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Self-Determination, Secession, and Civil War

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The end of the Cold War led to the creation of almost two dozen new states, resulting from groups that advanced claims based on the legitimacy of national self-determination. These claims ranged from modestly increased autonomy to secession and independent statehood. As a result, and because a number of these claims escalated to violence, scholarly research into self-determination and secession has increased tremendously over the past two decades, with scholars examining the fate of these movements and associated violence and wars, from onset to the termination of associated violence and wars. This article assesses the state of the academic literature as it relates to the links between self-determination, secession, and civil wars. It begins with a discussion of what exactly is understood by such key concepts as ethnicity, self-determination, secession, and secessionist war. It then turns to the conditions and factors that have been identified in the literature to explain the emergence of self-determination and secession and why violence and war become potential outcomes.

[Supplemental materials are available for this article. Go to the publisher's online edition of Terrorism and Political Violence *for the following free supplemental resource: article appendix of ethic groups at political risk, list of territorial secessionist wars, and militant secessionist groups active in the last 25 years.]*

Keywords civil war, ethnicity, nationalism, secession, self-determination, violence

The end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia led to the creation of almost two dozen new states, resulting from groups that advanced claims based on the legitimacy of national self-determination.[1] These claims ranged from modestly increased autonomy (economic or political), to secession and independent statehood. As a result, and because a number of these claims escalated to violence, scholarly research into self-determination and secession

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has increased tremendously over the past two decades, with scholars examining the interplay of the onset of violence, how this violence affects future dynamics for how the wars proceed, and how they end. Since 1945, the Minorities at Risk data project, for instance, has identified at least 283 groups at political risk for discrimination and repression, many of which have engaged in militant activism in order to advance claims of self-determination. Historically, most groups that have engaged in secessionist war have failed to achieve their objectives. Since 1990, about half of all civil wars resulted from ethnic groups seeking greater autonomy or statehood, and a number of conflicts remain violent or unresolved. Self-determination violence continues to plague Burma/Myanmar, India, Iraq, Georgia, Russia, and the self-determination struggles among Kosovar Albanians and southern Sudanese continue (despite the fact that the South Sudan is now an independent state). There were 22 secessionist wars ongoing at the end of 2009, many of which continue today.[2]

Although self-determination conflicts tend to be defensive and contained within a particular piece of territory, such crises are intimately connected to regional and global dynamics.[3] The case of Kosovo is paradigmatic. This conflict was rooted in a domestic political fight in the former Yugoslavia over the political status of the region of Kosovo and the rights of Serbs and Albanians living there. Russia supported the Serb-dominated regime of the former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and Serbs in Kosovo, and the United States and its NATO allies advocated the Kosovar Albanians. After years of increasing tension between the two sides during the 1980s and 1990s, non-violent Muslim Albanian resistance escalated to violence—brutal government reprisal violence—and ultimately to external military intervention in the form of air power by NATO in the spring of 1999, followed by nine years of a UN/NATO protectorate. Kosovo Albanians declared independence from Serbia in January 2008, yet its status as an independent, sovereign state remains ambiguous.

Consider the most recent conflict in South Ossetia (2008). The state of Georgia pushed its right to territorial integrity and non-interference in its sovereign affairs (UN Charter, Article 2), while Ossetians and their Russian ally argued on the principle of self-determination of nations (UN Charter, Article 1, and Article 1 in both the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights). Both sides could and did make plausible moral and legal arguments.

This interaction of international politics and domestic politics—the right of national and ethnic minorities to self determination versus the power of precedent and the status quo bias of the international community in favor of the territorial integrity of states—pushes these conflicts toward the center of global politics. So although self-determination movements tend to be defensive, territorially confined, and limited in scope, the dynamics of bargaining and the nature of stakes compel patron states and outside actors to get involved. Consequently, national self-determination and the question of secession are often an international problem.

In addition to wreaking havoc in a number of states, the principle of self-determination is a complex moral and legal issue.[4] The right of self-determination for ethno-national groups continues to clash with states' rights to territorial integrity. In fact, both of these claims have become enshrined in international law, which makes sorting out which claim is the (more) legal or legitimate all the more complex.

In the old days, empires were threatened by separatist movements; today, it is multiethnic states. From an analytic perspective, we need to ask how multiethnic states differ from these empires. Both are territorially bounded political units, comprised of a number of peoples or nations, and often ruled by a single government

with sovereign authority. Just as the older empires faced challenges, so too do today's multiethnic states. This is the case even more so, as more states participate in the waves of democratization that promise basic economic, political, and social rights. Furthermore, because these rights often apply not to individuals, but to groups, it should come as little surprise that affected people mobilize *as* groups in order to secure their rights. Even in established democracies with provisions for basic groups' rights in place, conflicts over national minority issues continue to plague domestic politics. Belgium still suffers over tensions between the Flemish (Dutch speaking) and Walloon (French speaking) communities. The June 2010 parliamentary elections in Belgium, for instance, raised real questions about the future of the federation: the Flemish nationalist party (New Flemish Alliance), which seeks to divide Belgium between its Flemish North and the French-speaking South, garnered the most votes, and nearly half of the Flemish electorate voted for separatists.[5]

This paper assesses the state of the academic literature as it relates to the links between self-determination, secession, and civil wars. It begins with a discussion of what is specifically understood by such key concepts as ethnicity, self-determination, secession, and secessionist war. It then turns to the conditions that give rise to self-determination and secession and why violence and war sometimes results. Three broad sets of arguments and findings are discussed. They include economic factors (distributional issues and poverty), political factors (grievances, institutions, and elites) and structural factors (geography and demography). The discussion then turns to key academic findings regarding the conduct and termination of secessionist wars, and includes consideration of outside actors and partition as a solution to secessionist wars. The paper concludes with a discussion of what we have learned from the academic research and what this means for effective policy.

Conceptual Issues: Ethnicity, Self-Determination, Secession, and Secessionist War

At their core, the concepts of self-determination and secession are rooted in identity, in particular, ethnic identity.[6] There have been two basic debates in the literature about the origins of identity, including ethnic identity. A primordialist school holds that identity is relatively fixed, and that attachments and sentiments "are the irreducible bedrock on which group material and political interests and claims tend to be based."[7] A social constructivist school, by contrast, views ethnic identity as malleable, seeing it as the product of a particular time, place, and series of events. Just as an identity can be constructed, it can be reconstructed.[8] Although the primordialist and constructivist understandings of identity are often treated as irreconcilable, the different understandings tend to be overstated and therefore "misleading."[9] Moreover, although many scholars make a strong case for constructivist understandings of identity (few scholars actually adopt a strictly primordialist position), most tend to work from a sort of hybrid position. As Comaroff and Stern explain, a "more sophisticated hybrid has emerged," and this hybrid "treats ethnic consciousness as a universal potentiality that is realized—objectified, that is, as an active political identity—when a population recognizes common interests, usually when it finds its existence, interests, or integrity under threat."[10] This hybrid approach accepts that identities are not necessarily fixed, but stresses these identities need to come from somewhere such as a shared history and common understanding of one's place in the world.

An "ethnic" group is a group of people that shares these conditions. According to Anthony Smith, a leading scholar of ethnicity, an ethnic group is a group of

individuals who share a) a common trait such as language, race, or religion; b) a belief in a common descent and destiny; and c) an association with a given piece of territory.[11] So, for example, "Serbs" see their ethnic brethren as sharing the Serb language, Orthodox religion, and a common homeland in and around contemporary Serbia, Kosovo, and parts of Croatia and Bosnia.

While ethnic groups are largely descriptive categories of groups, the concept of nation entails self-recognition.[12] Each member recognizes his/her own membership in that nation, the membership of fellow co-nationals, and the "non-membership" of non-nationals.[13] There is thus both a subjective and objective aspect to nations. The term nation is subjective in the sense that any ethnic group which considers itself to be a nation on the basis of the criteria listed above is a nation; and it is objective in that the group shares some common objective characteristic which identifies it as distinct and differentiated from other groups.[14] Such differentiation may come about in two ways. First, nations may emerge as the result of exclusion, which forces groups of individuals to identify themselves in relation to that non-membership. Roman Szporluk argues, for example, that non-Russians of the Soviet Union took notice of the de-Sovietization of Russia and the re-emergence of Russian national identity. Non-Russians responded "by raising analogous demands for the rehabilitation of their respective cultural figures. . . . This movement has been stimulated, and certainly legitimized, by the developments in ethnic Russia . . ."[15] For these groups to be categorized as nations, however, it is not simply enough for them to share exclusion as their common bond; they must also possess a common, salient trait.

Nations may also emerge from classification schemes imposed or structured externally. States, for instance, often rely on objective criteria—such as place of birth, language, or race—in order to politically structure and regulate their population and territories, often through censuses.[16] Jews under the German National Socialist regime exemplify this dynamic. While most German Jews viewed themselves as part of the German nation—"we are Germans"—the Nazi government classified them on the basis of race as non-Germans. For many German Jews who perished in the Holocaust, recognition of the significance of the state's redefinition of their identity—as non-Germans and therefore enemies of the state—came too late.

Whereas an ethnic group is a latent nation, a nation is a politically active ethnic group, which tends to demand greater cultural autonomy or self-determination. National self-determination, therefore, is the notion that ethnic groups have the right to determine their own fate. In some instances this might simply mean greater autonomy within the confines of the borders of a state, while in other instances the group may come to feel entitled to a state of its own, either out of fear for its survival or out of a sense of positive destiny.

Consider the case of Sudan. Even after its first civil war (1955–1972) between the largely Muslim-Arab North and the non-Arab, largely Christian and animist-black South, the South did not seek outright secession. Rather Southern demands were limited to greater autonomy and an increased share of the state's development aid for the South. The agreement that ended this war (Addis Ababa Agreement) did offer greater autonomy for the South, but the North later abrogated the agreement and, in addition, insisted the South abide by Sharia law. As a result, civil war resumed. The second war ended again with a negotiated settlement. This time, however, the South demanded and secured the right to hold a referendum on the independence of the South. The referendum was held as scheduled and resulted in 99 percent of southerners voting to secede to form an independent state.[17]

This case highlights the fact that self-determination claims exist over a continuum and that these claims can change over time—from minimal claims of cultural and educational protection and autonomy, to control over regional government and financial policy, to maximal claims of outright independence and statehood. Often the demands begin with lobbying to implement policies that protect elements of a group's identity that the group perceives to be threatened, extend to demonstrations, further lobbying, and depending on the reaction of the state, perhaps rioting, violence, and war. The escalation from claim-making to violence takes time. One of the only studies to examine the timing found that the escalation period from non-violent protest resembling conventional political activity to engagement in violent rebellion took on average about 13 years.[18]

Territory is at the heart of self-determination struggles and secessionist wars. From 1940 to 2000, 98 percent of civil wars fought for territorial control were incited by ethnically-based demands, while 73 percent of all ethnically-based civil wars involved fights over territory, in which a group sought to gain greater control or outright separation of its perceived territory from the state.[19]

The interests of ethnic groups being considered in light of the state with which it is contending is therefore a key issue. How does the state view ethnic group demands? Is the state ready to placate them, and if not, why not? It turns out that self-determination and territorial demands are difficult issues over which ethnic groups and states contend. This explains why some 150 years after independence and decades of democracy, Belgium is still threatened by secession.

The reason this is so is because territory is vital to both sides, though in different ways. For ethnic groups, territory is invariably tied to the group's identity. Control over homeland means a secure identity. For states, control over territory is directly linked to physical survival: all other things being equal, more territory means more physical security from conquest or from coercion. States are likely to view an ethnic group's bid to control territory—even objectively worthless or costly territory—as a threat whenever they fear precedent-setting.[20] Precedent-setting concerns arise because states fear that granting independence to one group will encourage other groups to demand independence, unleashing a process that will threaten the territorial integrity of the state, thus weakening it. Because most states are multi-ethnic—82 percent of all independent states are comprised of two or more ethnic groups—this precedent-setting effect is widespread. Nevertheless, states do not always react to claims for self-determination with resort to force. Often, a state will attempt to work out a solution short of war that satisfies demanding ethnic groups. Perhaps the question then becomes what satisfies or dissatisfies ethnic groups such that they challenge the state and demand greater self-determination?

The Origins of Secessionist Claims

The literature on ethnic groups' demands for autonomy or outright secession has in large part reflected two broader debates within the civil war literature. These focus on whether economics and material interests, or politics and grievances matter most. Although some scholars have stressed one explanation over the other, most accept that it is the interaction of economics and politics, and the opportunities and constraints faced by ethnic groups that account for the likelihood that an autonomy claim will escalate to violence. So in addition to economics and politics, some compelling research has emerged that examines the structure in which ethnic groups

operate, their geography and demography, and how these inform their willingness to make demands, and their capacity to mobilize to achieve those demands.

Economic Grievance: Development, Relative Deprivation, and Poverty

The material interest explanations tend to focus on economic development and resource distribution. Differential economic development models, for example, focus on the relative development of groups within a state's borders, and claim that as the economy and state structures modernize, individuals will transfer their loyalties from their ethnic group to the state.[21] Secessionist wars that remain are therefore caused by uneven economic development among the groups that populate the country's territory. Groups with greater economic development will come to resent that their wealth is being transferred to lesser developed groups as state subventions, while lesser developed groups will come to fear the economic domination, or perhaps increasingly resent perceived exploitation, by the advanced groups. Disparate development within the state leads to tensions between ethnic groups that populate the state. Equalize economic development, so the argument goes, and secessionist claims and conflicts will disappear.[22]

The logic of the material grievance argument cuts both ways. Both rich and poor groups have an incentive to demand greater autonomy and secession. Consider Yugoslavia again. The first groups to demand independence were the wealthy regions of Slovenia and Croatia. Similar dynamics were at work when the Soviet Union was collapsing, with the richer, more advanced Baltic republics demanding independence before the less wealthy Central Asian republics.[23] Yet we also know that poor regions populated by ethnic groups have attempted to secede from these same countries (e.g., Kosovo and Chechnya), and although they may not have initiated, they nevertheless held long-standing grievances vis-à-vis the center and desired greater autonomy and eventual separation.

Despite highlighting a genuine source of conflict, economic explanations tend to underplay ethnic and identity dimensions and consequent inter-group tensions that might also contribute to violence and war.[24] Proponents fail to explain why some groups are willing to risk death, internment, or mass deportation for seemingly worthless territory; or why they sometimes seek autonomy even when the economic conditions of independence are certain to be more desperate than those they are fighting to leave behind. Rather than exclusively seeking to ensure their material well-being, ethnic groups may rationally risk confrontation with the state and violence as a means to secure their cultural and historical livelihood—a livelihood which links them to a particular place, for instance.[25] Control over economic development can mean providing for the material needs of the group, as well as securing a part of the identity. In other words, even if we could redistribute wealth from richer to poorer and alleviate economic disparity between groups, this would not necessarily overcome underlying fears and resentment between them. Finally, this approach provides no necessary or logical reason why, among all the potential values over which two actors might struggle, material values should matter most. The priority of material values is assumed, and this leads to weaknesses in the ability of such approaches to offer a general explanation of the dynamics of secession.

Poverty

There is a consensus that poor states are more likely to experience civil war, including ethnic and secessionist wars. As important as this finding is in exposing

poverty, it tells us little about how poverty operates. Different scholars offer various explanations. Fearon and Laitin, for example, emphasize state capabilities: a poor state is a weak state. Collier and Hoeffler stress the opportunity costs of war: poor states contain lots of unemployed males who can more easily take up arms.[26] Because this finding does not allow us to discern which explanation is (more) right, we have little insight into how it is that lack of wealth proxies for civil war onset.

The main problem with these earlier empirical studies is that they have employed a single index—GDP—as an indicator and measure of poverty. This leads to two additional problems. First, these are aggregate figures for an entire state. They do not allow for analysis at the sub-state or regional level, which is the place where most secessionist wars occur. In reality, if we control for the distribution of resources within a state, resources are unrelated to the likelihood of secessionist war. Ethnic groups in regions of the state that are well endowed and poorly endowed with natural and man-made resources are equally likely to be engaged in civil wars.[27] Second, these measures are too broad. More recent research has shown that the nature of wealth and resources matter. For example, lootable resources such as diamonds and oil have been shown to be a better predictor of war onset than are wealth and resources more generally.[28] The argument here is that these resources are more easily exploited (diamonds can be picked up in the alluvial river beds and sold, for instance) and can be used to finance the war effort or increase individual wealth.

This strand of scholarship has suffered in theoretical terms as well. Because scholars promoting this approach do not accept any meaningful difference between ethnic and non-ethnic civil wars, and because their research designs do not distinguish between different types of war, lumping ethnic and non-ethnic sub-state violence into one category, they understandably find no significant difference in their analyses in what causes one type of war over another. Indeed, one of the few empirical studies that disaggregates ethnic wars from civil wars more generally found that ethnic wars, of which secessionist are the vast majority, stemmed more from political grievances than economic opportunity and discrimination.[29] Thus, on their own, economic grievances do not provide a sufficient, or even perhaps a necessary explanation for the emergence of secessionist claims and secessionist war. In short, it generally takes something more than economic grievances to motivate groups to challenge the existing order and demand greater autonomy or secession.

Political Factors: Institutions and Elites

Self-determination and secession are political acts. Therefore it is not surprising that the nature of the political system in which groups operate has been found to influence whether and how groups mobilize for self-determination and secession. Two factors have received considerable attention: the institutional framework within which groups operate and the role of elites in mobilizing groups.

Institutions. The most promising research in this vein examines the nature of political institutions and how political institutions help to channel economic and political demands. In essence, the claim is that there already exist ideal structural or institutional mechanisms for allowing disparate groups to live and work together in peace and prosperity. There are a number of ways these have come over time to be described and represented, including federalist versus centralist, presidential versus parliamentary systems, and proportional versus majoritarian-based legislative

arrangements. Thus, self-determination claims can be expected to escalate to secessionist war in places where these institutions have come under siege or failed completely.

As an explanation of self-determination and secession, the institutionalist approach has a number of important advantages. First, institutions appear to be easily quantifiable and comparable. To the extent this is true, this would facilitate testing and theory-building. Second, the logic is sound: power-sharing institutions grant affected ethnic groups authority in their own government. Given the opportunity, they will take advantage of this; and they should therefore be able to resolve their disputes without resorting to violence.[30] Moreover, to the extent that groups within a federal structure, for example, are insecure or anxious about protecting their identity, language, or cultural heritage, or have concerns about the state's distribution of resources, federalism provides a fundamental structural solution to two of the most common sources of friction among groups and between groups and central governments representing the state.

Yet debate continues among scholars within this approach as to whether federalism, for example, inhibits or fosters ethnic separatism and related violence. Arend Lijphart, for example, argues that through the diffusion of power, federalism is useful for managing ethnic conflicts.[31] Still other scholars argue that the diffusion of power causes precisely the opposite effect: allowing groups greater control over institutions and resources thereby facilitating collective action.[32] Thus, the logic, though reputable, only gets us so far: federalism diminishes the demand for autonomy even as it increases a group's capacity to obtain it. Moreover, this logical difficulty is perhaps reflected in more recent empirical studies, the results of which have raised concerns about the role of institutions in promoting self-determination and secessionist violence. Saideman et al., for example, report that democratization, federalism, and presidentialism may not be as violence-prone as some have argued.[33] They, along with Reynal-Querol, find that proportional representation in a legislature may *reduce* the likelihood of violence.[34] Yet, another scholar challenges this, especially as one expands the time horizon. Brancati finds that although decentralization might decrease ethnic conflict and the tendency towards secessionism in the short term, decentralization also promotes regional parties that reinforce ethnic cleavages and separatist tendencies down the road.[35] Institutions might bring short-term compromise, but they tend to encourage secessionist mobilization and war over time.[36]

Other issues associated with political institutions have been identified as well. The first problem is a basic historical, distributional one: the number of proportional representation and federalist systems is low compared to majoritarian-based legislative and centralist systems. Furthermore, we know from other studies that authoritarian states are also less prone to secessionist violence and they are the most problematic transitional regimes.[37] A larger issue for this approach in terms of coherence and policy relevance, however, has been its tendency to focus on the structure of the institutions themselves, as opposed to the process of how actors within states relate to those institutions. In *From Voting to Violence*, Jack Snyder, for example, demonstrates that the practice of voting is beset by a host of problems that a focus on the structure of the institution itself cannot reveal.[38] Consider the case of Sudan in the 1980s. The institutions looked fine on paper. Any study would have said that they respected the rights of the southerners by granting the South a good deal of autonomy. Southerners should have been satisfied with the institutional

arrangements. The problem was that northern elites decided for political reasons to change the institutional framework, thereby denying southerners the protections those institutions afforded.[39]

Elites. This raises the crucial issue of elites themselves and their role in instigating self-determination claims, secession, and war. There is no doubt that elites play a vital role in mobilizing ethnic groups and making demands on the state. Their role, however, should not be overemphasized. Typically elite-centric approaches assume that passive masses can be mobilized to violence by the oratorical skills of charismatic leaders.[40] The most common recent version of the elite-driven approach applies to de-legitimized communist leaders attempting to hold on to office[41] or gain power in a new sovereign state.[42] Many of these leaders utilize the convenient idea that they had been ardent nationalists all along. Privileged access to state media enabled these leaders to reconstruct ethnic identities, placing themselves at the vanguard of a new mobilization.[43] Given that many formerly communist states were multinational, rhetoric by leaders seeking legitimacy often directed national passions against members of other minority groups, leading to increased violence against members of those groups. FRY President Leader Slobodan Milosevic, for example, invoked both the history of the Serbian nation as victim of atrocities dating back for centuries, along with fears that the economic well-being of Yugoslavia was threatened by the secessionist republics of Croatia and Slovenia. According to Milosevic, Serbs needed to rally to avoid falling victim again to the Croats and to save the Yugoslav economic system from collapse. This explanatory approach has a strong *prima facie* appeal. Nationalist elites certainly appear to have been responsible for much violence in the twentieth century.

Nevertheless, elite-driven theories suffer from at least four shortcomings. First, they misconstrue and underestimate the power of self-determination and nationalism. They accord too little independent effect to the desire for self-determination and nationalism. Elites are assumed not to believe in the nationalist cause and the ethnic masses are assumed to be gullible and passive audiences for elites' charged rhetoric. The theories provide no evidence that the distribution of demagogues is greater in the areas that turn to violence and fail to explain cases in which either the elites or masses genuinely believe in what they are pursuing. Second, even when elites manipulate symbols, myths, and histories for personal gain, these constructions become embedded in history, perception, and interpretation. Elites are then beholden to this constructed reality if they want to stay in power.[44] Third, elite-manipulation explanations over-predict violence. If leaders can arouse a passive nation to violence, why shouldn't they also be able to dissuade an aroused group from taking up arms? This explanation does not address such cases either logically or empirically. Finally, some elites succeed, while others fail. A good example is Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar's attempt in the mid-1990s to inflame ethnic conflict over issues of borders and minorities. Meciar recommended a population transfer of ethnic Slovak and ethnic Hungarian minorities living in neighboring countries. He was excoriated domestically and internationally.[45] Such cases highlight a chief weakness of elite-manipulation approaches: they cannot be generalized.[46]

Structural Factors: Geography and Demography

A third general approach to self-determination, secession, and war has examined the structural conditions of ethnic groups. In essence, the economic and political

arguments stress the willingness of groups to mobilize, make self-determination claims, and perhaps become engaged with the state in a secessionist war. Structural factors shift the focus away from the *willingness* of ethnic groups to act to their *capability* to act, underscoring factors that affect the *capacity* of groups to mobilize for self-determination. The structural factors have stressed the geography and demography of states.

Geography: Settlement Patterns and Borders. On the geographical side, the settlement patterns of ethnic groups are key to understanding both whether they will mobilize for self-determination, and the likelihood that a move toward self-determination will result in secessionist violence and war. One of the most robust findings from the literature involves the geographic concentration of ethnic groups. Those groups that are regionally concentrated are much more likely to mobilize for self-determination and engage in violence than those that are dispersed throughout the territory of the state or live largely in urbanized areas. In fact, regional concentration serves as a practically necessary condition for a self-determination movement and secessionist war to emerge.[47] Of the 117 groups in the Minorities at Risk data set that sought self-determination in 2006, 93 (almost 80 percent) had a regional base.[48] Why is this? It appears to be the case that group concentration a) makes political organization easier over a compact territory; b) facilitates military operations; and c) defines the territory over which claims can be made. In essence, regional concentration helps to explain what Bunce has termed an ideological "misfit" between the center and the periphery.[49] Examining the Caucasus, Bunce found that the "ideological composition" of groups at the center and periphery were important, and that when there was an ideological "misfit," secessionist demands were more likely. In a similar vein, Wimmer and Cederman make the case that it is not economic and political exclusion that leads to secession, but weak political cohesion.[50]

A crucial element here is the territory itself and the status of that territory. If a group identifies with a piece of territory as a homeland and that territory has some recognizable boundaries, then secession is more likely. This explains why an ethnic group that has suffered a loss in autonomy over its territory is more likely to seek self-determination and engage in secessionist war.[51] Consider the cases of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia. Throughout the communist era, ethnic Abkhaz desired a level of autonomy that they had in 1921, but were denied for decades. Even before the Soviet Union collapsed, the Abkhaz sought a reconfiguration of power to regain their lost autonomy. For their part, Ossetians mobilized and fought a secessionist war in reaction to the newly-independent state of Georgia stripping their region of its autonomous status, a status that they had secured under the communist system and sustained for decades. A history of lost autonomy is therefore vital in identifying which groups might mobilize and the territory that is contested.

In addition to the settlement patterns of ethnic groups, another geographic factor that has been found to influence secessionist dynamics is whether the territory of the ethnic group borders a neighboring state. Most secessionist movements emerge in peripheral regions and a separatist war is more likely to take place in regions of states' borders than nearer to states' capitals.[52] We know from the insurgency literature that foreign borders may provide sanctuary for rebels challenging states by allowing access to goods and services that might otherwise be inaccessible. In addition, neighboring states and ethnic kin living across the border might support groups seeking self-determination. In terms of neighboring states, it does seem to

be the case that those groups pursuing self-determination received more external state support: of the 121 groups enjoying external state support in 2006, 69 (or 57 percent) were seeking self-determination. States may choose to support a neighboring ethnic group seeking self-determination for a number of reasons including to serve as a protector to the group (serving in the capacity of a "kin-state"), to undermine the neighboring state, or to bolster their own domestic politics.[53] To date, most of the evidence suggests that decisions to support self-determination movements are driven by politics at home rather than the plight of the group, especially when ethnic ties are involved.[54] While external states do seem to support groups seeking autonomy, ethnic kin do so even more. Upwards of 75 percent of groups seeking self-determination in 2006 received support from kin.[55]

Although external support does seem vital to supporting some ethnic groups' pursuit of self-determination, it is not clear at this point what the direction of causality is. It might be the case that self-determination groups receive more external support than other ethnic minorities,[56] or it might be the case that groups with outside support are encouraged to mobilize.[57] Furthermore, it is not clear what causes some external states to support self-determination beyond their borders. A status quo bias is assumed among states when it comes to borders, and given this bias, they are expected to show restraint and not support secessionists. The reason for this is they too are vulnerable to secessionists (recall that most states in the world are multi-ethnic) and therefore would not want to weaken the norm of inviolate territorial borders. Although this logic is sound, the behavior of states consistently undermines it.[58] Time and again, states with their own secessionists have supported secessionists elsewhere. The most obvious case is Russia, which has been fighting secessionist Chechens for two decades (Chechens would say hundreds of years), while at the same time supporting separatists in Georgia, Kosovo, and Moldova.

Demography: Diversity and Group Size. The other structural element that influences self-determination and secession is the demography of the group. Two factors have received a good deal of consideration: ethnic diversity and group size.

There is a sense among scholars that a lack of cohesiveness among ethnic groups is what explains the desire for self-determination and secessionist war. The question that has plagued this avenue of research has been how to measure diversity. For instance, one measure is ethno-linguistic fractionalization (ELF), which indicates the likelihood that someone will interact with members of other groups.[59] It is an aggregate measure of interaction and although it has been tested in a number of studies, it has received little empirical support.

Another measure has tried to observe polarization, or the degree to which ethnic groups and minorities are intrinsic and influential members of the state. This indicator has been measured in terms of the relative size of each excluded group.[60] Measures of polarization seem to predict the incidence of ethnic conflict better than measures of fractionalization such as ELF, but the findings seem quite fragile. One study, for instance, found that the positive association between exclusion and conflict depended on a few ambiguous codings.[61] So the issue remains conceptually and empirically muddled, with little insight provided so far on how the diversity or polarization of ethnic groups operates in relation to self-determination and conflict.

Measures of diversity and polarization have come under the same criticism as measures of poverty. The field of inquiry remains challenged by a dearth of sub-state

level data: most of the large-n data available to researchers, even today, are state-level, aggregate data. What is needed are data that measure and track characteristics of ethnic groups and their political, social, and economic environments. Although excellent databases such as the Minorities at Risk data set provide some of these data and other data sets are under development,[62] existing data are inadequate and, paradoxically, even important state-level characteristic data are missing.

A final demographic worth mentioning is group size. Size matters when it comes to self-determination and secession. The larger the group, the more likely it will make claims for self-determination and be involved in secessionist wars.[63] Related to settlement patterns above, it also matters whether the group is a minority or a majority. Groups that are regionally concentrated, but are also majorities are more likely to be engaged in secessionist struggles with the state.[64]

The Conduct of Separatist Wars

There is less scholarship on the conduct of separatist wars, but two common findings have emerged. First, separatist wars tend to be long wars. Second, they tend to be unsuccessful. There are a number of explanations for this. First, research has demonstrated that governments engage in long fights because they are averse to setting precedents for making concessions to separatists; they therefore continue to fight to dissuade others from challenging the state.[65] In a similar light, other research makes the case that "sons of the soil movements" involving territorial conflicts with a peripheral ethnic minority last a long time because the central government believes time is on its side as compared to the minority.[66] The government is in a position to hold out, denying victory to secessionist rebels. Yet because the ethnic group is usually fighting from a defensive, concentrated position of strength in a compact territory, it can deny the state victory as well, resulting in prolonged fighting and stalemates, with little hope of a permanent resolution (e.g., Kashmir, Palestine).[67]

The Resolution of Separatist Wars

There are two main themes in the academic literature on resolving secessionist wars. The first theme centers on widespread skepticism about whether international peacemaking does any good (and indeed, whether it may be counterproductive). The second involves an extensive debate over the merits and drawbacks of partition.

Mediation and Peacemaking

There has been some interesting theoretical work on whether unbiased peacemaking is useful or the best route for resolving civil wars, including secessionist wars. Most of the research has focused on the interests of the outside mediator and whether it is better for the mediator to be neutral or biased in helping to resolve the conflict.[68] To date, the literature has not produced any definitive findings, with scholars continuing to make the case for both biased and neutral mediators. The literature has pointed out some of the issues, however, that are necessary to consider as outside actors contemplate whether to intervene. For example, one issue that has emerged from some of the casework is that if the mediator is neutral, combatants will question whether it is actually committed to resolving the conflict. This has led other scholars to examine whether mediators thus needed to have an interest in the stakes of the

conflict.[69] The problem here is that the side not favored will not trust the process and accept the outcome. Yet another line of recent research has examined and made the case that either strongly biased or completely impartial mediators may be successful but that "middling intervener bias" will undermine the process.[70] A final, more pessimistic strand concludes that intervention more generally is problematic if it is the case that third parties fail to match their mandates to their political will.[71] Given that most mediation efforts do not engage vital interests of the mediator (and here we are talking largely about medium to large states), political will is often lacking and the mediation efforts will suffer as a result.

Partition

In addition to discussion about the merits of mediation of these conflicts, there has been a good deal of debate over the merits of partition. Just as with the mediation literature, this literature has produced many articles that argue with one another directly about the merits of partition, with the key question here focusing on whether partition leads to sustained peace.

The literature first emerged in the 1990s after the publication of a controversial article by Chaim Kaufmann that argued that partitioning ethnic groups was the only way to secure peace between them.[72] For Kaufmann, partition did not entail granting sovereignty and independent statehood, simply separation of populations. He based his argument on the notion of the security dilemma, which holds that members of ethnic groups fear one another, there is a deep-seated mistrust between ethnic groups, and therefore, in the absence of effective state authority and especially after violence between groups, the various groups need to be separated into their own compact territories.[73]

The new wave of partition advocates is a little more cautious than Kaufmann was in the 1990s.[74] They tend to argue that partition is effective, but it must be conditional on some important factor. For example, one scholar argues that partition only works if it is "complete," in that it involves the physical separation of groups rather than the redrawing of borders,[75] while another argues that only partition that is "complete" in the sense of redrawing borders works, but that this condition applies only to "wars that involve competing nation-state projects."[76] But more recent research shows that even these more nuanced claims are still fragile and that the findings about the effectiveness of partition in securing peace are quite sensitive to the data and how the data are coded (e.g., how partition itself is defined—is it just separation of populations or does it include independence?).[77]

The problem with the literature on partition is twofold. First, there are few cases of partition to begin with, so any ambiguity regarding coding issues and cases will lead to different findings.[78] Since 1945 there have been only nine cases of full partition after a secessionist war that resulted in a fully independent, internationally-recognized and sovereign state—Ethiopia-Eritrea, India-Pakistan, Indonesia-East Timor, Israel-Palestine, Pakistan-Bangladesh, South Africa-Namibia, Sudan-South Sudan, Yugoslavia-Bosnia, Yugoslavia-Croatia—and there have been only eight cases of de facto partition, where the two entities are basically separated and autonomous, but the seceding entity has not achieved sovereign independence—Azerbaijan-Karabakh, Cyprus-Northern Cyprus, Georgia-Abkhazia, Georgia-South Ossetia, Iraq-Kurdistan, Moldova-Transnistria, Russia-Chechnya, and Yugoslavia-Kosovo.[79] Given so few cases, it is not surprising that the statistical

analyses have failed to demonstrate with any confidence the efficacy of partition in securing longer-term stability.

Second, the literature has tended to ask the question of whether partition works, rather than under what conditions partition works. Partition can work, but it does not work consistently.[80] We need to determine the conditions under which its success is most likely and compare the relative efficacy of different conditions. Only then will we have an appropriate sense of modesty about the notion that any of these phenomena will be subject to variance.[81]

There is still some good work to be done on the subject, though on the question of the downside of partition as a general policy option, Toft shows that ethnic groups are more likely to be violent when they are concentrated. This begs the question: would partition merely encourage violence by these groups? She also argues that if a state grants one secession, it is more likely to face future challenges—so partition may lower violence locally and in the short term, but raise it regionally and across the state in the long term. Returning to Kaufmann, one of his core arguments is that partition needs to be handled proactively, with a plan in place to separate the groups systematically and completely. He argues that one of the reasons so many Kashmiris died and hostilities remain high today is that there was never a fully orchestrated and realized separation of Kashmir's population. A number of cases do seem to support the logic of his argument as does a recent examination of the incidence of conflict between rump and secessionist states, which finds that they are more likely to escalate to violence when the secession took place violently, and when there are members of the secessionists' group still living in the rump state.[82]

Conclusion

There is much room for optimism about our collective understanding of the causes, dynamics, and consequences of self-determination, secession, and civil war. We know, for example, that economics, politics, and ethnic identity are all necessary components to understanding self-determination and secessionist war. As a result, we can move toward resolving or preventing such violence with policies that take all three important pieces into account. In addition, the study of ethnic violence has brought together academic communities ranging from anthropologists and psychologists, to historians, comparativists, international relations theorists, and security studies specialists.

This theoretical collaboration is not only fortunate in terms of its ability to advance *theory*, but as events in the real world continue to demonstrate, demand for such knowledge to inform *policy* is likely to remain high for the foreseeable future. Self-determination conflicts are taking place all over the globe, and among the few that have escalated to war, some have rivaled or exceeded the destructiveness of many interstate wars. Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, for example, no longer exist as states.

As this review makes clear, academics are not at a loss for theories to explain secessionist dynamics; and though a number of these theories remain underdeveloped, in the past decade in particular our general understanding of secession dynamics has improved a great deal. We now have a considerable body of scholarship that can serve as a useful guide to policy where self-determination, secession, and civil war are involved. The best way to use this scholarship is to ask two sorts of questions: a) whether there are things we can predict in advance of a problem that might

help us *prevent* a conflict from escalation; and b) what sorts of policy initiatives might bring an *ongoing* and violent dispute to a lasting (and fair) resolution.

Regarding the first question, we can survey ethnic communities and determine where they match the patterns of concentration associated with escalation to violence. Groups concentrated in a self-described ethnic homeland, and who constitute a majority in that territory, are most apt to a) make ambitious claims; and b) escalate disputes to violence should their claims not be acted upon. Many such groups exist today in an equilibrium that could be shattered by an unexpected event such as a financial crisis, a natural disaster, or a coup. The exercise is analogous to mapping fault lines and evaluating the degree to which buildings and other vital infrastructure near such fault lines can withstand an earthquake, rather than the more ambitious goal of predicting an earthquake. Once mapped, an engaged third party can focus available resources on helping incumbent governments head off a potential disaster by building institutions aimed at ameliorating any security concerns domestic ethnic groups might have regarding the security of their identity. For example, a common complaint surrounds language and education programs. A positive way to head off minority group claims is to allow such groups to educate their children in their native tongues *and* at the same time protect the state's interests by incentivizing the adoption of a majority group's language. Parents often speak a mother tongue with their children at home, but insist their children also learn the majority group language so as to avoid discrimination in higher education and subsequent employment.

Regarding the second question, we have solid research to show that negotiated settlements will only halt ongoing wars if a) settlements include credible threats of harm should parties to the settlement renege on their commitments; and b) credible guarantees of economic, diplomatic, and administrative support should parties to the settlement abide by their obligations.[83] Settlements incorporating both sticks and carrots in this fashion show the highest likelihood not only of ending a violent conflict, but of preventing a recurrence of violence in the future. Yet most third parties capable of providing the economic, diplomatic, and administrative support to post-war reconstruction tend to be shy of credibly guaranteeing harm and enforcing the peace.[84]

Note that in both cases, state-of-the-art academic research has offered solutions to problems that both focus (or re-focus) on politics, and present policy makers with an age-old dilemma: what "works" on the ground may not be workable in a domestic political sense or in the international arena. The policy of partition discussed above is probably the most charged option for dealing with self-determination movements, yet it is often not even tabled. This is because states themselves fear other potential secessionists in their borders might become emboldened and the international community writ large is composed of largely multinational states. Politics, domestic and international, preclude its inclusion as a possible policy option. Thus, as scholarship moves forward, it will not only have to deal with the empirical realities on the ground, but the feasibility of implementing policies to deal with those realities.

Notes

1. The appendix (available from the publisher's online edition of *Terrorism and Political Violence*) includes lists of ethnic groups at political risk since 1945, territorial secessionist wars from 1945-present, ongoing secessionist wars, and other militant secessionist groups active in the last 25 years.

2. Monica Duffy Toft and Stephen M. Saideman, "Self-Determination Movements and their Outcomes," in J. Joseph Hewitt, Jonathan Wilkenfeld, and Ted Robert Gurr, eds., *Peace and Conflict 2010* (Washington DC: Paradigm Publishers, 2009), 39–50.

3. Myron Weiner, "The Macedonian Syndrome," *World Politics* 23, no. 4 (1971): 665–683; Myron Wiener, "Bad Neighbors, Bad Neighborhoods: An Inquiry into the Causes of Refugee Flows," *International Security* 21, no. 1 (Summer 1996): 5–42; and Susan Olzak, *The Global Dynamics of Racial and Ethnic Mobilization* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006).

4. Despite its age, one of the best considerations of the morality of peoples to the right of self-determination is Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), chapter 6. Also see, Allen Buchanan, *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce from Fort Sumter to Lithuania and Quebec* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991); Lee Bucheit, *Secession: The Legitimacy of Self-Determination* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978); and Lea Brilmayer, "Secession and Self-Determination: A Territorial Interpretation," *Yale Journal of International Law* 16 (1991): 177–201. For critical policy assessments of the tensions and problems associated with self-determination and secession, see Max M. Kampelman, "Secession and the Right of Self-Determination: An Urgent Need to Harmonize Principle with Pragmatism," *Washington Quarterly* 16, no. 3 (1993): 5–12; and Amitai Etzioni, "The Evils of Self-Determination," *Foreign Policy* no. 89 (1992): 21–34. On the legal issues, see Antonio Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples: A Legal Reappraisal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) and the more dense, but comprehensive treatment by James R. Crawford, *The Creation of States in International Law*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

5. Stanley Pignal, "Belgian Elections Show Rise in Separatism," *Financial Times,* June 13, 2010, available at: http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/0bf8f528-76f4-11df-ba79-00144feabdc0.html; and Stephen Castle and Steven Erlanger, "Vote Widens Divide Between Flemish-and French-Speaking Regions," *The New York Times,* June 13, 2010, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/14/world/europe/14belgium.html.

6. A more in-depth discussion of identity and ethnicity can be found in Jeffrey Murer's essay in this edition.

7. John L. Comaroff and Paul C. Stern, "New Perspectives on Nationalism and War," *Theory and Society* 23, no. 1 (February 1994): 35–45, 38. Clifford Geertz is often credited with first articulating the primordialist view. See Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution," in Clifford Geertz, ed., *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa* (New York: New Press, 1963). See also Harold R. Isaacs, *Idols of the Tribe: Group Identity and Political Change* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1970), 105–157.

8. James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Violence and Social Construction of Ethnic Identity," *International Organization* 54, no. 4 (Autumn 2000): 845–877.

9. Comaroff and Stern, "New Perspectives on Nationalism and War" (see note 7 above), 39.

10. Ibid.

11. Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1986), 22–31.

12. Walker Connor, "A Nation Is a Nation, Is a State, Is an Ethnic Group, Is a . . .," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1, no. 4 (October 1978): 377–400.

13. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 7. For a more recent application see Henry E. Hale, *The Foundations of Ethnic Politics: Separatism of States and Nations in Eurasia and the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

14. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 5–9.

15. Roman Szporluk, "The Imperial Legacy and the Soviet Nationalities Problem," in Lubomyr Hajda and Mark Beissinger, eds., *The Nationalities Factor in Soviet Politics and Society* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), 15.

16. See, for example, David D. Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

17. For a breakdown of the vote see, http://southernsudan2011.com/ (accessed February 2011).

18. Ted Robert Gurr, "Peoples Against States: Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System," *International Studies Quarterly* 38 (1994): 347–377.

19. See Monica Duffy Toft, "Issue Indivisibility and Time Horizons as Rationalist Explanations for War," *Security Studies* 15, no. 1 (January–March 2006): 34–69.

20. Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence: Identity, Interests, and the Indivisibility of Territory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003). These arguments and findings were further supported and developed in Barbara F. Walter, *Reputation and Civil War: Why Separatists Conflicts Are so Violent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

21. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983); E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1990). Also see Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

22. Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Ethnic Conflict* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985), especially chapter 6; and Jean LaPonce, *Languages and Their Territories*, trans. Anthony Martin-Sperry (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), especially, 137–149. The seminal work is Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1966). For critiques see, Michael Hector, *Internal Colonialism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1974) and Edward A. Tiryakian and Ronald Rogowski, eds., *New Nationalisms of the Developed West: Toward Explanation* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1985).

23. Kisangani Emizet and Vicki L. Hesli, "The Disposition to Secede: An Analysis of the Soviet Case," *Comparative Political Studies* 27, no. 4 (1995): 493–536.

24. Walker Connor spells out this logic in "Eco- or Ethno-Nationalism?," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 7, no. 3 (1984): 342–359.

25. John Agnew, *Place and Politics: The Geographical Mediation of State and Society* (Boston, MA: Allen & Unwin, 1987).

26. James D. Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97 (2003): 75–90 and Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "On Economic Causes of Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 50, no. 4 (1998): 563–573; and "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563–595.

27. Toft, "Indivisible Territory" (see note 19 above) and Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence* (see note 20 above).

28. Philippe Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflict," *Political Geography* 20 (2001): 561–584; Michael Ross, "How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases," *International Organization* 58 (2004): 35–67; and "What Do We Know about Natural Resources and Civil War?," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (2004): 337–356.

29. Nicholas Sambanis, "Do Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes?," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, no. 3 (June 2001): 259–282.

30. Håvard Hegre, Tanja Ellingsen, Scott Gates, and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Towards A Democratic Civil Peace? Opportunity, Grievance, and Civil War 1816–1992," *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 1 (March 2001): 33–48.

31. Arend Lijphart, *Democracies in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977) and *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984).

32. Philip G. Roeder, "Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilization," *World Politics* 43, no. 2 (1991): 196–232; Will Kymlicka, *Theories of Secessionism* (London: Routledge Press, 1998); Valerie Bunce, *Subversive Institutions: The Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

33. Stephen Saideman, David J. Lanoue, Michael Campenni, and Samuel Stanton, "Democratization, Political Institutions, and Ethnic Conflict: A Pooled Time-Series Analysis, 1985–1998," *Comparative Political Studies* 35, no. 1 (February, 2002): 103–129.

34. Marta Reynal-Querol, "Ethnicity, Political Systems, and Civil Wars," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, no. 1 (February 2002): 29–54.

35. Dawn Brancati, "Decentralization: Fueling the Fire or Dampening the Flames of Ethnic Conflict and Secession?," *International Organization* 60, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 651–685; Svante Cornell, "Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in

Theoretical Perspective," *World Politics* 54 (2002): 245–276; and Roeder, "Soviet Federalism and Ethnic Mobilization" (see note 32 above).

36. Ian D. Lustick, Dan Miodownik, and Roy. J Eidelson, "Secessionism in Multicultural States: Does Power Sharing Prevent or Encourage It,?" *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 2 (2004): 209–229; and Thomas Chapman and Philip G. Roeder, "Partition as a Solution to Wars of Nationalism: The Importance of Institutions," *American Political Science Review* 101 (2007): 677–692.

37. Gurr, "Peoples Against States" (see note 18 above); Carol Skalnik Leff, "Democratization and Disintegration in Multi-National States: The Breakup of the Communist Federations," *World Politics* 51, no. 2 (1999): 205–235; Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000); and Hegre, Ellingsen, Gates and Gleditsch, "Towards A Democratic Civil Peace?" (see note 30 above).

38. Snyder, *From Voting to Violence* (see note 37 above).

39. The best general history of Sudan is Douglas H. Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars* (Oxford: James Currey, 2003).

40. Three of the best works include: Paul Brass, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1991); V. P. Gagnon, Jr., "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1995/95): 130–166; and Peter Gourevitch, "The Reemergence of Peripheral Nationalisms: Some Comparative Speculations on the Spatial Distribution of Political Leadership and Economic Growth," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21, no. 3 (July 1979): 303–322.

41. Gagnon, "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict" (see note 40 above); and Elise Guiliano, "Secessionism from the Bottom Up: Democratization, Nationalism, and Local Accountability in the Russian Transition," *World Politics* 58 (2006): 296–310.

42. Pierre Englebert and Rebecca Hummel, "Let's Stick Together: Understanding Africa's Secessionist Deficit," *African Affairs* 104 (2005): 399–427.

43. Jack Snyder and Karen Ballentine, "Nationalism and the Marketplace of Ideas," *International Security* 21, no. 2 (Fall 1996): 5–40 and Snyder, *From Voting to Violence* (see note 37 above).

44. According to the Kosovo Commission Report, this is what happened to Milosevic: "By playing the nationalist and ethnic card in Kosovo as his path to power, Milosevic had made himself captive of internal ideological forces that were unwilling to compromise on Kosovo." The Independent Commission on Kosovo, *The Kosovo Report* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 132.

45. Jane Perlez, "Slovak Leader Fans Region's Old Ethnic Flames," *The New York Times,* October 12, 1997, http: //www.nytimes.com/1997/10/12/world/slovak-leader-fans-a-regions-'s-old-ethnic-flames.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm

46. Another interpretation offered by one of the reviewers is that they can be generalized, but they are incomplete by not theorizing on the conditions under which elites succeed or fail. I thank the reviewer for this insight.

47. Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence* (see note 20 above).

48. Toft and Saideman, "Self-Determination Movements and their Outcomes" (see note 2 above).

49. Bunce, *Subversive Institutions* (see note 32 above).

50. Andreas Wimmer and Lars-Erik Cederman, "Ethnic Politics and Armed Conflict: A Configurational Analysis of a New Global Data Set," *American Sociological Review* 74 (2009): 316–337.

51. This was first reported in Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993) and has been confirmed in a number of later studies, including Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence* (see note 20 above).

52. Lars Erik Cederman, Halvard Buhaug, and Jan Ketil Rod, "Ethno-nationalist Dyads and Civil War: A GIS-Based Analysis," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 4 (2009): 496–525.

53. For elaborations of these motivations see, Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and Erin K. Jenne, *Ethnic Bargaining: The Paradox of Minority Empowerment* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

54. Stephen M. Saideman, *The Ties that Divide: Ethnic Politics, Foreign Policy and International Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000) and Stephen M. Saideman and William Ayres, *For Kin or Country* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

55. Toft and Saideman, "Self-Determination Movements and their Outcomes" (see note 2 above).

56. Stephen M. Saideman, "Discrimination in International Relations: Examining Why Some Ethnic Groups Receive More External Support than Others," *Journal of Peace Research* 39, no. 1 (2002): 27–50.

57. Rupen Centinyan, "Ethnic Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-Party Intervention," *International Organization* 56 (2002): 645–677; Erin Jenne, "A Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog That Did Not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia," *International Studies Quarterly* 48 (2004): 729–754; and Erin K. Jenne, Stephen M. Saideman, and Will Lowe, "Separatism as a Bargaining Posture: The Role of Leverage in Minority Radicalization," *Journal of Peace Research* 44 (2007): 539–558.

58. Stephen M. Saideman, "Explaining the International Relations of Secessionist Movements," *International Organization* 51, no. 4 (1997): 721–753; and Alexis Heraclides, "Secessionist Minorities and External Involvement," *International Organization* 44, no. 3 (1990): 341–378.

59. Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War" (see note 26 above).

60. Jose G. Montalvo and Marta Reynal-Querol, "Ethnic Polarization, Potential Conflict, and Civil Wars," *American Economic Review* 95 (2005): 796–816; Lars-Erik Cederman and Luc Girardin, "Beyond Fractionalization: Mapping Ethnicity onto Nationalist Insurgencies," *American Political Science Review* 101 (2007): 173–185; and Cederman, Buhaug, and Rod, "Ethno-nationalist Dyads and Civil War" (see note 52 above).

61. James D. Fearon, Kimuli Kasara, and David D. Laitin, "Ethnic Minority Rule and Civil War Onset," *American Political Science Review* 101 (2007): 187–193; and Cederman and Girardin, "Beyond Fractionalization" (see note 60 above).

62. In this light, the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO) has started a major program to compile more localized and regional data that might provide insight into secessionist dynamics (available at: http://www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/Armed-Conflict/). There is also the Ethnic Power Relations data set that includes measures for ethnic group size, location, and access to state power. Most of the data relate to political and geographical factors rather than economics. See Lars-Erik Cederman, Brian Min, Andreas Wimmer, Ethnic Power Relations dataset (available online: http://dvn.iq.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/epr).

63. Fearon and Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War" (see note 26 above).

64. Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence* (see note 20 above).

65. Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence* (see note 20 above) and Barbara F. Walter, "Explaining the Intractability of Territorial Conflict," *International Studies Review* 5, no. 4 (2003): 137–153.

66. James D. Fearon, "Separatist Wars, Partition, and World Order," *Security Studies* 13 (2004): 394–415.

67. Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence* (see note 20 above).

68. For an early take on this question see, Richard Betts, "The Delusion of Impartial Intervention," *Foreign Affairs* 73, no. 6 (1994): 20–33.

69. Andrew H. Kydd, "When Can Mediators Build Trust?," *American Political Science Review* 100 (2006): 449–452.

70. Katja Favretto, "Should Peacemakers Take Sides? Major Power Mediation, Coercion, and Bias," *American Political Science Review* 103 (2009): 248–265.

71. Daniel Byman and Taylor Seybolt, "Humanitarian Intervention and Communal Civil Wars," *Security Studies* 13 (2003): 33–78.

72. Chaim Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars," *International Security* 20, no. 4 (1996): 136–175.

73. The logic of the security dilemma was originally invoked to explain how actors not interested in aggression might nevertheless end up fighting a war. It does not address other motivations such as greed or aggressiveness. The point is that if one side is not fearful or wants war, then there is no security dilemma. In his efforts to mobilize Serbs to attack Bosnia in 1992, for example, Slobodan Milosevic was more likely motivated by greed or personal

ambition than he was by fear. The collapse of central authority may make some actors fearful, but greed or outright aggressiveness cannot be excluded as possible motivations for others.

74. Alexander B. Downes, "The Holy Land Divided: Defending Partition as a Solution to Ethnic Wars," *Security Studies* 10 (2001): 58–116; and David Carment and Dane Rowlands, "Vengeance and Intervention: Can Third Parties Bring Peace without Separation?," *Security Studies* 13 (2004): 366–393. Downes, Carment and Rowlands provide more recent defenses of partition, but they are not very distinguishable from Kaufmann's earlier work.

75. Carter Johnson, "Partitioning for Peace: Sovereignty, Demography, and Ethnic Civil Wars," *International Security* 32, no. 4 (2008): 140–170.

76. Thomas Chapman and Philip G. Roeder, "Partition as a Solution to Wars of Nationalism: The Importance of Institutions," *American Political Science Review* 101 (2007): 677–692.

77. Nicholas Sambanis and Jonah Schulfer-Wohl, "What's in a Line?" *International Security* 34, no. 2 (2009): 82–118.

78. Alan Kuperman, "Is Partition Really the Only Hope? Reconciling Different Findings about Ethnic Wars," *Security Studies* 13, no. 4 (2004): 314–349.

79. Adapted from Chapman and Roeder, "Partition as a Solution to Wars of Nationalism" (see note 76 above).

80. Of course, partition would work perfectly if there were no one left on the territory to kill, but separating out and annihilating all of the members of the other group is nearly impossible to carry out.

81. Sambanis and Schulfer-Wohl, "What's in a Line?" (see note 77 above).

82. Jaroslav Tir, "Keeping the Peace after Secession: Territorial Conflicts between Rump and Secessionist States," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49 (2005): 713–741.

83. Monica Duffy Toft, *Securing the Peace: The Durable Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

84. Barbara F. Walter, *Committing to Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).