Elections, Ethnic Parties and Ethnic Identification in New Democracies: Evidence from the Baltic States

Masaaki Higashijima
Michigan State University
Department of Political Science
231 South Kedzie Hall, East Lansing
MI 48824, the U.S.
Email: higashij@msu.edu
Phone: 517-802-7340

Ryo Nakai
Waseda University
Faculty of Political Science and Economics
1-6-1 Nishi-Waseda, Shinjuku
Tokyo, Japan
Email: stebuklas@toki.waseda.jp

Keywords: Elections, Ethnic Identity, Ethnic Parties, The Baltic States, Electoral Campaigns

(Word Count: 9,797)

Introduction

Understanding the factors that make people identify with their ethnicity has been one of the most important research agendas in comparative politics. Criticizing the "primordial" explanations that ethnic identities are fixed and hard to change, recent literature has documented that ethnic identities are susceptible to change according to various political and socio-economic factors. This study, which develops this recent and existing constructivist approach to ethnic politics, aims to contribute to the further development of theories explaining when and how democratic competition leads to strengthening ethnic identities. Building upon previous studies emphasizing possible links between competitive elections and ethnic identification (Posner 2005; Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010), we investigate how the impact of electoral campaigns on ethnic identities will change according to an important political institution in democracies – party systems.

Competitive elections in democracies encourage political parties to spend their resources on presenting their policy packages to the public and cultivating supporters. Ethnic parties, or parties that mainly appeal to voters who belong to certain ethnic groups, propose ethnically exclusive policy platforms aimed at garnering political support from co-ethnics. Exposed to such ethnic mobilization, voters will be more likely to identify themselves as members of their ethnic groups. In democracies, where winning elections is the only way to take office, parties can maximize the marginal effect of political campaigns on boosting popular support at election time. Thus, ethnic parties should escalate political mobilization as an election approaches. In other words, we hypothesize that people will be more likely to strengthen their ethnic identities as competitive elections get closer, only in party systems in which political parties are able and willing to organize large-scale ethnic mobilization during election campaigns.

In this paper, we test our theoretical expectations through a mixed-method approach. First, using the *New Baltic Barometer*, which contains approximately 18,000 respondents from 15 public opinion surveys taken from 1993 to 2004, we estimate how the impact of electoral campaigns on the salience of ethnic identities changes according to the strength of ethnic parties, after carefully controlling for country-level

heterogeneity as well as other individual-level covariates influencing citizens' ethnic identities. The Baltic Republics provide an excellent laboratory to test our hypotheses due to large variation in the strength of ethnic parties, the timing of elections, and the degree of ethnic identification among citizens across countries and over time. Our case selection also allows us to control for other confounding factors, such as electoral systems and historical experience. Second, we conduct a case study of Latvia, which allows us to explore the causal mechanisms through which party mobilization for electoral purposes dynamically encourages citizens' ethnic identification.

Our empirical analyses uncover two main findings. First, the quantitative survey analysis robustly shows the importance of the timing of elections and party system: the closer the timing of a survey to a parliamentary election, the more likely citizens are to identify with their ethnicity, as long as ethnic parties occupy a majority of seats in parliament. Even though we found that this *mobilization effect* is consistently observed regardless of whether ethnic parties are based on majority or minority groups, the effect of ethnic majority (nationalist) parties is three times stronger than that of ethnic minority parties. Second, we also found that ethnic party mobilization induced by electoral calendars has a strong ethnic *polarization effect* as well: electoral mobilization by ethnic majority parties also tends to strengthen ethnic identities among members of ethnic minorities, and vice versa. Our case study of Latvia, employing both micro-level content analysis on protests and qualitative process tracing, empirically confirms the causal mechanisms underlying these statistical correlations. The Latvia case study suggests that strong ethnic parties emphasize ethnic issues immediately prior to elections in their political campaigns, resulting in an increasing number of ethnic riots and demonstrations and a deepening ethnic cleavage.

Our research makes an important contribution to the burgeoning literature on constructivist theories of ethnic politics (see, e.g. Laitin 1998; Posner 2005; Chandra 2012). Putting an emphasis on electoral campaigns carried out by political parties, this paper argues that competitive elections produce dynamic changes in the ethnic identities of citizens, as long as party systems include strong ethnic parties. In so doing, we aim at providing an electoral theory of ethnic identification in democratic states.

This paper is organized as follows. In the next section, we review previous literature on ethnicity and identity politics, pointing out that existing studies have not yet fully considered how ethnic identity is activated via democratic institutions, namely through the interaction between party systems and competitive elections. The third section theorizes linkages between party mobilization and ethnic identification among the citizenry, focusing on the dynamics of electoral campaigns in democracies. In the fourth section, we conduct quantitative analysis to test our hypotheses, using survey data from the Baltic states. The fifth section explores Latvia in a case study to process-trace the causal mechanisms expected in our theory of ethnic party mobilization. Sixth and finally, we conclude with implications for policymakers.

Literature Review

Scholars of ethnic politics and nationalism have long explored a fascinating and important question: where do our identities come from? While the earliest literature on ethnic politics assumed that ethnic identities were hardwired, and thus their salience intrinsic (Rabushka and Shepsle 1972), current scholarship has mostly arrived at the consensus that the sources of their salience are activated within specific political and socio-economic contexts. Focus in the literature has been mainly directed toward modernization (Deutsch 1953; Gelner 1983), the diffusion of "print capitalism" (Anderson 1982), economic disparity among ethnic groups (Hecter 1975), state policies adopted by nation states (Laitin 1986), economic benefits and social pressures (Laitin 1998), and information shortage in young democracies (Chandra 2004; Birnir 2007).[1]

In the attempt to untangle micro-foundations of identity formation, constructivist research on identity politics has found political manipulation by leaders in particular to be one of the most powerful driving forces (see, e.g. Bates 1974; Horowitz 1985; Brass 1997; Fearon and Laitin 2000).

[1] For more extensive literature reviews on ethnic identities and nationalism, see, for example, Olzak (1983), Fearon and Laitin (2000) and Chandra (2012: Chapter 1).

Politicians strategically determine the targets of their political mobilization to maximize public support. Citizens, activated by politicians' mobilization efforts, strongly attach themselves to certain social categories. Recent studies of ethnic politics provide compelling evidence that this mobilization mechanism impacts the salience of ethnic identities. Using systematic data on Hindu-Muslim riots in India, Wilkinson (2004) shows that the government tended to incite ethnic violence and thus deepen ethnic cleavages in situations in which they did not need minority votes to win elections. Ferree (2011), investigating the case of South Africa after Apartheid, argues that racial census elections in the country resulted from the ruling African National Congress successfully framing themselves the party for the "black" majority and the opposition parties as for the "white" minority through political campaigns. From the case of Zambia, Posner (2005) concludes that national democratic competition encouraged politicians to shift the targets of political mobilization from small, tribal-based communities to larger ethnic groups, which resulted in intensifying citizens' ethnic identification. Using 22 public opinion surveys of 10 African countries, Eifert, Miguel and Posner (2010) quantitatively demonstrate that voters in Africa tend to more strongly identify themselves as members of their ethnic groups as competitive presidential elections draw closer.

Although the role of political leaders in activating people's ethnic identities is obviously important to theorize about the logic of ethnic identification, previous studies, we argue, suffer at least three problems that need to be investigated by further research. First, other than an exceptional study by Eifert, Miguel and Posner (2010), most past studies fail to explore *when* political entrepreneurs resort to ethnic mobilization. While political elites might be able to garner greater political support through mobilization efforts, such political mobilization always entails some costs, because it needs a large amount of human and economic resources. Considering this cost, political elites should always take seriously the timing of when they will be able to maximize the effect of political mobilization on the number of votes, but the studies heretofore have hardly taken into account the fact that mobilization is costly. To consider politicians' calculations between costs and benefits of political mobilization, this paper introduces a temporal dimension of political

mobilization by treating electoral periods as a political opportunity during which parties can maximize the marginal effect of mobilization on collecting political support.

Second, there are few, if any, studies on *whose* political mobilization is most effective in encouraging voters to strengthen their ethnic identities. In this respect, even Eifert, Miguel and Posner (2010), one of a few, rigorous cross-national studies on ethnic identification, seem to make an implicit assumption that all politicians intensify political mobilization along the lines of ethnicity as a competitive election approaches. Though this is a fair assumption in the contexts of African countries where party systems as a whole are heavily constrained by ethnic demographics (see, e.g. Ferree, 2010), the assumption leads to excluding a theoretical possibility that a party system may encompass various political parties representing non-ethnic as well as ethnic stakeholders, which is the case in many new democracies outside Africa. Furthermore, it is highly likely that the mobilization effect of ethnic parties at elections may depend on the type of ethnic parties, yet Eifert, Miguel and Posner (2010) do not consider such a possibility. To fill in these gaps in the literature, we provide a theory as well as empirical evidence taking into account how much party systems are driven by ethnic parties in democracies. Moreover, to consider possible differences in the mobilization effect between different types of ethnic parties, we classify ethnic parties into the following two types: ethnic majority (nationalist) parties and ethnic minority parties.

Lastly, theories of ethnic manipulation have not yet fully clarified *how* political mobilization leads to ethnic identification. More specifically, most of the existing theories assume that voters intensify their political identities as a result of *supporting* the parties that invested mobilization efforts in them (see, e.g. Posner 2005). We can also expect, however, that electoral mobilization by ethnic parties may also activate ethnic identities among *members of out-groups* as a result in out-group members *fearing* the growing political influence of their counterparts. This study begins by systematically exploring the polarization dynamics of electoral mobilization.

Theory and Hypotheses

Before discussing how competitive elections and party systems lead to strengthening ethnic identification, we clarify several core concepts in the paper. First, following previous studies on ethnic politics (see, e.g. Horowitz 1985: 53; Chandra 2004; Chandra 2012: Chapter 3), we define the terms "ethnic group" or "ethnicity" as "the nominal members [membership] of an ascriptive category such as race, language, caste, tribe, or religion"(Chandra 2004:2). According to their political status, we can further classify ethnic groups into the following two types: *politically dominant groups*, whose members occupy most senior political posts such as legislators and cabinet ministers, and *politically dominated groups*, whose members have little access to these posts and are often excluded from political decision-making in the country (Wimmer, Min and Cederman 2009).

Importantly, being a nominal member of an ethnic group does not always lead someone to have a strong attachment to ethnicity, as much research has already demonstrated (e.g. Laitin 1998; Chandra 2012). Nominal ethnic categories are a necessary but not sufficient condition to "activate" ethnic identities. We can say that someone has a strong, activated "ethnic identity" if she actually professes membership in her nominal ethnic category (Chandra 2012: 9). Based on this understanding of ethnic identity and the different types of ethnic groups, we can further disaggregate ethnic identities into the following types: *ethnic majority (national) identity* and *ethnic minority identity*. Ethnic majority (national) identity is a belief or sentiment that drives people to feel strongly attached to a nation administered by the dominant ethnic group(s). On the other hand, ethnic minority identity is a belief or sentiment involving strong feelings of belonging in the dominated ethnic group(s).

Finally, following Chandra (2011), we define an ethnic party as "a party that is the champion of the particular interests of one ethnic category or set of categories," excluding any other ethnic groups (Chandra, 2011 155). Similar to the definition of ethnic group, we can develop the following two ideal types of ethnic party, depending on whether the subjects of their appeal are politically dominant or not: *ethnic majority (nationalist) parties*, whose support bases are found in dominant ethnic groups, and *ethnic minority parties*, which are supported by the members of politically dominated groups.

Party Mobilization and Ethnic Identification

In democracies, political parties seek support from voters to win elections. In order to achieve this objective, ethnic parties adopt two strategies to cultivate votes. First, ethnic parties try to attract co-ethnic voters through a series of expressive appeals. They develop policy platforms that promise ethnic privileges and stir ethnic antagonism. They energetically advertise their candidates as well as party leaders, both of whom share the same ethnicity with potential supporters. In political advertisements, they resort to emotional and extremist campaigns, rallying around symbols that allegedly express the history and memories of the targeted ethnic group. In order to conduct such expressive campaigns, they utilize the media, hold frequent party gatherings at the community level, and distribute policy leaflets and posters extensively to their co-ethnics. Second, ethnic parties engage in public goods provision to collect political support from in-group members. Construction of infrastructure, distribution of public jobs, and an increase in various social security payments are all available means for ethnic parties to attract swing voters or to increase turnout among loyal party supporters in their ethnic groups. In fact, research has documented that in ethnically divided societies, public goods provision and pork tend to go hand-in-hand with ethnic boundaries (See, e.g. Chandra 2004; Habyarimana et al. 2009).

Naturally, party mobilization becomes far more intense as elections draw closer (Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010). However large and powerful ethnic parties may be, they always face budget constraints. In order to maximize the effect of party mobilization on political support, they will deliberately decide the timing of when to begin their mobilization efforts. In democracies, the marginal effect of mobilization will reach a peak during campaigns before elections: representatives and candidates from ethnic parties make frequent media appearances to discuss their policies and appeal to members of their ethnic groups, hold more frequent campaign gatherings in preparation for the upcoming elections, and intensify the distribution of public goods.

The more powerful ethnic parties are, the more able they are to extensively mobilize co-ethnics. If a party system consists of strong ethnic parties, electoral campaigns will more likely revolve around

ethnic issues including language, education, and cultural policies. Exposed to such powerful ethnic mobilization and thus "biased" political information from ethnic parties, citizens will have more opportunities to think of their ethnicity, connect their interests with those of their ethnic group, and be more inclined to vote for these parties. Consequently, voters will feel a stronger sense of belonging to their ethnic groups. Therefore, we can express Hypothesis 1 as follows:

Hypothesis 1 (Mobilization Effect): The more powerful ethnic parties are in a party system, the stronger people's ethnic identities become as elections draw closer.

Party Mobilization as Political Threats

We have so far discussed the effect of party mobilization while assuming that people strengthen their ethnic identities as a result of being exposed to party mobilization from their own ethnic parties. In other words, we have considered electoral dynamics of ethnic identification from an in-group perspective. Now, we relax this assumption to consider how party mobilization will affect *out-group* members – those who do not share the same ethnicity with ethnic parties.

To theorize the polarization effect of ethnic party mobilization, we introduce a socio-psychological perspective to our electoral theory of ethnic identification. Social Identity Theory argues that the salience of group identities depends on how distinctive one's own groups are when compared to other relevant out-groups (Tajfel 1978). According to the theory, people subjectively evaluate their own membership in their groups via "social comparison – the process through which individuals arrive at an assessment of their groups' relative social position and the value and status they acquire through their membership in the specific group" (Gibson and Gouws 2000: 279). When they find there are significant differences between the groups, in particular, in the form of intergroup discrimination, people elevate self-esteem rooted in the groups and subsequently identify with them.

Indeed, numerous laboratory experiments support this theoretical insight by finding positive correlations between intergroup discrimination and in-group identity.[2]

When an election approaches, ethnic parties strengthen expressive appeals and material distribution toward their co-ethnics, as discussed above. Since ethnic parties escalate exclusive ethnic mobilization by discriminating against members of other ethnic groups, out-group members are more likely to recognize this mobilization as a political threat that will undermine the interest of themselves and their own ethnic groups. The greater ethnic party mobilization is, the more serious are the political threats posed against out-group individuals. As previous studies suggest, facing strong political threats, they become more conscious of their own groups' interests, appeal for stronger solidarity within their group, and are more likely to identify themselves with the membership of their own group (see, e.g. Gibson and Gouws 2000). Our empirical analysis explores this linkage between in-group mobilization and out-group ethnic identification: observing massive electoral mobilization by ethnic parties, out-group members should also intensify ethnic identification toward their own ethnic groups. Thus, Hypothesis 2 can be expressed as follows:

Hypothesis 2 (Polarization Effect): As ethnic parties become more powerful, members of out-groups are more likely to strengthen their ethnic identity as elections draw closer.

Survey Data Analysis

Data and Methodology

For statistical analysis, this study uses the *New Baltic Barometer*, which covers Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania between 1993 and 2004.[3] There are four reasons why we have chosen the Baltic states for our empirical analysis. First, these countries have held competitive elections under similar electoral systems. The existence of competitive elections is an important prerequisite for testing our

[2] For instance, Rubin and Hewstone (1998: 45-47) extensively review the literature on empirical studies of Social Identity Theory.

[3] The dataset will be available upon request to the authors.

theory, since we assume that policy packages proposed by competing parties encourage citizens to have specific identities. Moreover, all three countries use proportional representation based systems, and therefore we can focus on the impact of competitive elections while controlling for electoral system differences. Second, the Baltic states are so-called plural societies populated by ethnic groups with similar historical backgrounds from the Soviet era. Because ethnic parties emerge only in plural societies (though plural societies do not necessarily have ethnic parties), limiting our sample to multi-ethnic Baltic states is indispensable for investigating the effects of ethnic party mobilization on ethnic identification. Third, in contrast with many African countries where ethnic parties are banned (Ishiyama 2009), the three countries included in our study allow the formation of ethnic parties, which makes it possible for us to more accurately measure political mobilization by ethnic parties. As discussed above, identifying ethnic parties in countries in which they are formally banned is difficult in extant cross-national studies of ethnic identification in Africa (Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi 2005: Chapter 7; Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010). Finally, these countries provide us with ideal survey data. The *New Baltic Barometer* contains a question that provides options for both nationalist and ethnic minority identities, which are needed to test the mobilization as well as polarization hypotheses. These questions are unavailable in most other surveys.[4] In addition, as we discuss later in more detail, this dataset provides a rare opportunity to test our hypotheses controlling for country-level heterogeneity through country fixed effects. This is possible because multiple

[4] *Afrobarometer* contains similar options in the question on primary group identity. For example, Bratton et al. (2005) and Eifert, Miguel and Posner (2010) use such a question to test causes and consequences of subjective cultural values. We follow their operationalization of ethnic identities using the same question asking the "first and foremost" source of identity in *the New Baltic Barometer*.

rounds of surveys (5 waves in total) are available for each country.[5]

The dependent variables come from a question that asks respondents about self-defined group identity.[6] The question wordings and options in each survey are as follows:

[5] Also in this respect, we follow statistical methodology adopted by Eifert, Miguel and Posner (2010), who rigorously tested the effect of electoral proximity on ethnic identification in competitive democracies controlling for other country specific heterogeneity with country-level fixed effects model.

[6] We will not use questions asking voting behavior from the following two reasons. First, our primary interest in the paper is to explore political determinants of ethnic identification, rather than voting behavior itself. As the extant literature of ethnic identification uses questions asking self-defined, subjective identities (see, e.g., Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi 2005; Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010), we also follow this tradition to accurately measure ethnic identity. Second, we think that using questions on voting behavior like "if an election was held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?" may induce serious measurement errors and even bias on statistical estimations depending on electoral proximity in each survey. In a survey, which was very distant from the closest election (for instance, the November 2004 election in Latvia), respondents may answer such a question with taking it less seriously, whereas in a survey that was taken soon after an election (for example, the November 1996 election in Lithuania) they may take the question more seriously. Such possible differences in seriousness among respondents make it difficult to accurately measure ethnic identity. Yet, we do recognize citizens' voting behavior is deeply related to their identities. Our case study in Section 5.3 will illustrate that citizens' voting for ethnic parties is at least partly driven by ethnic mobilization and subsequently activated ethnic identities among citizens.

● *"Which of these terms best describes how you usually think of yourself?"*[7] (1993, 1995, and 1996 waves of survey)

● *"With which of the following do you most closely identify yourself?"*[8] (2001 and 2004 waves of survey)

Although the wordings and response options are slightly different across survey years, all surveys ask the respondents to identify a group that they belong to "first and foremost," which is a necessary component to capture self-defined, subjective identities (Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi 2005: 186-187). For simplicity and to keep consistency across surveys, we then grouped respondents' answers into five categories: 1. region, 2. nationalist (ethnic majority), 3. ethnic minorities, 4. international and 5. others.[9] To capture national (ethnic majority) identity, we created a dummy variable in which 1 is coded if the respondent chooses the national category ("Baltic nationality" before 2001 and "Country" after 2001) and 0 otherwise.[10] In a similar way, another dummy variable

[7] The following are options in the question that were available for respondents: 1. City/Locality, 2. Region, 3. Baltic Nationality, 4. Polish, 5. Russian, 6. Belorussian, 7. Ukrainian 8. European, 9. Soviet, 10. Other.

[8] The following options were available for respondents in the question: 1. City/Locality, 2. Region, 3. Country, 4. Europe, 5. Other, 6. Polish, 7. Russian, 8. Belorussian, 9. Ukrainian 10. Soviet.

[9] The responses are coded as follows: Region category = "City/Locality" and "Region"; Nationalist category = "Baltic Nationality" or "Country"; Minority category = "Polish," "Russian," "Belarusian," "Ukrainian," ; International category = "Europe" and "Soviet"; Other category = others.

[10] For descriptive statistics of the dependent variables, see Appendix A. Appendix B also shows national-level aggregate average of national and ethnic minority identities by country over time. Although one may think that ethnic majority identity is different from attachment to a nation state, both overlap considerably in the contexts of the Baltic states, where titular ethnic groups basically

for ethnic minorities (including Russian, Polish, Belarusian and Ukrainian) is created where 1 is assigned if the respondent chooses the "minority" category.

Our main variable of interest is the interaction effect between the strength of ethnic parties and temporal closeness to the nearest election. To operationalize strength of ethnic parties, we calculate the proportion of parliamentary seats obtained by ethnic parties in the Baltic states (see Appendix B). Based on the definition of ethnic party provided in Section 3, we coded all parties in the Baltic states (1990-2011) using multiple cross-national quantitative sources and various qualitative analyses in the literature of area studies on the Baltic countries to identify the ethnic parties.[11] Because it is reasonable to think that state resources for electoral campaigns are proportionally allocated to parties that control more seats in parliament, this operationalization is appropriate to measure the power resources of ethnic parties. Based on the above-mentioned sources and definitions, we further identify two types of ethnic parties: nationalist (ethnic majority) parties and ethnic minority parties.

To capture the mobilization and polarization effects of ethnic parties on ethnic identification, we coded variables of ethnic parties and electoral proximity in the following ways.[12] First, taking absolute values of months before/after the nearest election, we made an electoral proximity variable indifferent to the distinction between pre- and post-periods of elections. This treatment permits us to more accurately reflect our theoretical expectations in which we assumed party mobilization efforts

---

dominate major political posts in the government and ethnic majority parties pursue ethnically exclusive, nationalistic policies.

[11] More specifically, we relied on Bugajski (2002), *Comparative Manifesto Project* (see, https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu), and *the Chapel Hill Expert Survey* (see, http://www.unc.edu/~hooghe/data_pp.php). As there are some parties that are ambiguous as to whether they are ethnic parties in light of our definition, we recoded for those parties and reran statistical analysis in robustness checks (Section 4.3). The list of ethnic parties and their proportion relative to total parliamentary seats are available in Appendix C.

[12] For electoral proximity in each survey, see Appendix B.

will reach to a peak in the month in which the election takes place, then start to decrease.

Second, in this study, the simultaneity bias may crucially affect estimation results. It is not difficult to imagine that the level of people's current ethnic identity may determine ethnic parties' strengths in the parliament. In order to avoid this endogeneity problem, the proportion of seats obtained by ethnic parties at the (t-1) election is used to measure the strength of ethnic parties at the election (t). By doing so, we can treat the variable of ethnic party strength as an exogenous variable from the strength of voters' ethnic identification at the election (t).

We also address the country-level omitted variable bias that influences the level of ethnic identities. To minimize such omitted variable bias, following Eifert, Miguel and Posner (2010), we adopt a country fixed effects model in the survey data analysis to control for country-level factors other than our variables of interest. The Baltic countries share many commonalities in history, political institutions and socio-economic contexts, so that using the *New Baltic Barometer* already allows us to match effects of those factors better than other survey research projects. Use of repeated country-level observations with micro-individual survey data can far more rigorously control for possible national-level factors than conventional one-shot survey data analysis (Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010: 496). Using this modeling approach, we can control for country-level unobservable characteristics that we cannot measure directly, such as quality of leadership, contingent historical events, international relations with other countries (e.g. EU membership) and so on (Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010: 496). Furthermore, as we reviewed already, existing studies on ethnic politics have argued that there are many country-level factors that encourage people's ethnic identities such as ethnic diversity, level of socio-economic development, electoral systems and so on; a country-level fixed effect model allows us to control for those possibilities.

In examining how electoral proximity intensifies ethnic identification conditional upon the strength of ethnic parties, we model each individual respondent i living in country c participating in survey year t as attaching a salience S_{ict} to her ethnic identities (national identity or ethnic minority identity). This framework enables us to see the extent to which a respondent's identity function S_{ict} is

systematically related to her individual characteristics as well as her country's environment. Combining observable and unobservable heterogeneity, we express the salience of ethnic identities for individual *i* in country c during survey year *t* as

$$S_{ict} = W_{ct}\alpha + X_{ict} + \mu_{ict}$$

where the vector X_{ict} contains individual-level variables including age, gender, socioeconomic status (employment, unemployment and student status[13]), and education;[14] the vector W_{ct} contains country-level factors such as electoral proximity, proportion of ethnic parties in parliament, interaction terms of the former two variables, the 1990s decade dummy and country fixed effects. The 1990s dummy and country dummies are both included to control for country- and time-specific effects, which is necessary, as discussed above. And, μ_{ict} is individual *i*'s idiosyncratic level of attachment to ethnic identities, namely, the part of S_{ict} that is unrelated to observable factors.[15] Since the dependent variables are binary, we employ logistic regression. To account for heteroscedasticity, robust standard errors clustered at the country-level are employed. Introducing the interaction term between electoral proximity and ethnic party strength, we investigate how the effect of electoral proximity on ethnic identification changes as a function of the proportion of seats occupied by ethnic parties.

Results

[Table 1 and Figure 1 about here]

Table 1 reports the results. Setting national identity as the dependent variable and limiting our sample

[13] We have created three dummy variables by recoding "social status:" employed = 1, pensioner = 2, student = 3, unemployed = 4, housewife = 5, others = 6, and "do not know" = 8. Combining the other categories, we set as the reference category.

[14] The education variable is coded as follows: 1 = primary education, 2 = secondary education, 3 = university.

[15] See Appendix A for descriptive statistics.

to respondents belonging to politically dominant ethnic groups (the Latvians in Latvia, the Estonians in Estonia and the Lithuanians in Lithuania),[16] Model 1 tests Hypothesis 1. Here we expect that the positive effect of electoral proximity on ethnic majority (national) identity will be conditional upon the strength of nationalist parties in a party system. Electoral proximity and its interaction term with the seat share of nationalist parties are negative and positive, respectively, and statistically significant at the 0.1% level. These results show us the following two important empirical patterns: First, if the party system does not include any nationalist parties, people become increasingly less likely to take on their national identity as an election gets closer. Second, however, when the party system consists of powerful ethnic majority parties, then people tend to strengthen their national identity as an election gets closer. To visualize these two contrasting findings, Figure 1-(a) shows substantial changes in their national identity depending on electoral proximity in two scenarios (Nationalist parties = 0 percent [minimum] and Nationalist parties = 60 percent [maximum]), based on the results of Model 1. When nationalist parties do not have any seats in parliament (Figure 1-(a), the straight line), national identity decreases by about 32 percent in the two years before an election, suggesting that people weaken ethnic identities due to mobilization by non-ethnic parties or/and the lack of mobilization by nationalist parties. Conversely, if nationalist parties occupy 60 percent of seats in the legislature (Figure 1-(a), the dashed line), citizens' national identity increases by about 60 percent in the two years before an election. A series of results support the first hypothesis and are significantly

[16] To distinguish members of titular ethnic groups from others, we used a question asking in what language the respondents answered in survey interviews. What language people speak is a clear indicator of the nominal ethnic membership of a respondent, as we defined in theory section based on Chandra (2004, 2012). However, such a distinction may induce selection bias because selecting a language in the survey may indicate the respondent has already identified with the ethnic group of that language. We consider this possibility in robustness checks. As we show later, the results do not change in this additional analysis.

different from the findings of Eifert, Miguel and Posner (2010), who found that people in Africa tends to strengthen ethnic identities only if election are competitive. Our results suggest more nuanced effects of competitive elections and provide support for our theoretical expectation: competitive elections are a necessary but not a sufficient condition for ethnic identification. In other words, for elections to activate ethnic identities, the role of ethnic parties seems to be an important conditional factor.

Next, Model 2 tests the first hypothesis from the side of ethnic minority identity. Focusing on a sample that includes respondents belonging to minority ethnic groups,[17] we investigate how the impact of electoral proximity changes depending on the magnitude of ethnic minority parties in parliament. The election variable and its interaction with the ethnic minority party variable have both the expected signs and statistical significance. Figure 1-(b) shows how the effect of electoral mobilization changes, conditional upon the strength of ethnic minority parties. When ethnic minority parties do not hold any seats in parliament (the straight line in Figure 1-(b)), minority identity decreases by 5.5 percent in the two years before an election. This is a pattern similar to national identity without nationalist parties in Model 1. In turn, when minority parties occupy 25 percent of total seats (the maximum value in the sample, the dashed line in Figure 1-(b)) in the legislature, respondents' ethnic minority identity increases by about 20 percent in the same period. These results again support the idea that the strength of ethnic parties conditions the effect of the timing of elections on ethnic minority identities. The more interesting finding here is that when we compare differences in size of change in ethnic identities between ethnic majority and ethnic minority groups (Models 1 and 2), the effect is much larger in the former than the latter: we can see that the effect of nationalist parties is about three times as large as that of ethnic minority parties.

Models 3 and 4 test the second hypothesis, which argues that the ethnic identities of citizens in

[17] In the sample, we included respondents speaking languages of minority ethnic groups in the survey questionnaire.

one group will be activated as a result of strong political threats posed by parties of other ethnic groups. In Model 3, setting national identity as the dependent variable again, we test whether electoral proximity tends to have a larger positive association with national identity if minority ethnic parties grow in strength. The electoral proximity is negative with 0.1% statistical significance, whereas the interaction term (electoral proximity*ethnic minority party) is positive at 10% significance, suggesting that the impact of the timing of elections on national identity tends to increase when ethnic minority parties grow stronger in parliament. Figure 1-(c) graphically shows the result. While national identity tends to decrease by 20 percent if ethnic minority parties do not exist in a party system (the straight line), national identity is more likely to be intensified by 22 percent if ethnic minority parties occupy 25% of the total seats in legislatures (the dashed line). In Model 4, we examine the second hypothesis again, this time from the side of ethnic minority identity: the dependent variable here is minority ethnic identity and the independent variables of interest are electoral proximity and its interaction with the size of nationalist parties in legislatures. Figure 1-(d) graphically illustrates the result. With no nationalist parties in parliament (0%, the straight line), the proportion of people in ethnic minority groups who identify themselves with their ethnicities decreases as a parliamentary election approaches. If nationalist parties are strong, that is, if nationalist parties occupy 60% of total seats (the dashed line), then respondents in ethnic minority groups tend to strengthen their ethnic identities by about 30 percent for two years prior to the election. In sum, Models 3 and 4 both show that regardless of the type of ethnic groups, the ethnic identities of citizens belonging to one ethnic group are more likely to be activated as a result of electoral mobilization by political leaders of out-groups.

Robustness Checks

To check the robustness of our results, we perform additional analyses in the following four ways. First, we take into account alternative coding for ethnic parties. On the one hand, we excluded several political parties that were coded as nationalist parties in our previous analysis, but were more

ambiguous and controversial among researchers as to whether they were ethnic parties based on our definition.[18] All the results remained unchanged even after this recode. On the other hand, we also recoded additional political parties as ethnic parties,[19] and most of our results again remained unchanged.[20] Second, electoral mobilization may be effective only for people who hold citizenship and thus voting rights in a country. Especially, in Estonia and Latvia, a large number of people in ethnic minority groups have not been given citizenship, which may affect the results. Thus we included only respondents with citizenship in an additional analysis and reran all the models, and we found that the results did not change from the previous analyses. Third, although we used languages that respondents spoke as a criterion to identify what ethnic groups they nominally belong to, such a measure might bias the results because choosing a particular language itself may result from the fact that they have already strong ethnic identities. To avoid this possible selection bias, we used all observations without partitioning samples by language and reexamined all the hypotheses. We confirmed that most results did not differ from the original analysis.[21] Fourth, to further increase observations, we included additional survey data from the *World Values Survey* and *Euro Values Survey*, both of which enable us to test national identity change. Increasing the number of

[18] More specifically, we excluded (1) the Popular Front in Estonia and Lithuania and (2) People's Party (TP) in Latvia from our list of nationalist parties.

[19] We included (1) the National Movement for Latvia (TKL) and (2) People Harmony Party (TSP) in Latvia as nationalist and ethnic minority parties respectively.

[20] Only Hypothesis 2 did not hold in the case of national identity if we included TSP as an ethnic minority party. All other results, however, remained similar.

[21] Here also, only Hypothesis 2 in the case of national identity was not supported. A series of robustness checks suggest that the effect of ethnic minority parties' mobilization on intensifying national identity (Model 4) is less strong than the other three cases (Models 1-3).

observations observations through adding those surveys did not result any significant changes from our original analysis.

A Case Study of Latvia

This section provides a case study with the aim of tracing the causal mechanisms in our argument. Latvia serves as a typical case to investigate causal chains from ethnic party mobilization to ethnic identity changes among the electorate at elections. Latvia remains a multiethnic society with Russian minority issues in which both nationalist and minority parties have been active and retained strong influences in politics.[22] Centering on election calendars, ethnic politics has been the most important agenda in Latvia until present. As a Latvian social scientist noted, "…in Latvia, ethnic conflicts, on the one hand, do not feature in daily life and daily situations, but on the other hand, the ethnic factor obtains a significant role in the national and most local elections…" (Zepa 2011, 17: authors' translation). Hence, an in-depth case study of Latvia is very meaningful to trace the causal mechanisms that are expected in our theory and the underlying statistical correlations found in survey data analysis.

Nationalist and Ethnic Minority Parties in Latvia

There have been several strong ethnic parties in Latvia. The Latvian National Independence Movement (LNNK), which played a leading role in the independence movement, has retained seats in the Latvian parliament (*Saeima,* composed of 100 seats) since the first free elections. For Fatherland and Freedom (TB) was founded by members who had split from the LNNK. The two parties, however, merged into a single unit, TB/LNNK, in 1997.

Since the restoration of its independence in August 1991, Latvian public discourse and government policies pertaining to interethnic issues have remained highly nationalistic due to the

[22] See Appendix C for the seat shares of ethnic parties in Latovia and the other two Baltic countries.

influence of the nationalist parties. The government, formed by nationalists (TB and LNNK), was keen to overcome the Russification that occurred during the Soviet era and therefore pursued "Latvian-first" nation-building. This rhetoric led to the claim that Latvia had been illegally occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940 and the government should grant Latvian citizenship only to those who had possessed Latvian citizenship in 1940 and their descendants. This exclusive policy left about 30 percent of the country's residents, including a large Russian-speaking minority, without Latvian citizenship (Plakans 1997; Brands-Kehre un Pūce 2005).

In the same vein, ethnic minority parties have also been powerful political actors in Latvia. Just after re-independence, the Equal Rights (the predecessor to the Latvian Socialist Party) and the People Harmony Party (TSP) were the two main parties representing Russian minorities' interests. Before the 1998 general elections, they formed a unified coalition called "For Human Rights in a United Latvia (PCTVL)." In 2002, some members of the PCTVL founded an alternative ethnic minority party, Harmony Centre (SC). These ethnic minority parties have consistently won seats in parliament. Thus, ethnic parties from both the majority (Latvian) and minority (chiefly, the Russian speaking minority) populations have had a powerful and significant influence in electoral politics.[23]

Elections Are a Very Good Time to Mobilize: Content Analysis

Strong ethnic parties have always existed in Latvia since re-independence, but they do not necessarily invest their political resources in their co-ethnics all the time. Instead, they intensively spend their resources on performing effective election campaigns. This is the reason why ethnic segregation and confrontations appear in Latvia most salient at the time of elections.

[23] However, one caveat should be added to prevent any misunderstanding. The strength and influence of ethnic parties are not the simple reflection of deeply rooted social segregation between Latvians and Russian-speaking minorities. Most Latvians and Russophones have had many chances to communicate with one another across the ethnic divide.

In order to confirm this point, we need to show whether political mobilization by ethnic parties tends to occur more around elections. Fortunately, one nationalist party, LNNK, has kept the identical name since the restoration of independence. This allows us to observe intertemporal changes in mobilization by ethnic parties. Based on a search of news articles about the LNNK in connection with several selected words since the 1990s, Figure 2 shows time-series changes in the party's mobilization efforts.

[Figure 2 about here]

We searched all articles on *Baltic News Service* via LexisNexis, and counted the number of articles when "LNNK" appeared in the same paragraph as the following words: "demonstration", "picket", "protest", "rally", "organize", or "collecting." Summing up the number of articles on a quarterly basis, we can see that there has been a lot of news coverage linking the LNNK with some political movements around elections. In contrast, the same kind of political actions are fewer during the periods further removed from elections. This suggests that ethnic parties engage in more mobilization and agitation activities during elections.

Mobilized and Polarized Ethnic Identities on the Eve of the Elections

Ethnic issues have been the most significant political agenda in Latvia from the 1990s to the present (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2009), and the 1998 general election provides us with a vivid illustration. Before the 1998 election, nationalist parties and Russian-based minority parties both stirred citizens' ethnic sentiments and set ethno-political issues at the center of the campaign. They intended to mobilize people along ethnic lines, which consequently led to a low-intensity ethnic conflict between the two groups. The success of ethnic parties in the 1998 election can be largely attributed to an outbidding of the ethnic cleavage by both of the ethnic camps. In August 1997, Guntars Krasts, a member of TB/LNNK, became the Prime Minister of Latvia. The party pursued a tougher and more exclusive citizenship law, including the repatriation of Russian-speaking minorities

(to Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, etc.). Responding to this ethnic repression, ethnic minority parties tried to convince the government to liberalize its citizenship policy.

Both TB/LNNK and the Russian parties attempted to cultivate ethnic issues as a strategy to win the elections. This triggered three events preceding the 1998 election. First, the mood of ethnic confrontation, raised by the mobilization of Latvian nationalist and Russian minority protesters, created exclusive Latvian nationalism and public unrest, resulting in multiple bomb attacks and a Waffen-SS commemoration parade. On March 16, known as Latvian Legion day, many nationalists and Latvian veterans of the Legion, who fought alongside the Nazis, celebrated their 55th anniversary in the center of Riga, and several MPs took part in this event (Johnson 1998a). On April 2, April 6, and May 3, several bombs and landmines exploded near the Russian Embassy and statues commemorating Russian soldiers (Jansson and Johnson 1998; Norgaard and Johansen 1999). These events provoked public antagonism between the Latvian government and the Russian Federation, and highlighted the ethno-political issues at the center of the campaign. Second, two demonstrations, predominantly by Russian speakers, took place in Marc. Most participants were comprised of the elderly, pensioners, and socially marginalized persons. The Krasts cabinet, consisting of TB/LNNK, ordered the police to suppress these protests with rubber batons (Johnson 1998b; Jeffries 2004: 192). The LSP urged the Prosecutor General to investigate whether the police had violated the law (Galbreath 2005: 148). Both parties apparently showed a confrontational attitude toward this issue, in line with their ethno-political discourse. Third, after the parliament agreed to liberalize the citizenship law and pass an amendment in parliament on July 22, TB/LNNK initiated a referendum to block this amendment. They collected about 130,000 signatures (about 10 percent of the electorate)[24] to hold a referendum, and in doing so, brought this ethno-political issue to the forefront of their campaign (Budryte 2005: 119). Their attempt was successful. Election observers from the Council of Europe reported that "much of the electoral campaign centered on this theme [referendum

[24] The number of registered voters in the 1998 general election was 1,313,739.

of citizenship issues]," (Council of Europe 1998), because this referendum was held on the same day as the general election. A violent confrontation between Russian demonstrators and Latvians in the center of the capital, Riga, occurred on October 3, the day of the election (Minorities at Risk 2012).

Although the referendum resulted in a vote of 53 percent for and 45 percent against the liberalizing amendment to the citizenship law, the electoral campaign of the TB/LNNK contributed to major victories for the nationalist camp in the 1998 general election.. TB/LNNK itself got 14.7 percent of the vote and entered the new government with the newly formed People's Party (TP). We can say that the nationalist mobilization by TB/LNNK succeeded in encouraging portions of the electorate to intensify their ethnic sentiment and support nationalist parties. Ethnic minority Russian parties also benefited from this escalation of ethnic confrontation, increasing their number of seats from 11 to 16. Ethnic mobilization of ethnic parties brought them electoral success.

Tools of Electoral Mobilization: Referendums, Ceremonies, and Material Benefits

Another vivid example of ethnic party mobilization was observed in the general elections held in October 2010. Both the nationalist TB/LNNK party and the ethnic minority SC party deployed their electoral mobilization strategies based on ethnic discourses.

TB/LNNK once again meant to open the electorate's eyes to their nationalistic agenda by collecting signatures and calling for an ethnically-driven referendum, which turned the electoral campaign to TB/LNNK's advantage. The coalition started their signature collection campaign at end of January 2010 to initiate a referendum in support of a complete switch to Latvian-language-only instruction in school. This signature collection campaign was launched nine months before the general election set for October. Education Minister Tatjana Koķe detected that this signature collection drive had only "a purely political objective" (Baltic News Service 2010).

The ethnic minority SC party also geared up its own voter mobilization efforts in the spring of 2010. SC played on the historical memory of ethnic groups to elevate Russian ethnic consciousness and offered material distributions to consolidate their political support in predominantly Russian

communities. May 9, the Victory Day marking the defeat of Nazi Germany in WWII, has remained controversial in Latvia due to the historical issues involved. Most Baltic natives do not celebrate this day because they treat it as the start of the Soviet occupation. Thus, in Latvia, the main societal group that attends the ceremony and celebrates this day has traditionally been ethnic minority Russophone residents. Although most Latvian political parties do not commit official support to these ceremonies, the Russian SC party has financed and shown its support for this event every year. SC particularly capitalized on this event in 2010. The participants at the Victory Day celebrations numbered approximately 100,000 in 2010 (Wire Reports Riga 2010). An impressive one-third of the Russian residents in Latvia participated in the event. Usually, as in 2009 and 2011,[25] the crowds numbered approximately 20,000-30,000 in size (Hanley 2009, Wire Reports Riga 2011). It is very clear that the SC party intensively mobilized crowds and organized this event in 2010, the year before general elections. The chairman, Nils Usakovs, laid flowers as part of the ceremony before the eyes of the thousands of participants. He was the mayor of the capital city of Riga, which has a concentration of Russian residents. In the run-up to the election, Usakovs suddenly offered material benefits for some people in the city. His decision, which exempted retired elderly residents from public transportation fees, was released in August 2010—just two months before the general election ("Latvija in Brief" 2010). This news that the ethnically Russian mayor Usakovs had made such a move in the capital city with many Russian voters was reported by several local media outlets. The newspaper *Diena* covered the story with the cynical headline: "Next stop is – the voting polls" (Ludmila 2010).

These ethnic parties' mobilization strategies resulted in their electoral success in the general election, held in October 2010. The success of SC, which had deployed its aggressive ethnic mobilization campaign to capture the support of Russian minority voters, was notable. While the ethnic majority TB/LNNK party succeeded in increasing its vote share from 6.9% (in 2006) to 7.7%,

[25] Even though general elections were also held in 2011, they were announced in July 2011, after the victory-day event.

the SC experienced an outstanding electoral success in which they won 29 seats with a 26.0% vote share (as compared to 17 seats with a 14.4% share in 2006). SC became the second largest political party in the parliament after the election.

The in-depth case study of Latvia supports the validity of our theoretical arguments. It shows strong evidence that both nationalist and ethnic minority parties deployed ethnic mobilization as elections approached. They called for referendums in the pre-election term to make ethnic issues more salient, organized events to let voters recall the importance of their sense of ethnic belonging, and sometimes even promised material benefits to advantage certain ethnic groups. These mobilization tactics succeeded: citizens committed to, recalled, and intensified their ethnic identities, resulting in ethnic parties' electoral success.

Conclusion

This paper has investigated the conditions under which electoral campaigns drive citizens to embrace strong ethnic identities. Cross-national statistical analysis and a case study support the idea that powerful ethnic parties contribute to strengthening people's ethnic identities through mobilization at election time. Moreover, our research suggests that electoral mobilization efforts by ethnic parties also have the polarization effect: ethnic party mobilization poses political threats to members of out-groups, which in turn strengthens ethnic identities of out-group members. Our research shows that competitive elections are an institution that generates dynamic ethnic identification only when ethnic entrepreneurs are strong enough to undertake party mobilization.

Our research suggests that electoral mobilization of ethnic parties is one of the main processes of constructing ethnically divided societies in new democracies. Once strong ethnic parties emerge or political parties come to pursue more ethnically exclusive policies, their political appeals deepen ethnic cleavages among citizens at the time of elections, which often results in riots, protests and state repression along the lines of ethnicity, leading to further activating ethnic identities. For competitive elections to be an institution for resolving political conflicts in peaceful ways,

governments need to complement competitive elections with political institutions and rules that effectively prevent parties from resorting to exclusive ethnic appeals. Without such institutional arrangements, competitive elections are more likely to bring violent conflicts and further ethnic antagonism, increasing and exacerbating serious ethnic cleavages within the public.

References

Anderson, B. Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism. Verso, London. 1983.

Baltic News Service. Complete switch to Latvian language at public schools not on education ministry's agenda – Minister, Feb 1, 2010.

Bates, R. H. Ethnic competition and modernization in contemporary Africa. Comp Polit Stud.1973; 6: 457-484.

Budryte, D. Taming nationalism? political community building in the post-Soviet Baltic states. Ashgate, Hampshire and Burlington. 2005.

Brass, P. A Theft of an idol. Seagull Books, Calcutta. 1997.

Bratton, M., Mattes, R., and Gyimah-Boadi, E. Public opinion, democracy and market reform in Africa, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 2005.

Birnir, J. K. Ethnicity and electoral politics. Cambridge University Press, New York. 2007.

Brands-Kehre, Ilze un Ilvija Pūce. Politiskā nācija un pilsonība" In Juris Rozenvalds ed., Cik Demokrātiska ir Latvija: demokrātijas audits [How democratic is Latvia: audit of democracy]. Latvijas Universitātes Akadēmiskais Apgāds, Rīga. 2005.

Bugajski, J. Political parties of Eastern Europe: a guide to politics in the post-communist era. M.E. Sharpe, New York. 2002.

Chandra, K. Why Ethnic parties Succeed: patronage and ethnic head counts in India. Cambridge University Press, New York. 2004.

Chandra, K. What is an ethnic identity? Party Politics. 2011; 17, 151-169.

Chandra, K. ed. Constructivist theories of ethnic politics, Oxford University Press, Oxford. 2012.

Council of Europe. Observation of parliamentary elections in Latvia (3 October 1998). No. 8255, November 3rd, 1998. http://assembly.coe.int/Mainf.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc98/EDOC8255.htm (accessed 12 July, 2011)

Deutsch, K. Nationalism and social communication. MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. 1953.

Eifert, B., Miguel, E., and Posner, D. Political competition and ethnic identification in Africa. Am J Polit Sci. 2011; 54: 494-510.

Ferree, K. The Social origins of electoral volatility in Africa. Br J Polit Sci. 2010; 40: 759-779.

Ferree, K. Framing the race in South Africa: the political origins of racial census elections. Cambridge University Press, New York. 2011.

Fearon, J., and Laitin, D. Violence and the social construction of ethnic identity. International Organization. 2000; 54: 845-877.

Galbreath, D. J. Nation-building and minority politics in post-socialist states: interests, influences and identities in Estonia and Latvia. Ibidem, Stuttgart. 2005.

Gelner, E. *Nations and nationalism*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca. 1983.

Gibson, J., and Gouws A. Social identities and political intolerance: linkages within the South African mass public. Am J Polit Sci. 2000; 44: 272-286.

Habyarimana, J., Humphreys M., Posner, D., and Weinstein, J. Coethnicity: diversity and the dilemmas of collective action. Russell Sage Foundation, New York. 2009.

Hanley, M. Victory Day passes smoothly, The Baltic Times, May 14, 2009.

Horowitz, D. Ethnic groups in conflict. University of California Press, Berkeley. 1985.

Ishiyama, J. T. Do ethnic parties promote minority ethnic conflict? Nationalism and Ethnic Politics. 2009; 15: 56-83.

Jansson, E., and Johnson, S.C. Bombs rattle shaky Latvian-Russian relations. The Baltic Times, 1998, Apr 9: 1, 8.

Jeffries, I. The countries of the former Soviet Union at the turn of the twenty-first century: The Baltic and European states in transition. Routledge, London and New York. 2004.

Johnson, S. C. Latvian SS Veterans March, Infuriate Russia. The Baltic Times. 1998a; Mar 19: 1-2.

Johnson, S. C. Police actions strain Latvian-Russian relations. The Baltic Times. 1998b; Mar 12: 1.

Laitin, D. Hegemony and culture. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 1986.

Laitin, D. Identity in formation: The Russian speaking populations in the near abroad. Cornell University Press, Ithaca. 1998.

Ludmila. 2010. Nākamā pietura – Vēlēšanu iecirknis, Diena, Aug. 25, 2010. www.diena.lv/izklaide/maksla/nakama-pietura-velesanu-iecirknis-747778 (accessed January 3, 2013).

Minorities at Risk. Chronology for Russians in Latvia. 2012. http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/chronology.asp?groupId=36701 (accessed July 1, 2012).

Norgaard, O., and Johannsen, L. The Baltic states after independence, second edition. Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham and Massachusetts. 1999.

Olzak, S. Contemporary Ethnic mobilization. Annual Review of Sociology. 1983; 9: 355-374.

Plakans, A. Democratization and political participation in postcommunist societies: The case of Latvia. in Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott eds., The consolidation of democracy in East-Central Europe. Cambridge University Press, New York. 1997.

Posner, D. Institutions and ethnic politics in Africa. Cambridge University Press, New York. 2005.

Rabushka, A., and Shepsle, K. Politics in plural societies: a theory of democratic instability. Charles E. Merrill, Ohio. 2008 [1972].

Rohschneider, R., and Whitefield, S. Understanding cleavages in party systems: issue position and issue salience in 13 post-communist democracies. Comp Polit Stud. 2009; 42: 280-313.

Rose, R., and Munro, N. Parties and elections in new European democracies. ECPR Press, Colchester. 2009.

Rubin, M and Hewstone, M. Social identity theory's self-esteem hypothesis: A review and some suggestions for clarification, personality and social psychology review. 1998; 2: 40-62.

Tajfel, H. Social categorization, social identity and social comparison, In Differentiation between social groups, Henri Tajfel ed. Academic Press, New York. 1978.

Wilkinson, S. Votes and violence: electoral competition and ethnic riots in India. Cambridge University Press, New York. 2004.

Wimmer, A., Min, B., and Cederman, LE. Ethnic politics and armed conflict: a configurational analysis of a new global data set. Am Soc Rev. 2009; 74: 316-337.

Wire Reports Riga. Large turnout for victory day celebration. The Baltic Times. 2010; May 13: 3.

Wire Reports Riga. Victory celebrations mark 1945 peace, The Baltic Times. 2011; May 12: 3.

Zepa, B. Kas ir Nacionālā identitāte? kā to skaidrot? in Brigita Zepa un Evija Kļave red., Latija, Pārskats par Tautas Attīstību, 2010/2011. Nacionanālā Identitāte, Mobilitāte un Rīcībspēja. Rīga: Socialo un Politisko Pētījumu Institūts. 2011.

Appendix

Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Observations	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
Ethnic Majority (National) Identity	18365	0.386	0.48	0	1
Ethnic Minority Identity	18635	0.139	0.34	0	1
Electoral Proximity	18635	10.63	7.09	1	23
Nationalist Parties	18635	21.91	16.89	0	61.39
Ethnic Minority Parties	18635	5.47	5.87	0	25
Age	18308	45.53	16.38	18	99
Sex	18352	1.5	0.499	1	2
Employment (dummy)	18365	0.53	0.498	0	1
Unemployed (dummy)	18365	0.097	0.296	0	1
Student (dummy)	18365	0.051	0.221	0	1
Education	18270	2.16	0.63	1	3
Estonia	18365	0.33	0.47	0	1
Latovia	18365	0.33	0.471	0	1
1990s dummy	18365	0.669	0.47	0	1
Citizenship dummy	18365	0.7	0.457	0	1
Titular ethnic group dummy	18635	0.61	0.487	0	1

Appendix B: Survey Year/Month and Electoral Proximity

	Survey Year/Month		The Closest Election (Months to Election)	Nationalist Parties	Ethnic Minority Parties	National Identity		Ethnic Minority Identity	
	Year	Month				Majority Groups (Num of Obs)	All (Num of Obs)	Minority Group (Num of Obs)	All (Num of Obs)
Estonia	1993	September	1992 Elections (12)	61.4%	0.0%	67.8% (992)	35.4% (1,962)	32.3% (970)	16% (1,962)
	1995	April	1995 Elections (1)	12.9%	5.9%	63.1% (644)	32.7% (1,284)	34.6% (640)	17.2% (1,284)
	1996	November	1995 Elections (20)	13.0%	6.0%	63.9% (602)	30.5% (1,992)	39.2% (369)	14.9% (971)
	2001	Nobember	2003 Elections (16)	6.9%	0.0%	56.5% (633)	38.8% (943)	49.6% (310)	17% (943)
	2004	Nobember	2003 Elections (20)	7.0%	0.0%	62.2% (634)	42.9% (940)	41.1% (306)	13.7% (940)
Latvia	1993	September	1993 Elections (3)	21.0%	7.0%	66.3% (1,143)	37.5% (2,091)	34.7% (948)	16.1% (2,091)
	1995	April	1995 Elections (5)	22.0%	11.0%	63.9% (649)	37% (1,157)	25.1% (508)	11.3% (1,157)
	1996	November	1995 Elections (14)	22.0%	11.0%	56.7% (522)	40.2% (2,143)	34.6% (421)	15.4% (2,143)
	2001	October	2002 Elections (12)	27.0%	25.0%	62.4% (641)	40.9% (1,001)	33.8% (360)	12.6% (1,001)
	2004	November	2006 Elections (23)	31.0%	23.0%	59.9% (589)	38.9% (956)	35.4% (367)	14.8% (956)
Lithuania	1993	September	1992 Elections (11)	24.1%	2.8%	70% (1,009)	37% (2,012)	42.6% (1,003)	21.4% (2,012)
	1995	April	1996 Elections (22)	2.8%	2.8%	61% (633)	44.7% (870)	34.5% (237)	9.4% (870)
	1996	November	1996 Elections (1)	2.8%	2.8%	57.4% (702)	40.5% (998)	37.5% (296)	11.1% (998)
	2001	October	2000 Elections (12)	1.4%	1.4%	59.6% (922)	49.3% (1,124)	32.1% (202)	6.2% (1,124)
	2004	December	2004 Elections (2)	0.0%	1.4%	38.3% (891)	37.1% (1,113)	6% (222)	1.3% (1,113)

Appendix C: Ethnic Parties' Share of Seats in the Baltic states

country	election year	Nationalist parties' share of seats		Ethnic minority parties' share of seats	
Estonia (101 seats)	1990-Mar-18	**41.00%**	Rahvarinne[popular front] (43/105)	**0.00%**	
	1992	**46.5%** +(14.9%)*	I (29), ERSP (10), Estonian Citizen (8) +Popular Front (15)	**0.00%**	
	1995	**12.90%**	IL(8), Right Wingers(5)	**5.90%**	MKE (6)
	1999	**17.80%**	IL (18)	**5.90%**	EURP (6)
	2003	**6.90%**	IL (7)	**0.00%**	
	2007	**18.80%**	IRL (19)	**0.00%**	
	2011	**22.80%**	IRL (23)	**0.00%**	
Latvia (100 seats)	1990-Mar-18	**65.20%**	LTF (131/201)	**0.00%**	
	1993	**21.00%**	TB (6), LNNK (15)	**7.00%**	L (7)
	1995	**22.00%**	TB (14), LNNK (8)	**11.00%**	LSP (5)
	1998	**41.00%**	TB/LNNK (17), TP (24)	**11.00%**	PCTVL(16)
	2002	**27.00%**	TB/LNNK (7), TP (20)	**25.00%**	PCTVL (25)
	2006	**31.00%**	TB/LNNK (8), TP (23)	**23.00%**	PCTVL (6), SC (17)
	2010	**8.00%**	TB/LNNK-VL (8)	**29.00%**	SC (29)
Lithuania (141 seats)	1990-Feb/Mar	**72.70%**	Sajudis (101/139)	**0.00%**	
	1992	**2.8%** (+21.3%)*	LTS (4) + Sajudis Coalition (30)	**2.80%**	LLRA (4)
	1996	**2.80%**	LTS (3), JL (1)	**2.80%**	LLRA (3), Minority Alliance (1)
	2000	**1.40%**	JL (1), LLaS (1)	**1.40%**	LLRA (2)
	2004	**0.00%**		**1.40%**	LLRA (2)
	2008	**0.00%**		**2.10%**	LLRA (3)

Note: Number of seats gained by each party in parentheses. *Asterisk indicates share of seats won by Popular Front.
Sources: Bugajski (2002), Galbreath (2005) Millard (2004), and Rose and Munro (2009).

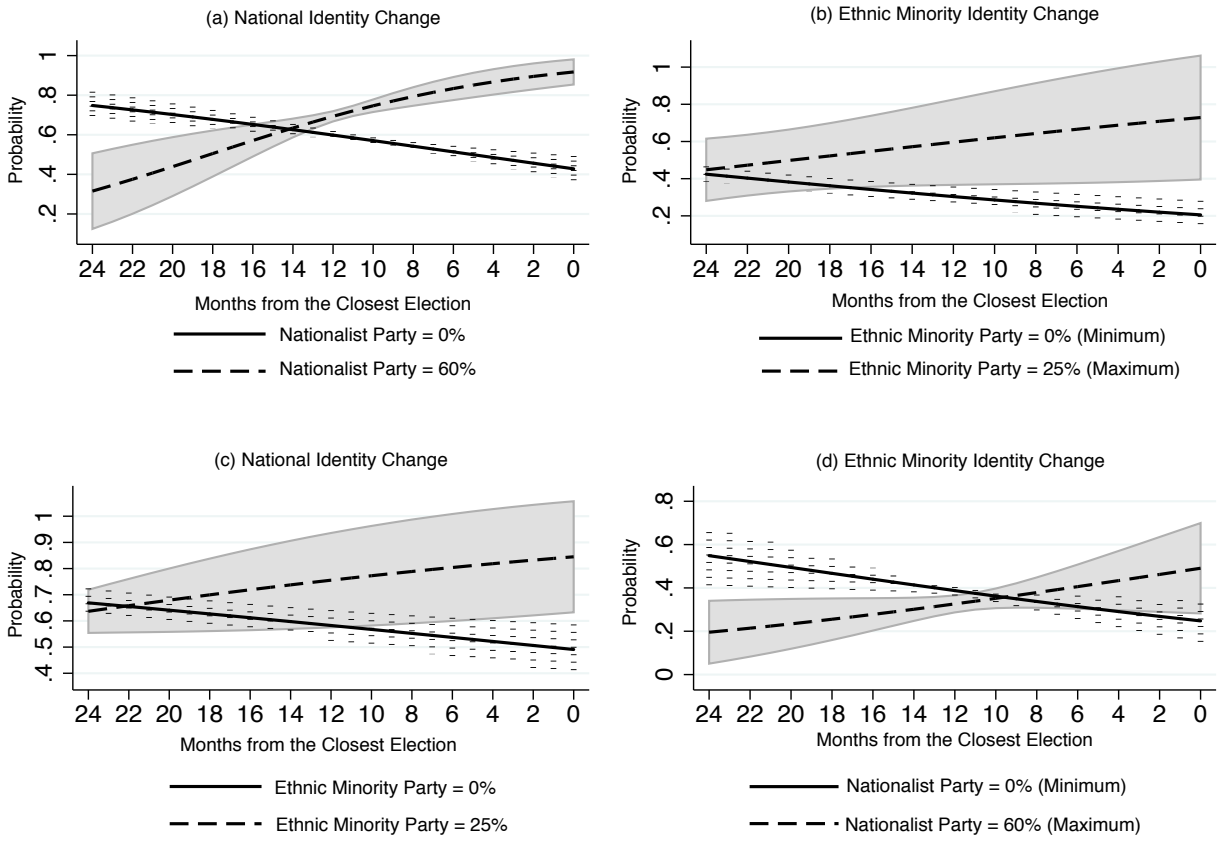
Tables and Figures

Table 1: Statistical Results

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Dependent Variable	Nationalist	Ethnic Minority	Nationalist	Ethnic Minority
Electoral Proximity	-0.0574***	-0.0436***	-0.0308***	-0.0544**
	(0.016)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.022)
Nationalist Party	0.0449***			0.0179
	(0.011)			(0.01)
Proximity*Nationalist Party	0.00317***			0.00186**
	(0.001)			(0.00)
Ethnic Minority Party		0.0937**	0.0693	
		(0.04)	(0.048)	
Proximity*Ethnic Minority Party		0.00374**	0.00313*	
		(0.00)	(0.002)	
Age	0.00318**	0.00745*	0.00302**	0.00709*
	(0.001)	(0.00)	(0.001)	(0.004)
Sex	-0.0197	0.0729	-0.0551	0.0849
	(0.053)	(0.05)	(0.065)	(0.1)
Employment Dummy	0.00537	-0.0741	0.0158	-0.0988
	(0.030)	(0.09)	(0.041)	(0.095)
Unemployment Dummy	-0.214***	0.028	-0.205**	0.0103
	(0.079)	(0.14)	(0.097)	(0.151)
Student Dummy	-0.0154	0.0757	0.000536	0.0501
	(0.152)	(0.077)	(0.159)	(0.075)
Education	0.191***	-0.122**	0.145***	-0.118***
	(0.049)	(0.054)	(0.030)	(0.029)
Estonia	-0.186**	-0.0145	0.0455	0.0239
	(0.085)	(0.019)	(0.064)	(0.062)
Latvia	-0.154**	-0.424***	-0.0837	-0.155***
	(0.068)	(0.156)	(0.247)	(0.012)
1990s dummy	0.203*	0.287	0.376***	0.186
	(0.121)	(0.379)	(0.071)	(0.309)
Constant	-0.818***	-1.560***	-0.613***	-1.346***
	(0.261)	(0.182)	(0.2)	(0.368)
Log Pseudolikelihood	-7,307	-4,529	-7,344	-4,530
Pseudo R squared	0.018	0.0123	0.013	0.012
Observations	11,129	7,077	11,129	7,077

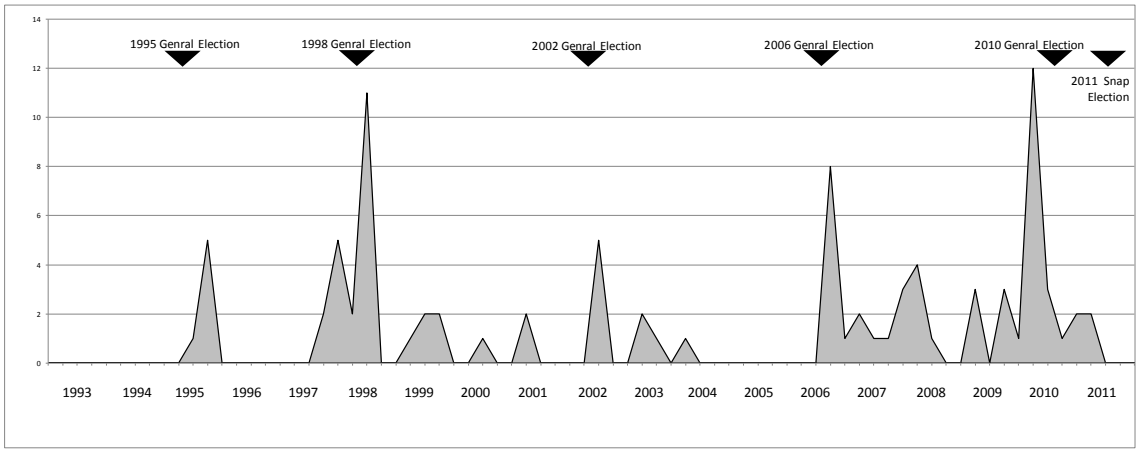
Note: Clustered robust standard errors are reported in parentheses. Significance level: p< 0.01***, p<0.05**, p<0.1*

Figure 1: Electoral Mobilization, Ethnic Parties and Ethnic Identification



Note: Shaded and dotted areas are 95% confidence interval. Each figure corresponds with estimation results in Table 1 as follows: Figure (a): Model 1, Figure (b): Model 2, Figure (c): Model 3, and Figure (d): Model 4.

Figure 2 Intertemporal Trends in Mobilization by LNNK



Sources: *Baltic News Service via LexisNexis.com*
Note: Black arrows indicate the period when general elections were held.