be shifted back to the very first day of the human on the planet. Hence, when it comes to the prioritizing the role of the intergovernmental organizations in the developments over any specific case of secessionism or generally the conflict over territory, we should predominantly consider the role of the conflict over the surrounding nations and beyond.

This very notion should be linked to the recent developments in the two regions after they faced the secessionist dilemma. As the primary argument of the study asserts, the secessionism should have caused the regional change. Obviously, the change is faced in both – the Caucasus and the Balkans. However, as Buzan and Little argued these changes do not lead to the refusal of the role of the state *per se* (Buzan & Little, 1999), it rather transforms the means of the interactions among states. Here, one should keep in mind that the challenge to the Westphalian order is essential, even on the state level, as the "means of interaction" are being changed. This is caused by the transformation of the traditional society to the "postmodern" (Buzan & Little, 1999). Obviously, this is one of the outcomes how secessionism in practice drives the re-arrangement of the roles, duties as well as responsibilities.

[9] Major empires starting from the Roman, to the recent ones (including the USSR (Lieven, 1995)) were gaining control over the territories forcefully in one way or another. Hence, the people inhabited in those territories were deprived of the right to decide their political destiny. However, the willingness of surviving from the suppression was undoubtedly *a priori* and *prima facie* the goal of their future.

At this point, the assertions lead to the primary concern of the study on the scales and limits secessionism redraws. In this sense, one might contradict and argue that the latter alone is incapable of bringing changes to the world political map. The respond to this claim would be positive, by accepting that obviously it is not secessionism that solely changes the regional or world order, but rather the way people tolerate secessionism as a tool of political power, domination and popular support. Conventionally, the other independent conditions would be the role of primarily, political leadership which the masses hold out and secondly, neighboring political unit that either cooperates or conflicts. As the corollary, more or less generalized approach to secessionism lead to the number of actors the study listed in the paragraphs above[10].

Another possible contradiction against the impacts of the secessionism on the changes undertaken in the world would probably rely on the question of secessionism whether being capable of triggering fundamental shifts in the order or not. Certainly, secessionism independently is not the cause of the changes as mentioned above. However, as the second argument, if one takes a look of how the world political map was changed as a result of the separation and division of world empires into smaller ethnic-based distributions of territories would be feasibly accurate. Thus, it is notorious that questioning the role of the secessionism poses handful advantages in understanding the regional changes. Therefore, it should be considered conversely, the regional order should conventionally be reviewed in the virtue of emerging secessionism in different parts of the world, where the location of the secessionism does not play crucial role, for the process is capable of causing the chain reaction, and trigger the flaring of the similar movements up in other part of the world sporadically. Hence, the spillover effect that secessionism obviously has, is a very serious threat to the regional integration and domestic stability of states around the world.

[10] The actors include the (1) secessionist unit, (2) the host of secessionist movement and (3) the dominant actor or third state beyond the borders.

The best illustration of chain effect of secessionism[11] would be this very case study. Here, Abkhazia together with so called "South Ossetia" and Kosovo are significantly entangled for their extreme importance on local and regional politics. Not only is it worth noting how critical the political transformation in the Balkans was, but also the impacts of it on the other parts of the world, including the Caucasus, that was drawn into the serious challenge, starting from 1990s, and especially in August 2008. One of the possible explanations of this much drastic outcomes of secessionism[12] is that it more or less leads to unilateral claims for independence. As a result of this claims, the state that hosts the political turmoil is dragged into the maelstrom from which she extricates either with fragmented territory or annulled statehood.

Hence, from this point it is worth dealing with the question of secessionism and related ambiguities of its outcomes. It is already mentioned how the NATO intervention in Kosovo crisis contributed in the process of shaping the order. However, there exist the variables that predominantly influence the outcomes. One of these variables is the lack of practice, as the international community has never come across with such a serious dilemma. Although the international law regarded the "right of the people to self-determination" as *jus cogens* norm the international society was not quite ready to respond the turmoil triggered by the quest for self-determination.

Furthermore, it was not only matter or political readiness (as another process of political transformation was going on as a consequence of the collapse of the USSR), but also the threat of unawareness. Apparently, the hurdle lied in the lack of formula or guidance to respond the self-determination driven secessionism.

However, not only the unavailability of the specific guidance burdened the process of treating the secessionism in the Balkans, specifically in Serbia, but also the disagreement within the P5, as well as the lack of the unity in the EU. Unsurprisingly,

[11] Chain effect refers to the event when secessionism on specific territory of the country causes the similar resistance against the central government in another territory, either in the state or beyond.
[12] Secessionism *prima facie* looks quite just and normal way of pursuing the right to self-determination to define the fate of the group of ethnic, religious, lingual etc. minorities.

few member states of the EU have not recognized the independence of Kosovo yet. Hence, *a priori* of considering the disagreements within either P5 or the EU members lays in the fact Krasner asserted against Westphalian order. The expectation on the unanimity upon the commonly accepted principle of self-determination in fact leads to the Krasnerian question of "transgression of autonomy by external powers" (Krasner, 1995-96) by those powers or political units that came up to another commonly accepted principle of non-intervention. Hence, this very illustration creates the basis on how the schism between third parties might arise.

The justification for this much entanglement could be the following comparison. Once the independence movement breaks up it has similar effect with the avalanche which is to fall, it is obvious that there will be disastrous outcomes; however, it is difficult and unfeasible to predict how subversive it will be, will it lead to other natural disasters like flood, earthquake etc. or it will damage the roads and local infrastructure. In any possible consequence it will raise concerns in the neighboring regions or even areas that are under threat of hazard. Conventionally, those areas, that are unsecured and endangered are more likely to take measures and either evacuate people or mobilize the forces to respond any possible threat immediately. Hence, even if the epicenter of the disaster was not their inhabitant, they are considered responsible for possible damages in case of occurrence.

The situation is the similar with regard to the secessionism. It is completely obscure to what extend the turmoil outcomes spread. However, it is definitely unquestionable that the very first target implicitly would be the areas where secessionism is either hidden threat or the challenge faced seriously by the local authorities.

The reason above given comparison is not easy to be questioned is that the response of the intergovernmental organizations to the secession problems are almost similar with the attitude vis-à-vis avalanche. Those, being in distance from the conflict observe and investigate it from the perspective of outsider, then consider the possible

precondition of the emergence of secessionism on their territories. And subsequently, analyze the chances to adjust the similar preconditions on their population as well as their possible impacts in case of occurrence. In the end, the measures will be taken as a consequence of national concerns. Hence, here we arrive to the pure realist approach[13], according to which the states are the rational actors in their decisions on international level.

Moving back, one might ask whether the comparison between the secession and avalanche leads us to the primary concern of this work. The answer to this would be – yes. As the direct or indirect risks to be the next target of natural disasters defines to what extend one takes measures for prevention, the response to the secessionism on international level is driven similarly. Regardless the territorial proximity, the states rather prioritize their identity and their interests and only after that take actions in accordance with the impendence of the disaster. Meanwhile, secession movement is either developing, as well as incorporating more and more maneuver that will lead to drastic impacts on the host state, or is extinguished. In both cases it triggers revision of the regional politics and the attitudes of the neighboring or distant states vis-à-vis the host state. In fact, it helps to reconsider the hidden political interests, too.

Once secession emerges in the state, the very crucial way to understand the respond from the very first day is to follow the rhetoric of other states. This is one of the useful ways to detect what their approach to the host state is. Here, there are various assumptions that one might consider. However, the most vital focus should be whether the international society (of states) approaches the secessionists and their host state from the commonly accepted international principles or not. But, the problem again is that the existing order and the principles themselves create several misunderstandings. The fact that the principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention clash with the right to self-determination is one example that is discussed above. However, even in this case the

[13] It refers to the structural realism, prominent figure of which is Mearsheimer. The assumptions on rationality are made in number of his works including "Reckless State and Realism" (Booth & Mearsheimer, 2009).

point that demands the most attention is the prioritization of these principles. One needs to analyze the contradicting circumstances and the way they are handled by the third states.

In this sense, both the Georgian and Serbian dilemmas of their domestic secessionism were responded divergently from different states. In case of the secessionist aspirations of the Abkhazians and Ossetians the majority of the third states in the conflict, supported the territorial integrity of Georgia relying on the historical and geographical reasons and disregarded any possible chance of the ethnic Abkhazians and Ossetians in Georgia to decide their political faith. Contrary to this, Kosovar Albanians, through the support of almost same group of third states were supported to have legitimate right to claim for independence and secede from Serbia. The justification was the humanitarian crisis, which needed to be resolved if and only if the Albanians in Kosovo would get the independence from Serbia and hence international recognition.

The misconception or misinterpretation of the principles of international law is very subjective. While some view these principles as a tool for self-help and international protection, the others clutch it as a weapon to implement their national strategies. As a result of both we face outcomes that even in short-term questions the existing perceptions of the regional politics. However, a very crucial point which can cause some misunderstandings and confusions is related to the question whether it is truly the secessionism that reshapes the regional order, or there also exist some other cofounding variables that shift the third states interrelations and policies vis-à-vis the host state. This question sounds very essential, as it doubts the predominant assumption of the study.

In answering the question above, the same two cases should be referred. Undoubtedly, the secessionist movements in Georgia led to reordering the political perceptions of third countries, similarly – in Serbia, too. Certainly, both in Serbia and in Georgia there was detected the trend of re-shifting the level of political influence. Both Serbia and Georgia were commonly associated with the Soviet regime and sphere of

communist era. However, once the circumstances changed, Georgia became independent, while Serbia in the beginning maintained part of the Yugoslavia, later on – gained independence. Hence, they both managed to extricate their political status and statehood, and become internationally recognized states with full sovereignty. Subsequently, they also enjoyed the membership of international regimes, several intergovernmental organizations for which they exerted huge effort.

However, not only sovereignty and international recognition matter but also the domestic politics. And here, they both – Georgia and Serbia – came across with one of the major challenges of the last decade of the 20th century and the new millennium. As both were independent states enjoying full sovereign capacity; it was expected from them to handle their own problems in the framework of internationally recognized principles. The essence of these principles in fact disregarded the intervention in the domestic politics and violation of the principle of sovereignty of the states. Hence, the new challenges of the new states at the same time challenged the international society, which was already stuck in the mishmash of the constant shifts of the national borders as well as dissolving political units in 1990s. It appeared that such crisis like secessionism and domestic disturbances were much thornier questions than complete dissolution of the empires back in the medieval period or even before.

What clearly was demonstrated was not surprising whatsoever. Despite the *sui generis* cases of secession it was Russian Federation, which managed to take the leading role in dealing with the troubles in neighboring states and regions. Starting with the conflicts in Georgia over "South Ossetia" and Abkhazia moving to the Balkans Russian government became entangled with the turmoil in surrounding regions. Similar to the rest of the third states she was new in dealing with the question. However, it was detected that predominantly the successor of the USSR was keen on dealing with the conflicts and assisting in the process of their resolution. For Russia viewed herself as

capable of possessing the highest legitimacy among the rest of the states[14]. For, it was understood that the *sine qua non* for the Russian intervention and mediation was to bring the conflicting parties to agree upon the true values and rational decisions that would decrease the chances of prospective losses and any possible cause of physical and psychological damages.

Anyhow, whatever justification the Russian side posed will not concern the normative approach to this study, which assumes that secessionism leads states to reconsider their roles in particular regions. What is obvious is that the secessionist movements in Georgia dragged the Russian Federation back to Caucasus. In fact, one might argue that she had never left the region. It is quite impressing argument to rely the fact that, around seventy year-long coexistence under the Soviet flag, and before that almost two centuries-long rule of the Tsarist Russia over Georgia, would not pass away immediately after the ideology of the hammer and sickle was vanished. Therefore, Russia being on time as the conflict emerged referred to their implicit maintenance in accordance with the regional transformations.

That said, the regionalization[15] of the Abkhazian and Ossetian claims drew the attention of the states beyond regional horizon. Starting with the soft rhetoric the calls upon preserving the territorial integrity of Georgia were intensified and maintained as part of their foreign policy agenda, unlike Russian Federation that viewed the conflict as her pawn on the Euro-Asian chessboard. The manifestation of her realistic aspirations was the August War 2008, which put a period to any possible resolution of the conflict between the official Georgian government and de facto Abkhazian and so called South Ossetian leadership.

[14] Here, legitimacy is a very crucial term, in fact; it is the only reason why a state with collapsed economic system and upside down social and political order would demonstrate herself qua the most responsive sympathizer of the domestic deals and dilemmas of either Georgia or Serbia.
[15] Author's own conception; refers to the process of involving Russian Federation, as the regional state, to deal with the Abkhazian and Ossetian secessionism in Georgia.

Despite the official negotiations, under the framework of the Geneva International Discussions on the Conflicts in Georgia (GID)[16] that still extend the process of comprehensive conflict resolution, they implicitly lack to valid mechanism that will bring the Abkhazians, Ossetians and Georgians together. In fact, the process needs extreme cautious on behalf of all the participant actors of negotiations. The most significant attention is required by the Georgian as well as the Russian officials, for not only existing fundamental disagreement over the secessionist aspirations of the Abkhazians and Ossetians, but also another question which is implicitly triggered – matter of trust. Not only trust, as part of psychological impacts, is neglected and implicitly excluded from the process of negotiations, but also ignored as the leading variable among the rest as it incorporates the importance of the development of the relations on the political as well as the interpersonal level.

However, the situation changes when it comes to the outcomes of the NATO intervention in Kosovar crisis to fight against Serbia's illegal actions targeting the ethnic minority of Albanians. As here, one might make considerations regarding the international order being dismissed as role of nation state is transformed.

The Kosovo's independence became strongly internationalized through the intergovernmental organizations that took leading role in the process of descalation of skirmishes and gaining the status for Kosovo. Aggravate evident proof of the argument above would be appearance of the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Its approached the issue from the perspective of international law, and furthermore, issued the document, and Advisory Opinion Accordance with the International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Respect to Kosovo on 22 July, 2010 (International Court of Justice, 2010). The existing document adopted by the highest

[16] The Geneva Discussions is the umbrella term for the international negotiation over the conflict in Georgia, emerged after the August War 2008. The Discussions are co-chaired by number of international organizations including the Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union (EU), and the United Nations (UN). The negotiations are held in Geneva, Switzerland. Until now Forty Two Round of GID was held. The most recent, 42nd, was held on 12-13 December, 2017 to address "security and humanitarian consequences of the Russo-Georgian War of August 2008" (Civil Georgia, 2017).

judicial body in international law once again demonstrates how Kosovar and Abkhaz/Ossetian secessionisms could be differentiated.

Moreover, the ado on Kosovo quivered the major states to shape their positions vis-à-vis the region, including China. China developed a very clear and definite position by disregarding Kosovo as international question and problem of worth considering on the level of the UN Security Council. While another unsurprising actor in the region, the Russian Federation appeared fragile throughout the conflict. Some argued that Yeltsin's Russia in 1999 was curious and even willing to have an intervention in the region to overcome the tragic turmoil and bring the conflict to the solution. However, Putin's Russia of 2000s, more or less, expressed reshaped attitude, with full capacity of doughtiness to stand by the territorial integrity of Serbia and keeping the international community away.

The Russian Federation's approach vis-à-vis the Abkhazians and Ossetians independence was *sui generis* and notoriously, unlike the Kosovar. In the latter case it was Russia with the same political leadership, which called the international community not to intrude in the process of recognition of Kosovo. Thus, one can argue that, as mentioned above, it is a matter of national interest of the third state to what extend they tend to interfere. Through this process of shaping the approaches and the attitudes of the state vis-à-vis another political unit handling the question of the secessionism should also require to be defined.

The definition is predominantly driven by the challenges that appear all around the world. Subsequently, this leads us to the "legitimation of the non-intervention" rather than intervention. This was the case with Russian Federation, when she refused to intervene in "domestic affairs of Serbia". All in all, believe it or not all scales of secession driven political developments lead to the changes and revisions of the attitudes of the third states. Consequently, they become implicitly affected and compelled to respond the actions of the host state.

Moreover, numerous evidences are detected that show the secessionist movements being explicitly capable of raising interest in different parts of the world. For those states, which prefer not to intervene or avoid any possible response are likely to be strained to at least reluctantly express their position, like China – vis-à-vis Kosovar independence. At any rate, they are very crucial in disregarding various variables that might either risk or flourish their political image and alliances around the world.

The process of normalization[17] of the attitudes did not completely happen within the negotiations over the future status of Kosovo, however, today we can witness that the majority of the states in the UN have recognized Kosovo's independence. Although one might argue that this very step that led the international attention to be drawn away from Kosovo. For, there are still problems on the solutions of conflict at its very core. In addition to this, the Kosovars on the ground are still in the struggle of controlling the issues and maintaining the order that seems fragile for them. However, more or less one might still believe that the case of Kosovo's secessionism was relatively successful one in favor of Kosovar Albanians who attained their ultimate goal despite the frustrations internally as well as externally.

However, when it comes to Georgia and related secessionism in Abkhazia and so called "South Ossetia", the situation is completely reversed. The problems related to the status of the secessionists are surrounding the whole process of negotiations. Unlike Kosovo, neither Abkhazia nor South Ossetia enjoys the advantages of significant scale of recognition of their independence, as there are handful nations in the world recognizing them. That's because the international community is not sufficiently perceived that they deserve the status of independent state as there is no accurate evidence of the limitation of their political, economic and social rights within Georgia. In fact, what evidences are revealed are mainly assumed to be artificial and intriguing

[17] The term might be misunderstood. To avoid obscureness it refers to the unanimity within the decision-making process of the international community over the aspects of the secession deals and its impacts. Hence, the normalization of the conditions should firstly occur among the third states who are engaged in the process of negotiations. Consequently, it will lead to the efficiency in the forthcoming stages of the peaceful talks on the domestic level.

rather than the true foundations of the ethnic-based juridical selectivism by the Georgian side.

All in all, the major international interventions that are driven by the secessionist movements in the regions are more likely to act as the tools that manipulate the redistribution of regional power balance. Whatever purposes they serve, including the peacekeeping, peace enforcing, preventing of ethnic cleansing or genocide and etc. they all end up with solving the problems on the surface. Subsequently, whatever is remained after the intervention, predominantly, becomes the matter of domestic concerns, if there exists the unanimous understanding of the distinction between the domestic and international affairs. Hence, for some it might be argued that the intervention only prepares the "façade" in the process of reviewing the spheres of dominance.

Obviously, the situation regarding Georgia is not very different from Kosovo. Despite the lack of direct intervention by the intergovernmental organizations (except the EU appointed French mediation), the outcome is more or less similar. Hence, both cases can be consolidated under the same umbrella, which shelters the parties of the secessionism driven political crisis, where the long-term consequence is usually pursued by the third states. For, the intervention whether it is direct or indirect is not the primary concern of the study. And as it was argued for numerous times, it is no more a questions that secession draws the international attention and leads the states beyond borders focus on the core of the issues, reconsider their role in the region and intervene in case of necessity.

One might argue that, in fact secessionism does not lead to segmentation and further separation of the nations but it rather triggers the formation of political clubs that share similar political strategies and interests, like the western nations cooperating over the Kosovo and authorizing the NATO intervention. Similar illustration would be Russian and Chinese tandem in opposing the intervention on the basis of rejecting any intervention in the domestic affairs of Serbia and the regional deals of the EU, respectively. In case of Abkhazian and so called "South Ossetian" strives for

independence, there was no political club established as it was only Russia which actively supported the independence of both regions.

However, the assertion above related to prospective appearance of the regional political clubs, one way or another lacks the long-term perspective that will more likely be revised in accordance with the changes in perception and priorities of each and every political unit. Notoriously, not only Balkans but the Caucasian, and specifically Abkhazian and Ossetian secessionist aspirations caused political cooperation. However, gathering under one umbrella can only be assumed as part of the foreign policy strategy of different states that in other possible case of secessionism will once again review their position and even reform it in case of necessity. Apparently, that is how the global politics has been operating throughout the history of mankind, where the roots of secessionism are deeply grounded within the perceptions of the political units.

CONCLUSION

As the domain of the IR studies suggest, the main focus of the analysis in the international, regional and/or even domestic deals is predominantly the state. This approach is especially emphasized relying on the Treaty of Westphalia, signed in 1648. While the Treaty initially aimed to bring the war between the state and religious authorities to end, it implicitly adopted the principles of the modern state and statehood. As a result of the Treaty the state emerged as the most superior political, territorial and even social unit capable of engaging in any type of negotiations and decision-making processes. Thus, starting from the year of 1648, predominantly it appeared that ultimate decisions were made on the level of political authority. Consequently, through establishing the principles of the state sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Treaty accompanied the process of formation the major changes in the world political order.

However, the recent developments in international politics restrained the Westphalian principles in advance. The challenges appeared on state as well as the individual level. These challenges drew the attention of the scholars, as apparently states appeared to be deprived from the superior status, and thus, from being a single subject of considerations in international politics. Hence, despite strong assumptions on the ultimate target of any analysis being predominantly the state came to the bridge of certain amount of transformation. Consequently, once parsimonious approach in understanding international politics needed to be reconsidered.

Increasing notions on possible actors other than states led to more comprehensive approaches. In fact, there appeared variety of justifications on the basis of numerous variables, including intra-state groups. These groups, mostly referred as minorities, represented either distinctive ethnic, religious, or cultural peculiarities. The fact that the minorities in some cases took control over the political affairs of the state shifted the traditional understanding of the Westphalian sovereignty. Here we arrive to the point the study targets – the political activism in the means of emerging independence movements of the intra-state minorities.

Changing priorities as a result of both World Wars led to revise the understanding of the needs and necessities. The ethnic, religious, linguistic and etc. minorities were not an exemption in this sense. Starting from 1960s with the process of massive decolonization, moving to the 1990s and 2000s – the occurrence of independence movements led to very significant changes, as for the struggle for secessionism became more likely arising among the groups.

This study aimed to target the secessionism from the perspective of its impacts on the regional order. The recent almost three decades, can likely be defined as a very significant period in the process of studying the secession movements from different perspective. Starting with the collapse of the USSR, the term of secession has maintained the spotlight of the political discourse of the major states in the world. However, not only it became the matter of interest or high attention, but also direct concern or the number of newly emerged states.

At this point, to refer to the goal of the study it was to revise the understanding of regional order from the perspective of the challenges the secessionist movements trigger. For as it was argued in almost all the chapters above, essentially, it is secession that grabs the interest of the central government, which is the subject of the problem, as well as the international community, which possesses a very crucial role in dealing with the secessionism through active or passive means.

Following the deep and detailed theoretical study on the various approaches of secessionism from normative as well as practical understanding, the study is led by the literature review, which aims to introduce the basic concepts and the existing understandings on these concepts, including Westphalian sovereignty, principle of non-intervention etc. Apparently, the first chapter aims to briefly recall the Treaty of Westphalia and the preconditions of it to be signed. The first section of the chapter dealt with factual information related to the treaty. However, the tenet of the study was not the historical content analysis, but rather the analysis of the post-Westphalia political events

that led to significant redetermination of the concepts and in some cases, reduction of their gravity in international politics.

While the second section of the first unit recalled the challenges of Westphalia, the study essentially aimed to demonstrate the emerging trend in the international politics that in fact occupy notorious position. Obviously, simply referring to Bull and his realistic approach to the order, would account for sufficient image. That's why the whole second section was decided to be dedicated to the numerous interpretations of the different factors that scholars assumed as vital in challenging the Westphalian order. As a result of contradicting arguments of Buzan, Strange, Ohmae or Falk, the first chapter was completed. Furthermore, it avoids any specific corollary, as essentially it is secessionism for the author to be considered among the challenges.

The second chapter of the study embarked upon the second main concept – the secessionism. This part, too, had less analytical but rather informative importance. It aimed to demonstrate the process of shaping the developing approaches to the secessionism. Moreover, it dealt with the preconditions and causes of secessionism as to briefly define on what political, social, economic, or psychological foundation there occurs for the group to challenge to state's territorial integrity and question the stability of existence.

That said the last two chapters, the third and the fourth are the most harmonized two pieces of the whole study. The third chapter made the introduction to the cases of the study, and subsequently the fourth section analyzed them. Remarkably, they both were parts of a total subject of secessionism in the Balkans and the Caucasus. Furthermore, the third chapter incorporated the methodology part to facilitate the story-telling process that was developed in advance in the fourth chapter. In the last two sections, the study referred to the brief historical developments of both regions, Georgia and Serbia. The most considerable section of the third chapter was the last one, as it actually knotted the very essential case of Kosovar independence, which can be said to

represent the “phantom pain” of Serbia; and similarly, Abkhazian and so called “South Ossetian” secessionist aspirations.

In the final fourth section the author reminded few political events including the NATO’s intervention in Serbia and August War 2008 between Russia and Georgia to analyze the process of *regionalization* and *internationalization* of domestic problems. Furthermore, the case study demonstrated how the principle of self-determination that implicitly led to quest for independence and secession clashed with Westphalian territorial integrity. An illustration for this would be the case of Kosovar unilateral declaration of independence, which was brought to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). On 22 July, 2010 the Court rendered its non-binding opinion on the question that was proposed to court by the General Assembly (GA). The question was as following: “Is the unilateral declaration of independence by the provisional institutions of self-government of Kosovo in accordance with international law?” Noteworthy court was critical in considering the rules of the international law in making decision. As a result they found out that the Kosovo’s unilateral declaration was not against the international law, for there was no international regulation that would prohibit the unilateral declaration of independence of any political unit.

Hence, the corollary here could be that the recent legal opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo provided useful but not dispositive backdrop. As right to secession could possibly arise and be justified in case people were “denied of the minimal exercise of their rights within the state”, as a result of which the rest of the principles would be rejected or neglected. As in international law there is no such term of “right to secession”, it is only the right to self-determination that implicitly leads to the unilateral struggle for secession. And it can only later be responded by the international society whether to reply them and recognize or not.

On the other hand the study also aimed to refer to the principle of territorial integrity, which, in fact, is capable to block any attempt to right to self-determination

claim. The ICJ made an important notification that the territorial integrity confines the relations between states, while secessionism and self-determination claims render the state-to-societies interactions. This leads to the understanding that the self-determination should be something pursued internally, within the state. Hence, it obliges the sovereign state to reveal her attitudes both to democracy (as letting to enjoy the right to full participation in the political rights, as well as selecting their political future) as well as protecting minority rights. Hence, the government should represent all the people or peoples of the territory.

However, once the disagreement emerged between the ethnic group and the central government is transformed into classical understanding of domestic conflict, more likely. With number of actors involved as a result of the secession-based turmoil, the study arrived to the conclusion, which was repeated in the last chapter for several times. It is on all three levels, including the individual, state and regional, that the break-up of the secessionism sends implicit but very clear signals to the international community, which in the most cases disregards the Westphalian principles of the state sovereignty and territorial integrity. As a result of the third party interruption, which is witnessed quite often, the *host state* is the most essential party, which literally supports the argument of the study – the emerged secessionism leads to threaten Westphalian state system and hence, the understanding of the international order.

The two cases selected, predominantly targeted to evaluate to what extent the regional order faced changes. As an outcome, direct and indirect role of the international community implicitly as well as explicitly manipulated the outcome. Thus, as a consequence of their interference in the independence driven secessionism affairs, the serious challenges on the state as well as on the regional levels appear inevitably; contrary to which the likeliness of the conflict resolution process, as it undoubtedly incorporates the risks and further concerns worth taking into consideration in order to avoid creating the “phantom pain” of the *host state* caused by the break-away region.

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