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Representing the Nation and Others: A Formal Method for the Analysis of Political Identities

This paper presents a formal method to track changes over time in the salience of different political identities: political claims analysis (PCA). Identities are operationalized as collective public claims, made in a specific place and time. While linear and unidirectional socialization models work with a substantialist conception of identity, a claims-centered approach assumes political identities are collective and relational, shaped through public claim making interaction. Coding discrete identity claims, researchers can sort them by actor types and capture the distribution of claims across the political field. The specific relations asserted in claims -- the 'we' and 'they' – can also be recorded. The coding of temporally situated claims reveals a far more dynamic picture of political identity than what is implied by socialization models – and it shows more clearly how relations with 'others,' such as international institutions, shape political identities.

1. Introduction

Early political forecasts of persistent ethnic conflict and nationalism in postcommunist Eastern Europe have given way over time to more optimistic prognoses. While the first streams of scholarship after 1989-90 tended to focus on obstacles to 'democratic consolidation,' such as ethnic diversity and 'un-civic' cultural dispositions, the latest research emphasizes the transformative impact of 'international socialization.' By 2002, ten former Warsaw Pact states had joined NATO, and by the end of 2006 all of them had become members of the European Union. In the brief period between communism's collapse and accession, these Central and East European countries (CEECs) managed to transform their planned economies and single-party polities into capitalist democracies, framed by rules and regulations typical in the West. Although the speeds and trajectories of change varied, today the CEECs feature similar minority rights and protection regimes, which are more far-reaching than those of many Western democracies.

Western policymakers and academics generally describe these policy shifts as 'adoption of liberal norms,' a behavioral change commonly associated with declines in ethnic tensions and reductions in the political salience of ethno-national identities. Socialization theory predicts that ongoing engagement with international institutions will promote the *internalization* of liberal norms, a belief change. The greater degree of internalization, the more likely is 'normative convergence' among community members, new and old. Some anticipate the eventual eclipse of national identity (e.g., Hass 1958), while others expect progressive blurring between or blending of national identities and European identity (e.g., Lewis 2005; Risse 2005; Johnston). Socialization theory generally works with a substantialist conception of identity. Whether conceptualized as (zero-sum) 'eclipse' or (positive-sum) 'blurring' or 'blending,' identity change is viewed as a developmental process involving the change of properties (in this case, beliefs).

Unfortunately, prevailing research designs lack clear and operational definitions of identity and identity change, as Zürn and Checkel (2005, 1062) observe in a recent review of socialization scholarship. This makes it difficult to gauge 'progress' (toward a particular endpoint or toward convergence). And it makes problematic the basic assumption of directionality in European identity change. Fundamentally, assessment of identity change requires attention to temporality. And formal methods discipline our inquiry, beginning with the generation of evidence. Observation of identity change -- no less than explanation – benefits from formalism, defined by Tilly (2004) as 'the explicit representation of a set of elements and of relations among them.' The goal here is to represent identity in relation to the elements of time.

This paper presents a formal method to track changes over time in the salience of different political identities: political claims analysis (PCA). Identities are operationalized as collective public claims, made in a specific place and time. While linear and unidirectional socialization models work with a substantialist conception of identity (usually focusing on a single, monolithic 'state' identity; e.g., Wendt 1999), a claims-centered approach assumes political identities are collective and relational, shaped through public claim making among multiple, often competing, actors. Coding discrete identity claims, researchers can sort them by actor types (e.g., ruling parties, opposition parties, or extra-parliamentary actors) and capture the distribution of claims across the political field. The specific relations asserted in claims -- the 'we' and 'they' – can also be recorded. The coding of temporally situated claims

reveals a far more dynamic picture of political identity than what is implied by socialization models – and it shows more clearly how relations with 'others,' such as international institutions, shape political identities.

I apply the PCA method – first assembling and then interpreting evidence -- to two cases, which conform to two general patterns of postcommunist political change in the CEECs: the 'liberal' pattern Czech Republic and the 'mixed' (or 'illiberal') pattern Slovakia (Snyder and Vachudova 1997; Schimmelfennig 2005; Vachudova 2005). After the breakup of Czechoslovakia in 1992 its successor states seemed headed in starkly different directions: while the Czech Republic quickly earned a reputation as a consolidated democracy based on civic values, observers questioned Slovakia's commitment to political pluralism and free markets, worrying that its ethno-national divisions would undermine the development of democratic institutions. A decade later, it appeared the Slovaks had 'caught up' with the Czechs. Judged to be in compliance with the political and economic conditions for accession, Slovakia joined the Czech Republic in NATO in 2002, two years before both states officially entered the EU. The question is: did political identities in the Czech and Slovak polities change in tandem with policy liberalization?

I begin with an overview of key differences and similarities in Czech and Slovak domestic politics and in their relations with international institutions over their first decades of independence. I then outline a theory about the generation of evidence of political identities, explaining the construction of the Czech and Slovak Ethno-national claims (CSENC) catalog. As others have observed, the process of coding claims, indeed, the generation of any kind of evidence, simultaneously involves theory construction (Tilly 2002; Franzosi 2004). Thus, I start by sketching out a relational ontology of political identity and nationalism, contrasting it with a substantialist perspective. While the ideal research design for assessing identity change in Western-integrating CEECs would cover the complete range of political identity claims, including claims of supra-national identity, the event catalog presented here is limited to ethnic and national identity claims; but coverage is relatively extensive and intensive, spanning a ten-year period of daily claim making in two states. Presenting my coding strategy, I highlight how the CSENC catalog captures the relational features of ethnic and nationalist claim making. Displaying the historical claims data in graphical form, I discuss how they test the assumptions of linearity and unidirectionality in European identity change.

2. The question of Czech-Slovak convergence

Not long after the fall of communism, states across Central and Eastern Europe had significantly expanded protections for the equal rights of minorities and even provisions for collective rights. As Judith Kelley (2004, 6) observes, these outcomes were 'more comparable with international norms than with the preferences of the dominant domestic actors, even when domestic opposition was quite strong.' Liberal policy outcomes incompatible with domestic preferences thus call for explanation. In cases where the disjuncture between domestic and international norms was greatest – where domestic opposition to minority rights and protections was strongest – explaining liberal outcomes presents an even greater challenge. Comparisons of the newly independent Czech Republic and Slovakia often pivot on the extent of this normative gap, relatively small in the Czech case and large in the Slovak.

While the right-leaning government of the newly independent Czech Republic seemed to move swiftly ahead with political and economic reform, earning prompt recognition as a consolidated democracy, sovereign Slovakia's leftist government stalled on marketization and showed little respect for the rule of the law. Czechs were represented on the world stage by former dissident and playwright, Vaclav Havel, hero of Western liberals, whereas Slovakia's first Prime Minister, Vladimir Mečiar, an ex-communist and former boxer, became internationally known for his pugnacious political style. Perhaps the most significant difference between the two new states was the centrality of ethno-national divisions in the Slovak polity and their relative marginalization in the Czech. The Slovak parliament contained nationalist parties of two kinds: those committed to building Slovak nationhood and others vowing to strengthen the collective sovereignty of the state's Hungarian minority, which made up around 10% of the total population. By contrast, the departure of the disgruntled Slovaks appeared to remove ethno-national divisions from the Czech political field.

The divergence in the state's independent political paths came as little surprise to area observers. Even before Czechoslovakia's peaceful separation at the end of 1992, there was significant international concern about Slovak nationalism, which was widely considered the principal cause of the country's breakup and a threat to its Hungarian minority. Nationalism, viewed as the primary obstacle to democracy and stability in the region, seemed to dominate
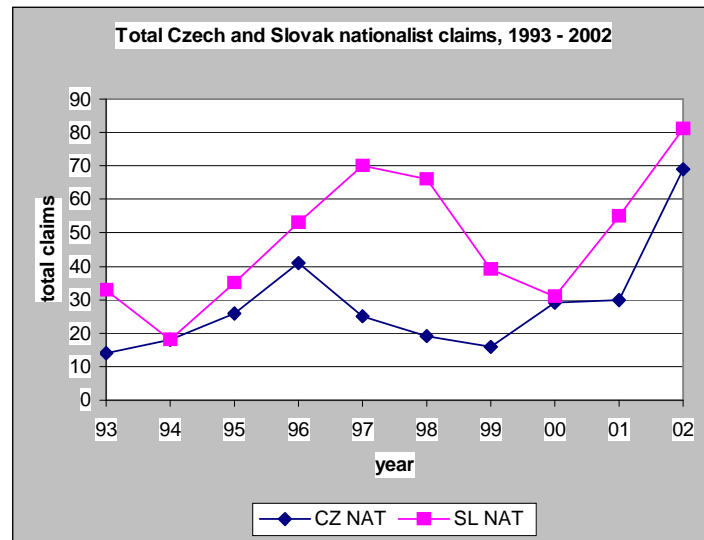
Slovak politics – thereby seriously jeopardizing the Western integration that was both states' foremost foreign policy goal.

Circa 1997, when its applications to begin entry negotiations with both NATO and the EU were rejected, the prospects for Slovakia's 'return to Europe' seemed bleak. But by 2002, Slovakia was invited to begin accession negotiations with the EU, five years after the Czechs. The invitation closely followed Slovakia's entry into NATO, three years after the Czech Republic's. The EU and NATO feature centrally in stories of Slovakia's turnaround, which is commonly viewed as a case of *delayed* normative adaptation (e.g., Schimmelfennig 2005, 855). In other words, it took longer for EU/NATO incentives and/or persuasion to be effective. Indeed, many analysts contend that the ultimate internalization of liberal norms in the CEECs may still take time (ibid. 857; Zürn and Checkel 2005).

While we wait for normative convergence, however, other significant – and more easily observable – changes go unnoticed. After alternations of ruling parties in both states in 1998, there were signs of *political* convergence between them. Both polities featured fervently 'internationalist' ruling parties confronting nationalist opposition parties, both major and minor. Both of these new programmatically 'minority-friendly' governments eventually faced pressure from outside, from 'co-ethnics' representing 'historical minorities' of their states (the Sudeten German minority of the Czech Republic and the Hungarian minority of Slovakia).[1] After a period of almost unconditional compliance with Western recommendations and cooperative relations with neighbors, ruling parties from both states responded defensively to perceived threats, affirming the priority of national interest and identity over supra-national affiliations and against 'intrusive' neighboring states and 'disloyal' minorities. After 1999, nationalist claim making escalated in both states, reaching comparable levels by the end of 2002. By the measure of nationalist claim making, it was the Czech Republic that had 'caught up' with Slovakia. Figure 1 below displays annual time series of total Czech and Slovak nationalist claims from 1993 – 2002.

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[1] Accused of collaboration with Nazi occupation of the Czech lands during the Second World War, Czechoslovakia's Sudeten German minority (some three-million large, making up almost a quarter of the country's total population) was collectively deported at the war's end, their property confiscated. Representatives of the Sudeten Germans in Germany and Austria continue to press for restitution, against fierce resistance from virtually the entire political spectrum in the Czech Republic (Leff 1998: 42).

Figure 1

Over this ten-year period of considerable negotiation over sovereignty and minority policy, political claim making in the name of the nation did not show a downward trend compatible with international socialization. Instead, we see significant flux in claim levels over the period. However, some may argue it is too early to expect norm internalization and related changes in identity. Socialization may be working at the behavioral level but not *yet* at the level of belief (Checkel 2005, 804-5). After discussing the concept of socialization in more detail in the following section, I review the process by which textual data were transformed into the line graph above.

3. Getting socialized

Ascendant theories in the study of international relations, as well as European integration, attribute liberal policy shifts to the 'socializing' effects of international institutions. While rationalist explanations of liberal policy change in the CEECs focus on cost-benefit calculations structured by EU/NATO membership conditionality (e.g., Schimmelfennig; Vachudova 2005), constructivists emphasize the power of normative persuasion.[2] Drawing on

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[2] See Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) for an excellent review of international relations approaches to norms.

Durkheimian sociological theory and symbolic interactionism, researchers conceive of socialization as a process of inducting actors into the norms and rules of a given community (Dawson and Prewitt 1969, Alderson 2001, Checkel 2005). According to Checkel,

> Its outcome is sustained compliance based on the internalization of these new norms. In adopting community rules, socialization implies that an agent switches from following a logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness; this adoption is sustained over time and is quite independent from a particular structure of material incentives or sanctions. [Checkel 2005, 804]

International relations constructivists call for a more expansive conception of rationality that moves beyond the instrumental rationality typical of neorealist approaches and the bounded rationality of neoliberal perspectives (Checkel 2005, 805). Many constructivists see international institutions, particularly the European Union, as sites for the development of Habermasian 'communicative rationality' (Joerges and Neyer 1997a, 1997b).[3]

While constructivism and rationalism are commonly seen as mutually incompatible approaches to explanation, recent attempts at 'bridge building' between the schools have emphasized their complementarities (e.g., Fearon and Wendt 2002, Zurn and Checkel 2005). For example, Checkel (2005, 808-9) suggests we consider how 'strategic calculation' (a favored rationalist mechanism) may serve as a trigger for socialization. The sine qua non of socialization, however, is norm internalization (Risse, 1997; Johnston 1998; Checkel 2005) and it is driven by non-instrumentalist mechanisms such as 'role playing' and 'normative suasion' (Checkel 2005 808-813).[4] Again, socialization outcomes are determined by the 'switch' from a logic of consequences to a logic of appropriateness, when rules and norms are followed 'unconsciously' (March and Olsen 1998). But recognizing the difference between the two in empirical data – measuring our dependent variable – presents a challenge.

To date, empirical investigation in the domestic arena has largely been limited to measuring government compliance with international standards. A recent issue of *International Organization* assessing the state of the art of socialization research critically

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[3] Since Haas (1958) advanced a neo-functionalist theory predicting European integration would effectively replace national loyalties with supra-national ones, specialists on international institutions and socialization have paid particular attention to Europe.
[4] Examples of social psychological mechanisms promoting socialization are 'cognitive dissonance' (Festinger 1957) and 'rhetorical self-entrapment' (Risse and Sikkink 1999, 16).

addressed a range of operational issues. Zurn and Checkel (2005, 1068), its editors, found that 'In all of this work, systematic attention to, let alone explicit theorization of, domestic politics is notable mainly by its absence.' The editors also called for more careful attention to the conceptualization and measurement of causal variables, namely, links between international institutions and domestic politics (Zürn and Checkel 2005, 1068).

Although many current research designs tend to leave the links between external 'socializers' and domestic 'socializees' obscure, the academic consensus seems to be that international/external pressure, in one form or another, had critical effects on policies, political identities, and democratization in the CEECs – and that those effects were 'positive' for democracy. When positive effects are not found, the conclusion is usually 'nil effect.' The values of these variables, of course, depend on how analysts define them. This apparent overdetermination may be a sign that our selection of evidence is biased. In any case, it recommends consideration of the conventions that guide the construction of evidence.

One possibly worrisome convention in the literature on international institutions and socialization is the tendency to take for granted a common definition of '*liberal* norms.' Variations on Peter Katzenstein's (1996, 5) general definition of norms (as 'standard(s) of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity') are quite standard, but how determine which standards 'count' as liberal is not always clear. In practice, policy changes compliant with European and Western demands are usually designated as the 'adoption of liberal norms.' Content aside, the temporal scope of norm adoption is often unclear. It is more expansive than an event (or claim) and seems to have an ongoing quality to it, but it does not imply a durable change of state (like a transformation of belief). Other scope conditions are often vague. In comparative studies, a change in governmental behavior tends to be considered as representative of state elites as a group or of the polity as a whole. Yet it is well known that norm-conforming behavior by governments is often countered by norm-violating behavior by government challengers. Governmental compliance with certain external recommendations, on minority policy, for example, may itself be accompanied by other governmental behavior contrary to liberal norms, including nationalist claim making (Tesser 2003; Ram 2003; Kelley 2004,). Equally problematic are conventional interpretations of noncompliance. In such cases, international pressure is typically labeled as 'ineffective.' But the record of political claim making suggests that during such periods outside pressure may be having the significant effect of *stimulating* contention along ethno-national lines, promoting ethnic and national

political identification. These observations suggest that 'external pressure' may have dynamic effects on domestic political contention and identities. They recommend a method sensitive to the dynamics of politics and identity.

4. The Relations of Nations

Political identities may be organized around gender, class, religion, race, ethnicity, nationality, or any number of other categories. As recent work on collective identities demonstrates, actors claim different identities at different points in time, foregrounding one, and leaving others in the background (e.g., Mische and White 1998, Kalb 1997, Somers 1994, Calhoun 1991).[5] Identities are increasingly understood, not in a substantialist sense as durable traits of actors,[6] but as products of interactive contexts or social relations.[7]

Relational understandings of ethnicity and nationality, though less common than substantialist approaches, are not new. Fredrik Barth (1969) has long argued that 'the contrast between "us" and "others" is what is embedded in the organization of ethnicity: an otherness of the others that is explicitly linked to the *assertion of* cultural differences' (1995, italics in original). Here, ethnicity is understood in relational terms, defined not by timeless inner substances, but by changeable outer boundaries.

Identities are answers to the questions 'Who are you?' and 'Who are they?'. Political actors take action in the name of identities, which specify relations to others. Charles Tilly, whose recent writings on identities have a distinct relational grounding (1998, 2003), proposes that identities consist of the following:

a) a boundary separating me from you or us from them
b) a set of relations within the boundary
c) a set of relations *across* the boundary
d) a set of stories about the boundary and relations

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[5] For reviews of scholarship on identities, see Cerulo (1997), on identities in social movements, see Polletta and Jaspers (1997), and on identities and boundaries, see Lamont and Molnar (2002).
[6] According to Emirbayer (1997, 281), this ontological choice constitutes a 'fundamental dilemma' for sociologists today. The question is 'whether to conceive of the social world as consisting primarily in substances or in processes, in static "things" or in dynamic, unfolding relations.'
[7] For example, Somers (1994) calls these contexts 'relational settings.'

Identities are defined through pairing, by comparing, contrasting, and relating two categories. For example, under communism, Czechoslovak leaders typically identified with the 'international socialist community,' against 'the capitalist West.' Dissidents, however, identified as 'the kidnapped West,' against 'Soviet imperialism.'[8] After Czech and Slovak entry into the EU and NATO - and with the creation of the post-9/11 Euro-American rift -- the category 'West' has lost the political salience it once had in Czech and Slovak politics.

When boundaries fall along ethno-national lines, we encounter ethnic and national identity claims. McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) classify these claims as part of an important subset of social identities that are 'categorical.' A social category consists of a set of sites that share a boundary distinguishing all of them and relating all of them to at least one set of sites visibly excluded by the boundary. Besides separating 'us' from 'them,' categorical identities imply distinct relations among us, among them, and between us and them. The sites on either side of the boundary create a 'categorical pair.' The mechanism of *category pairing* creates ethnic and national identities (McAdam et al. 2001, 142-3).

Ethnic and national identity claims do not always invoke political interests. The CSENC catalog concentrates on *contentious* claims, collective, public expressions of support for or opposition to a political program. The term *ethno-national claims* used throughout this article refers to contentious claims in the name of ethnic or national categories. It covers both nationalist claims (in the name of national identities) and ethnic claims (in the name of ethnic identities). Below, I describe both types.

4.1. Nationalist claims, majority and minority

National identity always depends on relations between the nation and others, but expressions of national identity turn into nationalism when they explicitly link national identity/difference with distinct political interest and assert the priority of national interest. Nationalism is the claim that the political and the cultural (or national) unit should be congruent, that nations

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[8]The term comes from a well-known essay by the Czech émigré intellectual and anti-Communist, Milan Kundera (1984).

have a rights to control states and states have a right to control nations, and that obligations to nations should supersede other obligations (Breuilly 1993, 3; Gellner 1983, 1; Hobsbawm 1990, 9; Conner 1999, 413; Tilly 1999).

Claims qualify as nationalism *insofar as* they call for nation-state correspondence and for national loyalty above all other kinds (Tilly 1999, 413). This definitional approach is general enough so that it includes both titular (majority) and non-titular (minority) nationalism. Titular or majority nationalism involves claims on behalf of the state-bearing nation, aiming to impose a particular definition of the nation on inhabitants of the state. Non-titular or minority nationalism features claims on behalf of ethno-national minorities, which can range from limited demands for distinct political rights and privileges based on ethnicity to calls for outright secession.[9] Nationalist claims may be made by members or by 'non-member' third parties; the former qualify as identity claims, the latter, as advocacy claims.

All nationalist claims, at least implicitly, make *attributions of threat,* drawing boundaries between the nation and some other categorical identity. Like opportunities, threats are socially constituted, not given in the objective political environment (McAdam et al. 2001, 46-7). They form through interactive claim making, as different political actors try to make sense of -- and to control -- the political environment. Threats fall into two main categories, ethno-national and international. Ethno-national threats relate to internal ethno-national minorities or other nations, usually neighboring nation-states. International threats are usually associated with international authorities, for example: international institutions such as the EU or NATO, powerful states like the US and sometimes with influential international NGOs. McAdam et al. (2001, 121) call these actors 'certifying agents.' As Sidney Tarrow (1998a, 23-24) suggests, such framing 'defines the "us" and "them" in a movement's conflict structure.' By drawing on inherited collective identities and shaping new ones, challengers delimit the boundaries of their prospective constituencies and define their enemies by real or imagined attributes or evils.'

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[9] The label nationalism tends to be restricted to the mobilization of 'titular' nations. I try to use the term in a more value-neutral way, while recognizing differences in the structural positions of collective actors. Coding claims strictly on the basis of minority status is also problematic because it neglects a crucial difference between *calls for* distinctive treatment based on ethnicity and *protests against* distinctive treatment based on ethnicity. The latter are citizenship claims, the former nationalism.

4.2. Ethnic claims

A subset of ethno-national claims is 'anti-nationalist.' Claims made in the name of ethnic or national minorities, which protest discrimination based on ethnicity or nationality are considered citizenship claims. Whereas minority nationalist claims call for special rights based on ethnicity or nationality, citizenship claims protest against distinctive treatment based on ethnicity or nationality.

4.3. Internationalist claims

Claim making around international institutions featured another set of 'anti-nationalist' claims. Internationalist claims, including European identity claims, challenge the nationalist principle that legitimate authority resides in a nation-state. Throughout this period, political actors in the Czech and Slovak states claimed an identity of interests between the nation and supra-national collectives such as the EU, the West, and the international community. Unlike ethno-national claims, these claims were not coded systematically as part of the CSENC catalog.

5. Political claims analysis

I adopt an event-centered approach to national identity and nationalism. Events are observable interactions among political actors in a specific place and time. Political event analysis is a way of tracking over time the rise and fall of particular types of events and the features associated with them (Beissinger 2002, 43). Event-based approaches to social and political analysis come in many forms, both quantitative and qualitative. They rely on various kinds of data and employ a range of methods, characterized by varying degrees of formalism. Some researchers, like the historian William Sewell (1996a, 1996b), probe the meanings of a single 'great event,' while 'event-history' analysts, such as Susan Olzak (1992), rely on statistical

techniques to describe change and variation in a whole class of events over long time periods, across multiple spatial contexts.[10]

Analysts of 'protest,' 'collective action' and 'contentious gatherings' look to identify the claims made in non-routine, collective events.[11] Rather than attempt to discern what political actors 'really' believe, what their interests 'really' are, or who they 'really' are, researchers document claims about interests and identities. The public claims of collective political actors, whether verbalized or 'acted out,' represent the strategic dimension of politics, which is often the object of research (Koopmans and Statham 1999, 4). Compared with other sources, such as attitudinal surveys or personal interviews, event data captures the interactive, performative character of political contention. Political analysts interested in macro-historical questions assemble datasets that span multi-year periods and feature numerous observations. As Mark Beissinger (2002, 43) observes, the advantage of large-n research strategies like these is 'that they can uncover in a sea of action patterns of regularity which are not easily visible through examination of a single case or event.' At the same time, such data provide a basis for more qualitative process-tracing, which may involve subsequent, more detailed investigation of specific critical events.   .

Students of protest events have traditionally limited objects of analysis to public gatherings by government challengers, as Beissinger (2002) did in his study of nationalist mobilization around the collapse of the Soviet Union. Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham (1999) advocate an extension of analytic scope to include events from entire 'multi-organizational fields.'[12] They propose 'political claims analysis' (PCA) as a way to integrate the distinctive strengths of protest event and political discourse approaches. In a PCA framework, the units of analysis are claims, in the form of both 'physical protest' and 'speech acts,' by challengers as well as polity members. In addition to protest events or contentious gatherings, less 'disruptive' forms of expression are analyzed as well. Polity members have a whole range of regular platforms from which to make claims, from governmental proceedings to public meetings to press briefings. Even political actors without regular access to political institutions issue claims in standardized forms such as public statements. PCA maintains the

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[10] For reviews of scholarship based on the analysis of events, see Tarrow (1998b) and Rucht, Koopmans, and Neidhardt (1998).

[11] Examples include Tilly on popular mobilization in Europe (1978), Franzosi on Italian strikes (1995), Beissinger (2004) and Stroschein (2000) on ethno-national mobilization in postcommunist Eastern Europe, and Ekiert and Kubik (2001) on popular protest in postcommunist Poland.

[12] The PCA approach is exemplified by the Mobilization on Ethnic Relations, Citizenship and Immigration project led by Ruud Koopmans (Koopmans and Statham 1999).

rigor of protest event analysis, observing similar conventions for collecting and coding data. It captures 'qualitative' elements of discourse while employing formalisms (Tilly 2004) to discipline evidence, facilitating comparisons and generalizations.

5.1. Cataloguing Events

Data on political events are organized into catalogs. Charles Tilly (2002, 249), a pioneer in the use of event catalogs for political analysis, describes them 'as a set of descriptions of multiple social interactions collected from a delimited set of sources according to relatively uniform procedures.' Such registers of events are used to sort and arrange data on a range of social phenomena. Their use is especially common among analysts of collective action and contention. Most researchers gather their data from public media, particularly daily newspapers.[13] Texts are reviewed for information on events of particular types, for features such as timing, location, forms, actors, actions, and objects.

Such standardization facilitates aggregation and comparison across space. The chronological nature of the data makes possible observations of variations over time, that is, of *change* in a type of political phenomenon. Catalogs can also be used to identify recurrent sequences of events and connections among events, across space and time (Tilly 2002). Relational event data, in particular, facilitate identification of these connections.

6. The Czech and Slovak Ethno-national Claims (CSENC) catalog

Tracking ethno-national claim making over a ten-year period in two states presents a challenge for the average researcher working under considerable resource constraints. The selection of sources involves a number of considerations such as access and the sources' selectivity, reliability, continuity and ease of coding (Rucht and Neidhardt 1998). Weighing these considerations, I determined that the British Broadcasting Company Monitoring service would serve as the optimal source. BBC Monitoring selects and translates information from press,

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[13] For discussions of the relative strengths and weaknesses of different types of sources, see Franzosi (1987), Olzak (1989), Rucht and Ohlemacher (1992), McCarthy et al. (1996), Koopmans and Rucht (1999).

radio, television, news agencies, and the internet from 150 countries in more than 70 languages.[14] The BBC archive was accessible via LexisNexis and offered continuous coverage of both country cases for the ten-year period of the study. The electronic format allowed for easy retention of all text, which facilitated coding, and (inevitable) re-coding.

The sample includes all BBC news reports from January 1, 1993 – December 31, 2002 generated by a search of 'headlines, lead paragraph(s) and terms' using the keywords 'Czech Republic' or 'Slovakia.' The keyword search produced a list of headlines (averaging around 7,000 annually, per country, including duplicates).   Only the reports whose headlines mentioned the following were read:

- contentious claims by organizations (domestic and external) on behalf of ethno-national categories identifying residents (past or current)
- nationality/minority policy
- contentious claims involving foreign governments
- interactions with external political authorities (e.g., the EU, NATO, the US, IGOs, and certain NGOs)

The CSENC catalog is not a re-creation of the totality of ethno-national politics in the Czech and Slovak states from 1993 to 2002. Rather, the catalog represents ethno-national politics that were 'on the media radar.' The catalog is based on a sample of media coverage of the Czech Republic and Slovakia selected by BBC monitors. BBC Monitoring routinely consults a range of public and private news sources from both countries. The majority of reports on the Czech Republic came from its national news agency (CTK); a smaller portion came from Slovak and German media. The dominant source for Slovak news was the Slovak national news agency (TASR), although reporting from private press, radio and television outlets, including Hungarian-language outlets, also appeared frequently, as did reporting from Hungary-based and Czech-based media organizations.

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[14] The agency was formed in 1939 as the BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (its name until 2000) to provide the British Government access to foreign media and propaganda. It supplied the government with valuable information during World War II, particularly in places where foreign journalists were banned. The organization played an important role in helping observers keep track of developments during the Cold War, the anticommunist revolutions and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

There is now a large literature on the use of news sources for political analysis, especially for analysis of collective contention.[15] Selection bias has been a central concern, particularly when researchers rely on a single news source whose coverage may be politically partial. This could result in the over-representation or under-representation of certain types of events.[16] Depending on the questions researchers aim to answer, the general media bias problem may be overstated. 'If our interest lies in analyzing protests that are potentially relevant for social and political change,' Dieter Rucht and Friedrich Neidhardt (1998) contend 'there is good reason to focus only on those events that are, or can be, registered by the wider public.' Rucht and Neidhardt maintain that 'In this regard, event analysis based on the mass media is not only a pragmatic choice, but a theoretically grounded imperative' (1998, 76).

7. Coding claims

Table 1 below presents the coding scheme, which is modeled on the coding scheme of the European Protest and Coercion Data assembled by Ron Francisco (2006). It has five general categories: context, actor, claim, object, and other information.

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[15] Rucht and Neidhardt (1998) provide a comprehensive discussion of methodological challenges in the use of news data. Also see .McCarthy, McPhail and Smith (1996).

[16] Researchers have also worried that event catalogs constructed from national news sources will underestimate local and regional protest. This does not present a problem for this project, since the object of explanation is national-level contention.

Table 1: Basic CSENC coding categories

Context	Actor	Claim	Object	Other information
-Date -Day -Location -Source	-Actor type -Organization -Representative -Features -Identity category -Member or advocate?	-Claim type -Categorical pair -Event type -Claim text	-Object type -Organization -Representative -Features -Identity category	-Event details -Police involvement? -Arrests? -Property damage? -Violence?

The following kinds of claims were coded:

- contentious claims by organizations (domestic and external) or public gatherings of five or more people on behalf of ethno-national categories referring to residents (past or current)

- policy recommendations and expressions of concern from international institutions that refer to political, social and economic behavior in the Czech or Slovak states

- all domestic claims addressed to international institutions

Domestic actors/objects were divided into the following types:

- government: prime minister and other cabinet officials

- ruling party: the party or coalition of the majority in parliament

- major opposition party: the largest opposition political party or coalition of opposition parties, capable of forming a government

- minor opposition party: smaller opposition party in parliament, incapable of forming a government

- extra-parliamentary actors: non-parliamentary political parties, nongovernmental organizations and contentious gatherings involving at least five people

External actor/object types were the following:

- government, political party or extra-parliamentary actor from neighboring state

- external authorities (international institutions, powerful states, and select NGOs)

- international/Western NGOs

Organization names or organizational departments/divisions were recorded, as were the names of particular representatives when provided. When data were available, other demographic characteristics were recorded (e.g., number of individuals, age cohort, etc.). The identity categories *on whose behalf* claims were made were coded, as were the identity categories *in whose name* claims were made. These are sometimes the same, but in cases of third-party advocacy, actors speak on behalf of a particular ethnic or national group, yet not in the group's name.

Claims were made in the course of the two types of events: speech acts and contentious gatherings. The speech act category includes: public pronouncements (made in press briefings, political meetings, and interviews); written statements (including reports); government/parliamentary proceedings (including resolutions); and diplomatic actions (correspondence, boycotts of meetings, recalls of ambassador). Contentious gatherings include: marches (moving demonstrations); rallies (stationary demonstrations); commemorations (memorial gatherings that feature contentious claims); occupations (illegal takeovers of space); and blockades (illegal occupations of roadways by motor vehicles). A single event may feature multiple nationalist claims.

The catalog contains both majority nationalist and minority nationalist claims. Table 2 presents a typology of majority nationalist claims, which all feature attributions of threat. Often, though not always, nationalist attributions of threat have specific objects. The table indicates the type(s) of threat attribution and the objects of threat attribution (internal or external) associated with different types of nationalist claims. A brief description of each type of claim follows.

Table 2: Majority nationalist claims

Majority nationalist claim	Threat type	Actor location	Object location
National affirmation	Ethno-national / International	Internal	None
Disloyalty	Ethno-national / International	Internal	Internal
Interference	Ethno-national / International	Internal	External
External co-ethnic support	Ethno-national	Internal	External

National affirmation claims draw a boundary between the nation and some other political category, attaching distinct sets of political interests to the two sides. Interests may be characterized as merely distinct or conflictual; the distinction in interests may be characterized as situational or fundamental (the latter are specially coded as 'fundamentalist'). National affirmation claims affirm the priority of national identity and interest over some other collective identity/interest without specifying an object. Terms such as 'integrity,' 'unity,' 'indivisibility,' 'tradition,' and 'custom' frequently figure in national affirmation claims**.**

Disloyalty claims have internal objects who are accused of placing non-national obligations ahead of national ones, with treason charges at the extreme. In charges of disloyalty, the categorical pair features the nation and the alleged 'foreign' loyalty of the accused internal party. The rival loyalty group may be inside the state or outside. For example, it could be an object's local ethnic community or it could be a supra-national community. Actors commonly accuse objects of 'servility,' subversion,' 'collaboration,' as well as 'disloyalty.'

Interference claims always have an external object and charge that an external actor has violated the nation's sovereignty in some way. More often than not the word 'interference' appears in nationalist claims of this type. Other code-words are 'meddling,' 'intruding,' 'intervening,' 'dictating,' 'patronizing,' and 'violating sovereignty.'

External co-ethnic support claims have external objects: members of the nation who reside abroad. Such claims rest on the nationalist principle that nationality overrides citizenship and that state authorities should defend and promote the identity and interest of co-ethnics abroad, towards preserving national integrity. The category paired with the nation in these claims is usually the titular nation of the state where co-ethnics reside.

Table 3 below diagrams the set of minority nationalist claims. As the table shows, minority nationalists, like majority nationalists, make ***national affirmation*** claims. The most common type of claim is a ***demand for minority/national rights***. Claimants call for distinct rights or privileges based on nationality, all the way up to control of their own state. The claims are

addressed to the government of the state where they reside. Minority nationalists may also address claims to external parties, international organizations or co-ethnics in neighboring states. The final two types of claims are made by external actors. ***External co-ethnic support*** claims are expressions of support for minority/national rights by co-ethnic actors. General ***external minority support*** claims come from outside actors that are not members of the particular ethno-national group.

Table 3: Minority nationalist claims

Minority nationalist claim	Threat type	Actor location	Object location
National affirmation	Titular nation	Internal	None
Demand minority/national rights	Titular nation	Internal	Internal
Appeal for external support	Titular nation	Internal	External
External co-ethnic support	Titular nation	External	Internal
External minority support	Titular nation	External	Internal

Table 4 below lists ethnic claims, which are made on behalf of ethnic minorities. These claims are not nationalist and, thus, do not involve the pairing of national identity with threats. ***Discrimination protest*** claims challenge unequal treatment on the basis of ethnicity. ***Appeals for external support*** call on outside actors, such as international institutions and powerful states, to use their influence to promote the citizenship rights of ethnic minorities. ***External minority support*** claims are instances when outside actors express support for equal citizenship rights for minorities.

Table 4: Ethnic claims

Ethnic claim	Actor location	Object location
Discrimination protest	Internal	Internal
Appeal for external support	Internal	External
External minority support	External	Internal

Figures 2 and 3 below display *all* ethno-national claims made by domestic actors in the Czech and Slovak states 1993-2002, divided into majority nationalist claims (MJY NAT), minority nationalist claims (MNY NAT), and ethnic claims (ETHNIC).
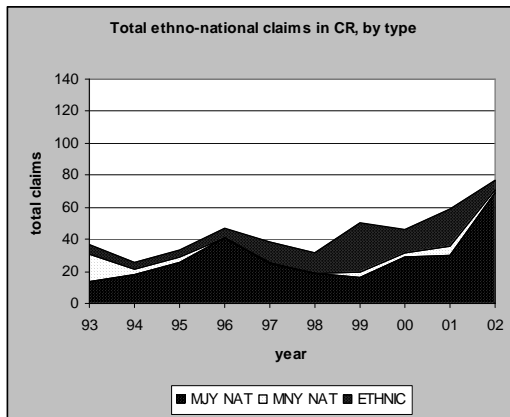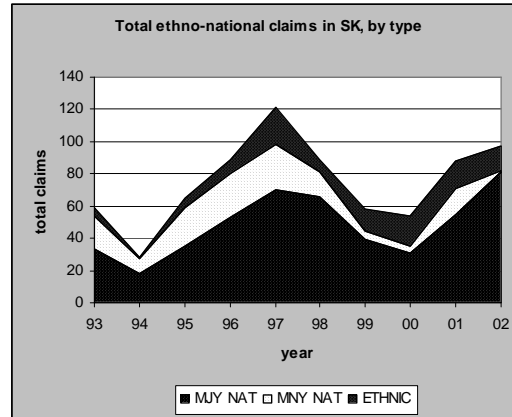
Figure 2	**Figure 3**

These very basic graphs reveal a basic, important fact of ethno-national politics in most places, its interactive nature. While popular conceptions of ethno-national politics in other states (especially non-Western/East European states) conjure an image of undifferentiated ethnic strife, the images above convey the lines of conflict. Majority or titular nationalists defend the right of the state to promote common culture, without external interference. Minority nationalists deny the territorial state unlimited jurisdiction over culture and make claims for autonomy. Ethnic minority activists protest against culture-based discrimination and demand equal protection from the state. Interaction among – and within -- these sets of actors shapes political identities. Figures 4 and 5 add another crucial set of actors to the picture of ethno-national claim making, external actors. Outside actors make political claims on behalf of internal ethno-national minorities. Again, they divide mainly into political actors from neighboring states, international authorities, and (challenging/non-certifying) international NGOs.
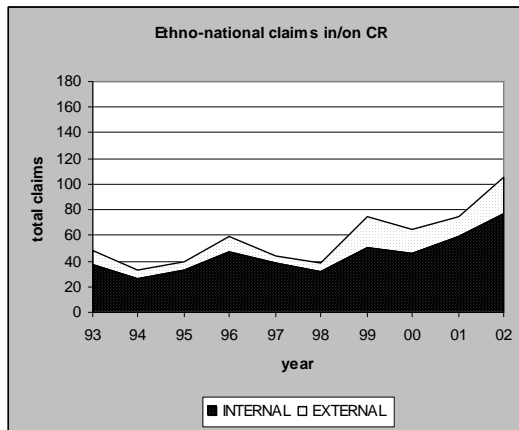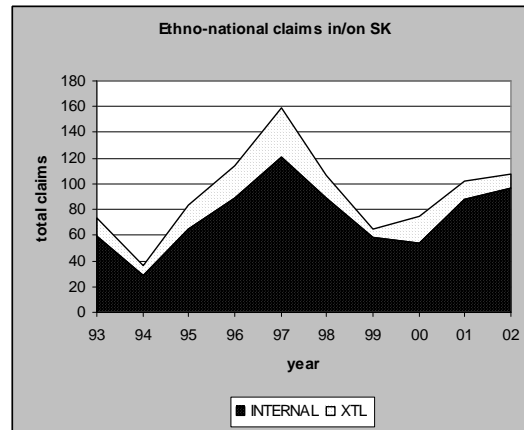
Figure 4   **Figure 5**

Ethno-national claims in/on CR

Ethno-national claims in/on SK

8. Representing relations, categorical and organizational

Political claims analysis can reveal the unanticipated, '*anti*-social' effects of engagement with international institutions. Similarly, the method can uncover evidence of unintended consequences of political conditionality on domestic political identities. The records of ethno-national claim making show that international institutional integration was *politicized* in both the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

EU/NATO membership was not universally valued or uniformly welcomed as an opportunity for rewards. Frequently, domestic actors attributed *threat* to political conditionality and its international agents, whose recommendations and criticisms were seen as encroachments on national sovereignty. At times, external demands for improved treatment of ethnic minorities were met with escalations of anti-minority claim making, which linked *international* threats to these *ethno-national* threats. In other words, domestic actors responded to international pressure with nationalist claims. Speaking in the name of the nation, actors drew boundaries between the nation and others. By specifying changes in these relations – categorical and organizational -- over time, we can represent identity change. The Czech and Slovak Ethno-national claims catalog provides a chronological map of these social relations.

National identity and nationalism are commonly conceptualized in substantialist terms, as properties of groups. Even the typical constructivist understanding of identity construction is substantialist: identity formation is understood as a change in individual or group properties, namely their beliefs. A relational perspective, by contrast, focuses on boundary drawing or category pairing in political claims. Again, ethno-national threat refers to relations with ethnic and national groups, usually ethno-national minorities and neighboring nation-states. International threats concern international authorities. Figures 6 and 7 below break down total Czech and Slovak nationalist claims by these two kinds of threat attribution.

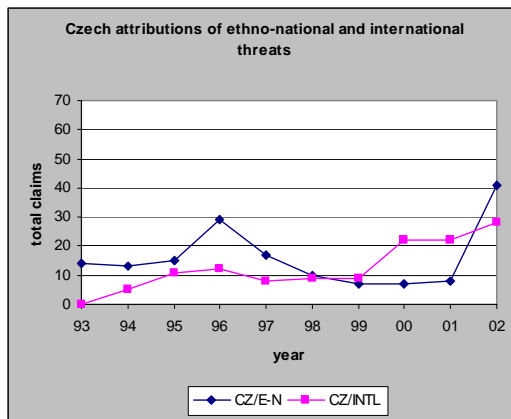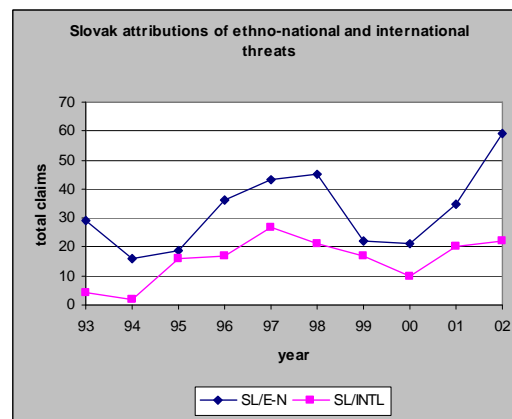**Figure 6**   **Figure 7**

We see how Slovak attributions of ethno-national threat and Slovak attributions of international threat trended similarly over the entire decade, whereas in the Czech case there is no consistent relation between the two kinds of threats. We also notice that Czech and Slovak claims of ethno-national threat conformed to a similar wave-like pattern over the decade, dropping a year after independence, rising in a wave, dropping again, and ending at peak levels, on an upward trend. While Slovak attributions of international threat reached their height in 1997 (nearly matching it in 2002), Czech attributions of international threat were highest at the end the decade, beginning their climb to unprecedented levels.

The CSENC coding scheme captured further distinctions in threat attribution, specifying the threats named in claims. Figures 8 and 9 disaggregate claims of international threat into the following categories: the EU, NATO, the US, and a fourth category for all other attributions of threat with international scope (*INTL). Threats attributed to other international

institutions and international NGOs are included here, as are all general claims of 'Western,' 'international,' and 'foreign' threat.
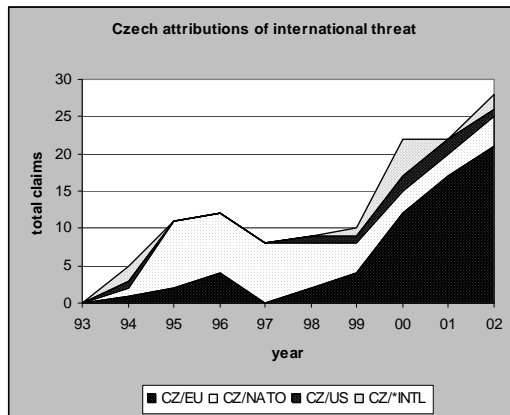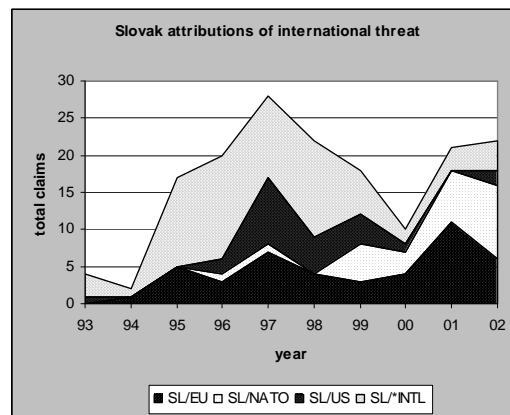
Figure 8   **Figure 9**

When nationalist claims of international threat are presented in the form of area graphs, the same wave-like patterns we noticed in both Czech and Slovak attributions of ethno-national threat and in Slovak attributions of international threat becomes visible in the Czech case in Figure 8: there is a modest wave, peaking in 1996, a drop in claim-making in 1997, then an upward trend until the end of the period. By contrast, Slovakia's first wave of nationalist claim making was more intense than the second.

The main purpose of the area graphs above is to represent the distribution of international threat attribution, by particular categories of threat. Figure 8 shows that until 1999 Czech attributions of international threat most frequently focused on NATO; then they shifted to the EU.   Figure 9 indicates that through 1999, Slovak claims of international threat most frequently concerned international collectives in general, not the EU, NATO or US specifically. Such generic attributions of international threat were uncommon in the Czech case. The Slovak graph also indicates that claims of US threat rose dramatically in 1997 and were frequent until 1999. In 1999, claims of NATO threat suddenly rise and seem to displace anti-US claims thereafter. Claims of EU threat increase sharply in 1997 as well, before bottoming out in 1999 and rising to their peak in 2001.

Global measurements of variations in threat attribution over time reveal the changing salience of different national boundaries and relations. Threats to the nation, as represented by nationalists, change over time. But nationalist claimants – how they are organized in the

political field -- also change over time. Sometimes they are concentrated in the government, sometimes on the political fringe, within NGOs or loosely organized public assemblies; or they may be spread across the political field. Figures 10 and 11 display the distribution of nationalist claims among actor types in the Czech and Slovak states. Actors divide into the following: ruling parties (RP), opposition parties (OPP), and extra-parliamentary actors (XP).
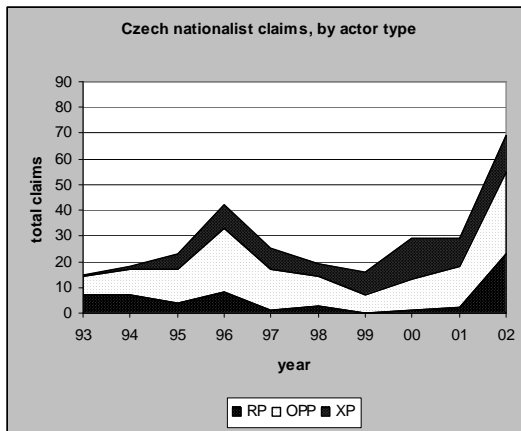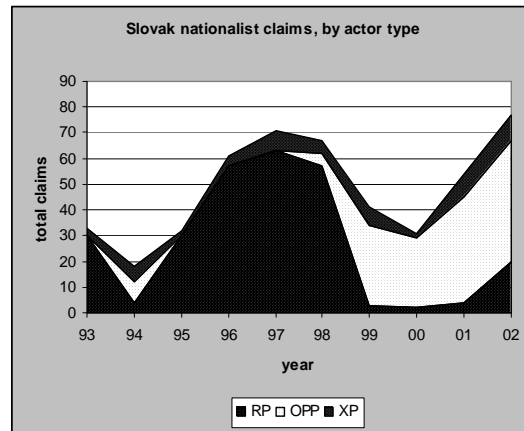
Figure 10	**Figure 11**

The graphs reveal a key difference between the states. The relative distribution of claims among actor types changes radically in Slovakia but is relatively stable in the Czech case. In interpreting the graphs, it is important to consider how changes in government potentially change actor type assignments and the organization of the political field. The replacement of the Mečiar government with a pro-integration coalition in Slovakia in 1998 explains the subsequent shift in nationalist claim making away from the ruling parties to the opposition. The slight reversal in claim distribution in 1994 similarly corresponded to a period during which Mečiar's party was briefly thrust into the opposition (replaced by a 'Western-oriented' caretaker before winning early elections six months later). During Mečiar-led governments no nationalist claims came from the opposition. By contrast, nationalist claim making from the opposition was a consistent feature of the Czech political field, with opposition nationalism always more vigorous than ruling party nationalism. Figure 10 also indicates that for most of the period, extra-parliamentary actors accounted for a substantial proportion of nationalist claimants. Starting in 1999, similarities between the states become apparent. Nationalist claims from ruling parties virtually disappear. After 2000, nationalist claim making from

opposition parties and extra-parliamentary actors begins to escalate (In the Czech Republic, the formerly-ruling Civic Democratic Party accounts for most of the increase in opposition claim making after 1999; notably, when it was positioned as part of the government, the same party seldom made nationalist claims). And in 2002 ruling parties from both states got involved in nationalist claim making.

As already noted, fervently pro-Europe, internationalist governments gained control in both states after elections in 1998. The new governments acted quickly to adopt liberal policy recommendations from international institutions, focusing especially on minority rights and protection policy. Nationalist claim making declines significantly over the next two years in Slovakia, suggesting that policy changes may have affected political identities. But Czech nationalism intensifies after 1999. And a year later, Slovak nationalist claims rise as well. In 2002, we find ruling parties involved in increasingly vigorous nationalist claim making interaction in both states.

9. Conclusion

By the measure of public political claim making, the Czech and Slovak polities converged – not in *internalizing* liberal and Western norms, but in *contesting* them. In this contest, it was the Czech Republic that had 'caught up' with Slovakia, not the other way around. The track-meet metaphor, however, is most inappropriate to describe identity change in the independent Czech and Slovak states**.** Political identities did not move along a single track from illiberalism to liberalism, or in the opposite direction. A relational perspective sees multiple identities in Western-integrating CEECs and it sees multiple actors making claims in the name of the same identities – all at the same time.

This observation does not mean that generalizations about political identities are impossible or inappropriate, only that they should be applied to the right 'bits' of reality. If we assume that social interactions have an efficacious reality of their own, then it makes sense to look for evidence of interaction. But whether we choose a relational or substantialist ontology of political identities, the application of formalisms help guide our search for evidence, making our usually implicit theories about evidence explicit.

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