

**A STATE DIVIDED: THE DECISIVE IMPACT OF THIRD-PARTY
INTERVENTIONS ON SECESSION CONFLICTS (1945-2011)**

**ERICA MA
A Thesis
in
International Relations**

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Bachelor of Arts
2015

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Abstract

Increasingly since the end of World War II, nationalist groups pursuing secession have claimed self-determination, a right of peoples to define the status of their nations. However, as secession violates a state's territorial integrity, these conflicts have tended to receive interventions from third parties interested in preserving boundaries. Therefore, utilizing mixed methods and four hypotheses, this thesis seeks to answer the following question: *how do third-party interventions affect the outcome of secession conflicts (1945-2011)?*

The first three hypotheses measure how the type of intervener, the target of the intervention, and the type of intervention affect the *temporary* outcome of a conflict. These hypotheses are tested with a logistic regression on a sample of 86 distinct interventions in 29 secession conflicts from 1945 to 2011. The fourth hypothesis measures whether the type of intervener affects the *permanent* outcome of a conflict. This hypothesis is tested with case studies of East Timor (1975-2002) and the Western Sahara (1975-2011). All four hypotheses are based off a realist theoretical framework established in the literature, which argues that third parties can decisively affect these secession conflicts.

The results of the statistical regression found that the type of intervener and target of an intervention affect the *temporary* outcome of a conflict, while the type of intervention does not. Similarly, the results of the case studies found that the type of intervener also affects the *permanent* outcome of a conflict. The implications of this study thus provide insight into how third parties can intervene to maximize their impact on secession conflicts. While previous works have studied interventions in intrastate conflicts in general, these hypotheses test interventions in secession conflicts specifically and with a distinction between the temporary and permanent impacts of third parties, offering a unique contribution to an ongoing discussion regarding statehood struggles.

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List of Acronyms

FRETILIN	Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICJ	International Court of Justice
INTERFET	International Force for East Timor
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
OAU	Organization of African Unity
POLISARIO	Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro <i>Frente Popular de Liberación de Saguía el Hamra y Río de Oro</i>
SADR	Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
UDT	Timorese Democratic Union
UNAMET	United Nations Mission in East Timor
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor

Acknowledgements

To Dr. Frank Plantan – a Great Power unto himself – and the International Relations Program for their dedication to all of us;

To Professor William Burke-White, whose course and advice first showed me that I could breathe new life into old concepts;

To Dr. Isa Camyar for his incredible kindness and help;

And above all to Dr. Thomas Cavanna, who answered long-winded questions, replied to wordy (panicked) emails, and always bore my bad jokes with good humor;

Thanks for teaching me the things that matter.

“Why not stand still and draw a circle round your feet and name that Selfistan?” –

Salman Rushdie, *Shalimar the Clown*, 2005

“Some nations have certainly emerged without the blessings of their own state.” –

Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1983

Map of States with Secession Conflicts Examined in Study



Chapter One: Introduction

On September 18th, 2014, Scotland held a referendum on the question of whether it should be a country independent of the United Kingdom. Separatist groups around the world, from the Kurds in the Middle East to fringe Texan secessionists chasing ghosts of statehoods past, voiced their support for Scottish independence. In the days leading up to the referendum, the nationalist party leader of the Basque, an autonomous ethnic group within Spain, proudly displayed the kilt he owned and quipped that Basques “would rather be part of an independent Scotland than remain part of Spain.”¹ The referendum provoked ripples of nationalist sentiment around the world, with separatist groups hoping that Scottish independence would lend credence to their own secessionist desires. “There is a serious risk of a domino effect,” George Robertson, a former secretary general of NATO, warned in September. “A ‘yes’ vote could trigger ‘the Balkanization of Europe.’”² Whether that is true remains to be seen, but such declarations only heighten fears surrounding secession claims.

Although in Scotland the “No” vote supporting unification with the U.K., at 55.3 percent, edged out the 44.7 percent “Yes” vote, the results still fueled hopes around the world for the possibility of a successful bid for secession.³ The day after the Scottish referendum, the parliament of Catalonia, another autonomous region within Spain, approved a call for a Catalan independence referendum. While the parliament eventually

¹ Katrin Bennhold, “From Kurdistan to Texas, Scots Spur Separatists,” *The New York Times*, September 10, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/11/world/europe/separatists-around-the-world-draw-inspiration-from-scotland.html>.

² Ibid.

³ “Scottish Independence Referendum - Results - BBC News,” accessed November 30, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/events/scotland-decides/results>.

amended the referendum to only an informal “popular consultation,” Catalonia nevertheless held a vote on November 9th, 2014, despite protests from the Spanish government. In this popular consultation, 80.76 percent of voters supported Catalanian independence.⁴

The recent actions of Scotland and Catalonia illustrate that secession and self-determination aspirations of nationalist groups remain central concepts in the current international system. Exploring these principles opens “a veritable Pandora’s box” of questions related to sovereignty, statehood, and territorial integrity.⁵ In particular, the idea of secession leads to the issue of whether a group’s right to self-determination trumps a state’s right to territorial integrity. State practice indicate that governments vehemently resist when their territorial integrity is threatened, and, fearing setting precedence by allowing groups to secede, the international community tends to intervene in secession conflicts.

The topic of interventions into secession conflicts is therefore the focus of this thesis. I examine how interventions by third parties affect the outcome of secession conflicts, specifically ones that arise in a post-colonial context in the period from 1945 to 2011. As secession refers to the external aspect of self-determination, the terms “secession” and “external self-determination” will be used interchangeably throughout this thesis. In the literature, scholars generally define self-determination as the right of groups with a shared ethnicity, culture, and language to determine their status in the

⁴ “BBC News - Catalonia Vote: 80% Back Independence - Officials,” accessed November 30, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29982960>.

⁵ Antonio Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples: A Legal Reappraisal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1.

international system.⁶ Secession is the external realization of that right, and is defined as the process by which a nationalist group determines this status through the formation of a new state.⁷ Finally, intervention, broadly defined, consists of assistance “with the apparent purpose of influencing the course of an ongoing civil conflict”⁸ It is also important to note the difference between nations and states – the former is a group of people conscious of its unity and identity and the latter is a politically designated territory.⁹ The boundaries of nations and states often do not align, and in some instances this may provoke a group’s desire to secede and form its own state.

In studying this topic, my research question is: *how do third-party interventions affect the outcome of secession conflicts?* This study begins in 1945, with the wave of decolonization that occurred after World War II. The temporal scope of this study is limited to 2011 due to the most recent datasets regarding secessionist movements providing information only up to this year. The scope of this study is further limited to post-colonial secession conflicts; that is, disputes over either 1) the implementation of self-determination during the decolonization era, such as Eritrea’s secession from Ethiopia, or 2) the territorial definition of former colonies, such as the Kachin and Karen ethnic groups in Burma. The results of this thesis can therefore be generalized to all secession cases arising in the post-colonial context, but not to cases arising in a non-colonial context, such as Chechnya in Russia and the Quebecois in Canada.

To answer my research question, I adopt the following four hypotheses:

⁶ Hurst Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination: The Accommodation of Conflicting Rights*, Revised edition (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 7.

⁷ James Crawford, “State Practice and International Law in Relation to Secession,” *British Yearbook of International Law* 69, no. 1 (January 1, 1999): 85.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 342.

⁹ James B. Minahan, *Nations without States: A Historical Dictionary of Contemporary National Movements* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1996), Preface.

H1a: *Regional powers have a larger temporary impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.*

H1b: *Regional powers have a larger permanent impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.*

H2: *Interveners have a larger temporary impact on the outcome of secession conflicts when targeting the mother state rather than the secessionist group.*

H3: *Diplomatic interventions have a larger temporary impact than military/economic interventions on the outcome of secession conflicts.*

These hypotheses seek to test both the temporary and permanent impact of third parties on the outcome of a secession conflict, the dependent variable (DV). In order to test the temporary impact of an intervention, I observe whether an intervention was successful, with success defined as the cessation of the conflict for at least six months.¹⁰ This operationalization of the dependent variable tests H1a, H2, and H3 in the quantitative analysis section. In order to test the permanent impact, I observe whether a secession was successful, with success defined as whether statehood is achieved. This operationalization tests H1b in the qualitative analysis section. Table 1a illustrates these hypotheses.

¹⁰ Patrick Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 14.

Quantitative Data Analysis	Qualitative Data Analysis
H1a: <i>Regional powers have a larger <u>temporary</u> impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.</i>	H1b: <i>Regional powers have a larger <u>permanent</u> impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.</i>
H2: <i>Interveners have a larger <u>temporary</u> impact on the outcome of secession conflicts when targeting the mother state rather than the secessionist group.</i>	
H3: <i>Diplomatic interventions have a larger <u>temporary</u> impact than military/economic interventions on the outcome of secession conflicts.</i>	
DV: <u>the outcome of a secession conflict</u>	
DV operationalized as whether an intervention was successful, measures <u>temporary</u> impact	DV operationalized as whether a secession was successful, measures <u>permanent</u> impact

Table 1a – Operationalization and Methods of Testing Hypotheses

Hypotheses H1a (testing the type of intervener), H2 (target of the intervention), and H3 (type of intervention), measuring the success of an intervention, are imported from a framework established by scholar Patrick Regan, who examines these conditions using a broader sample of intrastate conflicts.¹¹ Although secession conflicts are a subset of intrastate conflicts, no study in the field has yet studied how third-party interveners impact secession conflicts with these specific parameters. My study therefore offers a contribution to this gap in the literature.

Additionally, I chose to test my hypotheses two different ways because of limitations existing in Regan’s study. Regan acknowledges that even a successful intervention – leading to cessation of a conflict for at least six months – is only a temporary measure of impact and may not resolve the underlying issues of an intrastate conflict. In order to address the permanent impact of third parties, I test H1b by

¹¹ Patrick Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*.

operationalizing impact as whether a secession was successful, which is a more lasting solution than a successful intervention, as once a state is created, it cannot be involuntarily dismantled.

Through these hypotheses, the broader problem this thesis addresses is how third-party interveners can affect what, technically, is a dyadic conflict. In practice, however, these conflicts are rarely self-contained. According to legal scholar Ulrich Schneckener, secession “conflicts raise a set of legal, political, economic, and security issues that go far beyond the local struggle between a central government and a separatist movement – they are by no means a purely internal affair.”¹² The results of this thesis can therefore have implications of how successful claims to secession *can* emerge, depending on how the third party intervenes.

These implications can be especially useful in the present day, as secessionist movements have increased dramatically since 1945. According to a 2014 study by Tanisha Fazal and Ryan Griffiths, “That the number of movements has generally increased over the post-1945 period, even as the number of sovereign states has increased, speaks to a high rate of secessionism: new movements are springing up to replace those that succeeded in gaining their independence.”¹³ The number of secessionist movements per year since 1945 has averaged 51, with a spike in average number of movements per year at the end of the Cold War in 1991 (see Figure 1a). As of 2011, there exist 55 current secessionist movements.¹⁴ The most recent instances of secession include

¹² Ulrich Schneckener, “Third-party Involvement in Self-determination Conflicts” in *Settling Self Determination Disputes: Complex Power-Sharing in Theory and Practice*, ed. Marc Weller, Barbara Metzger, and Niall Johnson. (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 2008), 467.

¹³ Tanisha M. Fazal and Ryan D. Griffiths, “Membership Has Its Privileges: The Changing Benefits of Statehood,” *International Studies Review* 16, no. 1 (March 1, 2014): 84.

¹⁴ Fazal and Griffiths, “Membership Has Its Privileges: The Changing Benefits of Statehood,” 83-4.

Kosovo, which separated from Serbia in 2008, and South Sudan, which separated from Sudan in 2011.

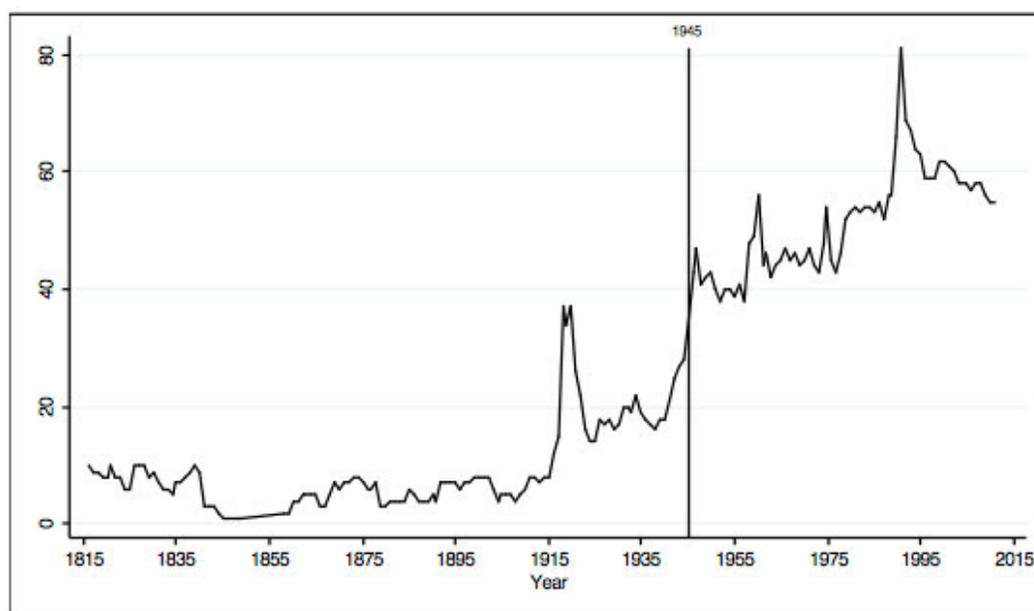


Figure 1a - Annual Number of Secessionist Movements, 1816-2011

Source: Fazal and Griffiths 2014

In order to answer my research question and test my hypotheses in the following thesis, I adopt a mixed methods approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative analysis in order to provide a comprehensive investigation of how various conditions of third-party interventions affect the outcome of secession conflicts. Within this study, the actors involved include mother states, secessionist groups, and third-party interveners, and the unit of analysis is each individual intervention. For the quantitative portion of this study, I conduct a logistic regression on a sample of 86 interventions in secession conflicts from 1945 to 2011. For the qualitative portion, I conduct a historical analysis of two cases, East Timor from 1975 to 2002 and the Western Sahara from 1975 to 2011. This analysis will examine the evolution and major milestones through the course of

these two secession conflicts. This approach complements the quantitative section by investigating the permanent impact of third parties and providing a more nuanced discussion of interventions in secession conflicts.

This thesis is structured as follows: Chapter Two presents the historical background of secession and self-determination, examining its origins, development, and related concepts. Chapter Three reviews the existing literature on secession theories, studies on third-party interventions, and the debate regarding great and regional powers. Chapter Four describes the quantitative and qualitative research design. Chapter Five conducts that quantitative analysis, and Chapter Six discusses the results. Chapter Seven carries out the case study of East Timor, Chapter Eight of the Western Sahara, and Chapter Nine synthesizes the findings. Chapter Ten concludes with a summary of the thesis.

Chapter Two: Historical Background

This study is concerned in particular with secession, the external aspect of self-determination. It is therefore imperative to examine how self-determination is related to secession, and how groups claim this right when attempting to secede. To better formulate the nuances of these concepts, this chapter will provide a fairly comprehensive examination of the historical development of secession and self-determination. I first examine the origins of the concepts. I then explain the various distinctions within self-determination, such as the differences between autonomy versus secession and claims made in the post-colonial context versus claims made in a non-colonial context. Finally, I discuss concepts related to secession and self-determination, including statehood, sovereignty, state recognition, and nationalism, before describing emerging trends of secession.

Emergence of Self-Determination and Codification in International Law (1916-1945)

The concept of self-determination can be traced back to the ideas of liberty, individualism, and self-government that emerged prior to and during the American War of Independence (1775–83) and French Revolution (1789–1799).¹⁵ Self-determination further developed as a right of national groups in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, as various ethnic minorities within the Ottoman, Austrian, German, and Russian empires began claiming independence.¹⁶ The concept did not emerge as a universal right until 1916, when Vladimir Lenin became the first strong advocate for self-determination on an

¹⁵ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 11.

¹⁶ Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination*, 27.

international level, defining self-determination as the liberation of peoples, albeit in a fashion that would support global socialism.¹⁷ At the same time, Woodrow Wilson, aiming to shape the post-WWI international order, developed a concept of self-determination based on Western democratic values, as articulated in his 1918 “Fourteen Points” speech. He equated self-determination with self-government, and believed that peoples should determine the future of their territories through plebiscites. However, in the aftermath of WWI, Wilson’s ideals failed to translate to state practice due to the fact that “self-determination in 1919 had little to do with the demands of the peoples concerned, unless those demands were consistent with the geopolitical and strategic interests of the Great Powers.”¹⁸ Where the Allies had strategic interests, plebiscites were ignored altogether.

Although it was considered a universal right following WWI, self-determination did not become codified in international law until after World War II, with the ratification of the United Nations Charter in 1945. Chapter I of the Charter states that one of the purposes of the UN is “To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples...”¹⁹ Although the Charter did not impose a legal obligation to honor self-determination, this was the first time that the principle had been codified in a multilateral treaty, and it signaled “the maturing of the political postulate of self-determination into a legal standard of behaviour.”²⁰

The concept was further enshrined in international law with the creation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International

¹⁷ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 14-9.

¹⁸ Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination*, 28.

¹⁹ “Charter of the United Nations.” Accessed October 18, 2014.
<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml>.

²⁰ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 43.

Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 1966, both of which include the statement that “All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”^{21,22} These Covenants broadened the scope of self-determination so that it was no longer limited to formerly colonized peoples. Although only previously colonized peoples acquired the explicit legal right to *secession* from former colonial powers, these Covenants also emphasized the right of all peoples (previously colonized or not) to *internal autonomy* within a state.²³

Distinctions within Self-Determination: Autonomy versus Secession and Post-Colonial versus Non-Colonial Claims

An important distinction in self-determination is between internal self-determination, a group’s exercise of autonomy within a state, and external self-determination, or secession.²⁴ According to international legal scholar Patrick Thornberry, “The external dimension or aspect defines the status of a people in relation to another people, State or Empire, whereas the democratic or internal dimension should concern the relationship between a people and ‘its own’ State or government.”²⁵

Adjudicated by the League of Nations in 1921, one of the first cases that illustrated this

²¹ “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.” Accessed October 18, 2014. <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>.

²² Ibid.

²³ Milena Sterio, *The Right to Self-Determination Under International Law: “Selfistans,” Secession, and the Rule of the Great Powers* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 11.

²⁴ James Summers, “The Internal and External Aspects of Self-Determination Reconsidered” in *Statehood and Self-Determination: Reconciling Tradition and Modernity in International Law*, ed. Duncan French. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 230.

²⁵ Patrick Thornberry, “The Democratic or Internal Aspect of Self-determination with Some Remarks on Federalism” in *Modern Law of Self-Determination*, ed. Christian Tomuschat. (Boston: Springer, 1993), 101.

divide concerned the Aaland Islands, a Swedish-speaking territory that belonged to Finland but wished to become a part of Sweden. The League concluded that self-determination, at the time “a principle of justice and of liberty, expressed by a vague and general formula,” did not give rise a right to secession to the people of the Aaland Islands and therefore the territory could not join Sweden.²⁶ However, the Aaland Islands did have a right to self-government and was granted internal autonomy by Finland. In subsequent treatments of self-determination in international law, the guaranteed right is of the internal variety – that is, signatory countries intend for peoples exercising self-determination to exercise self-government within an existing state.²⁷ In the present day, internal self-determination involves the recognition of a group’s identity within a state; the group is allowed to participate in the national government (in the case of Quebec within Canada), or is given autonomy in self-governance (in the case of Scotland and Wales within the United Kingdom).

Conversely, external self-determination, or secession, was often forbidden in order to protect states’ territorial integrity. The 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Declaration on Colonial Countries) prohibited “any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.”²⁸ This mention of “national unity and principles” aimed to prevent groups’ demands for separation from a mother state. In the present day, examples include the 1993 secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia or the 2011

²⁶ Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination*, 29.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

²⁸ “Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.” Accessed December 6, 2014. <http://www.un.org/en/decolonization/declaration.shtml>.

secession of South Sudan from Sudan (as well as the rest of the cases in this study's sample).^{29,30}

After WWII, secession applied as a right of previously colonized peoples to declare independence from their colonial powers.³¹ The two documents adopted by the UN General Assembly that affirmed state practice regarding application of this right to previously colonized peoples include the 1960 Declaration on Colonial Countries, and the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (Declaration on Friendly Relations), the latter of which includes the phrase, "Every State has the duty to refrain from any forcible action which deprives peoples referred to in the elaboration of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of their right to self-determination and freedom and independence."³² The Declaration on Friendly Relations in particular was essential in advancing the right of previously colonized peoples to secession. However, once a former colony exercised the right to external self-determination by either declaring independence or joining an existing state, its right to self-determination expired. Their right to external self-determination was seen as a one-time right.³³ Self-determination conflicts that arose during this era include East Timor and the Western Sahara.

²⁹ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 67.

³⁰ For further reference, see Appendix A.

³¹ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 65.

³² "Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations." Accessed October 18, 2014. [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/2625\(XXV\)](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/2625(XXV)).

³³ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 73.

Following the decolonization of most of the world, groups that were not previously colonized began claiming a right to self-determination.³⁴ However, although Kosovo's secession from Serbia is an example of a successful non-colonial self-determination claim, states have generally been more cautious in applying self-determination in this context. According to scholar Michla Pomerance, "No state has accepted the right of *all* peoples to self-determination...Of course, no one any longer *claims* to be denying self-determination..."³⁵ This tension played out in late 2014 when Spain attempted to block Catalonia from conducting a self-determination referendum, then refused to recognize the results of a November vote on separation. While allowing former colonies the right to self-determination was more acceptable, states are hesitant to allow self-determination in a non-colonial context for fear of more groups claiming the right, which may lead to increased infringements upon the state's sovereignty.

Statehood, Sovereignty, State Recognition, and Nationalism

A few concepts are imperative to mention in discussions of secession and self-determination, chief among them the ideas of statehood, sovereignty, state recognition, and nationalism. While there are currently 193 states in the UN system, that number varies and increases to nearly 200 when quasi-states and disputed territories are taken into account. The state system first emerged in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia, which articulated the concepts of state sovereignty and noninterference in other states' governance.³⁶ The idea of sovereignty is considered "the basic constitutional doctrine of

³⁴ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 73.

³⁵ Michla Pomerance. *Self-Determination in Law and Practice*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982, 68.

³⁶ Bridget Coggins, *Power Politics and State Formation in the Twentieth Century: The Dynamics of Recognition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 20.

the law of nations.”³⁷ However, a state’s sovereignty is not absolute. It can conflict with the sovereignty of other states, and it is often limited, voluntarily or involuntarily, by international law. In particular, there is an inherent tension between a nationalist group’s right to external self-determination and a state’s right to sovereignty. An act of secession invariably violates a state’s territorial integrity and its sovereignty over the land.

There is a consensus that the right to sovereignty belongs solely to a state, with the generally accepted definition of a state found in the 1933 Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States.³⁸ The Convention outlines four attributes of a state: “The State as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications: (a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) government; and (d) capacity to enter in relations with other States.”³⁹ The final criterion of the Convention – capacity to enter in relations with other states – is critical to a group’s successful achievement of secession. According to scholar David Strang, “...notions of sovereignty imply a state society founded on mutual recognition. The status of each state is thus tied up with that of the others in a continuing process of mutual legitimation.”⁴⁰ A secessionist group may possess a permanent population, a defined territory, and a government, but without recognition by other states, it is not a state that can fully participate in the international system. For example, Somaliland, a functioning republic with de facto control over its territory, meets all the legal criteria for statehood but is not considered a state because no other state has recognized it.⁴¹

³⁷ Ian Brownlie, *Principles of Public International Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 3rd. ed. 1979), 287.

³⁸ Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination*, 15.

³⁹ “Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States.” Accessed October 18, 2014. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/intam03.asp

⁴⁰ David Strang. “Anomaly and Commonplace in European Political Expansion.” *International Organization* 45:2 (Spring 1990): 148.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 33.

Generally speaking, a state is accepted once a majority of other states has recognized it, and once recognition is bestowed it cannot be rescinded. Recognition can be implicit, such as the establishment of diplomatic relations with the new state, or explicit, such as public statements or written documentation of recognition.⁴² However, the act itself is often politically motivated. The number of states that recognize a secessionist group can potentially determine the acceptability of a group's claim to secession, but the mother state may also attempt to block recognition of the separatist group. For example, following the secession of Kosovo from Serbia in 2008, a number of states remain divided on the issue of recognition. Russia has continued to refuse to recognize the entity, while the U.S., U.K., and France have conferred recognition to Kosovo.⁴³

Also related to secession and self-determination is the concept of nationalism. Broadly defined, nationalism is a movement for political identity by an ethnically, culturally, or linguistically homogenous group.⁴⁴ "Political identity" does not always indicate a desire for broad political power, and may encompass petitions for economic development or protection against discrimination. This idea of a nation differs from the political construct of a nation-state, and in instances where the borders of a nation and the borders of a nation-state do not match, claims for secession may arise. Like self-determination, nationalism was originally equated with peoples of former colonies declaring independence from colonial powers. Since 1945, nationalism has been a response to the unyielding sovereignty of states and "a reaction against states and empires

⁴² Strang, "Anomaly and Commonplace in European Political Expansion," 39-40.

⁴³ "Countries that have recognized the Republic of Kosova." Accessed December 6, 2014. <http://www.mfa-ks.net/?page=2,33>.

⁴⁴ Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination*, 24.

which were unresponsive to the needs of the many communities of which they were composed.”⁴⁵ While state sovereignty indicates that “there must be a supreme authority within the political community if the community is to exist at all,” nationalism contends that there may be varying layers of sovereignty beyond just the power of the state.^{46,47} However, it is important to note that vague terms like sovereignty and nationalism have failed to contribute to legal resolutions or compromise in self-determination conflicts.⁴⁸ In fact, some scholars argue, “As an agency of destruction the theory of nationalism proved one of the most potent that even modern society has known.”⁴⁹ Because few, if any, states consist of an entirely homogenous population, a desire for homogeneity may in fact lead to more ethnic conflicts and repression of minorities.⁵⁰

Breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia and Implications for Secession in the Present Day (1991-Present)

The breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1991 to 1992 brought additional attention to secession. The Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, illegally incorporated into the Soviet Union following WWII and thus possessing the legal right to self-determination, declared independence in 1990.⁵¹ While the 12 Soviet republics that constituted the Soviet Union did not possess the same legal right, all twelve states followed self-determination procedure and held referendums on the question of secession. Additionally, the European Community, in

⁴⁵ Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination*, 23.

⁴⁶ F. H. Hinsley, *Sovereignty*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2d ed., 1986), 219.

⁴⁷ Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination*, 26.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁴⁹ Alfred Cobban, *The Nation State and National Self-Determination* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell. rev. ed. 1969), 36.

⁵⁰ Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination*, 26.

⁵¹ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 260.

recognizing these states, based their recognition on a general right of self-determination.⁵²

Yugoslavia, a federation of six republics that included Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia, formed at the end of WWII. However, beginning in the 1980s, nationalist movements and ethnic conflict led to the dissolution of the federation. While these republics also did not possess an explicit legal right to self-determination, political rhetoric surrounding the breakup invoked the broader right to self-determination.⁵³ In the case of both the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the concept of self-determination served as the political rhetoric necessary to legitimize secessionist claims. In addition, these secessionist states also followed the typical procedure in self-determination claims, holding referendums that verified the will of the public to secede in order to further legitimize their claims.⁵⁴

A greater number of secession movements have emerged since the end of the Cold War, with about half of these cases having engaged in armed conflict since the 1960s.⁵⁵ While states are unremittingly reluctant to recognize secessionist claims, there has been a gradual increase in willingness to recognize claims to internal self-determination. Additionally, there has also been further refinement of internal self-determination as a *continuous* right rather than a one-time right of peoples to exercise self-government. Legal scholar Antonio Cassese concurs, concluding that “unlike external self-determination for colonial peoples – which ceases to exist under customary

⁵² Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 266-7.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 268-9.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 273.

⁵⁵ Monty G. Marshall and Ted Robert Gurr, *Peace and Conflict 2005: A Global Survey of Armed Conflicts, Self-Determination Movements, and Democracy* (College Park, Maryland: Center for International Development and Conflict Management, May 2005), 21.

international law once it is implemented – the right to internal self-determination is neither destroyed nor diminished by its having already once been invoked and put into effect.”⁵⁶

Currently, while self-determination is considered a *jus cogens* rule – a peremptory norm – in international law, that does not apply to external self-determination, or secession. With customary law forming as new cases emerge, self-determination in practice acts more like a broad concept with a set of guiding principles rather than a hard legal rule. As the concept evolves, state practice will continue to modify the legal framework, especially regarding secession. Having presented historical developments and concepts related to secession and self-determination, I turn now to a discussion of theories and debates within the existing literature.

⁵⁶ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 101.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

This thesis examines how third-party interventions affect the outcomes of secession conflicts. While some scholars, applying a liberal theoretical framework, argue that secession should be an absolute right, there is a general realist consensus that secession conflicts are affected by outside interventions. My thesis is situated primarily within the empirical framework of scholar Patrick Regan, who makes the same realist assumption that third-party interventions matter decisively, and who examines the conditions of successful interventions in intrastate conflicts. Although secession conflicts fall under the wider umbrella of intrastate conflict, there have not yet been evaluations of the conditions of successful interventions in secession cases specifically. Furthermore, there is a broader debate regarding whether great or regional powers have a larger impact on secession conflicts that this thesis also addresses. Therefore, this thesis will test whether the conditions of third-party interventions (particularly whether the intervener is a great or regional power) impact the outcome of secession conflicts.

To achieve this goal, I first review the various theoretical frameworks upon which this thesis is based, examining existing assessments of the right of secession. These include the seminal works of Hurst Hannum and Antonio Cassese, who are often cited due to the extensive and nuanced historical background they provide on the topic. I then describe studies that have assessed how third-party interventions impact intrastate conflicts. Subsequently, I explore the intervention condition that has provoked the greatest debate: the question of whether great or regional powers have a larger impact on

the outcome of such conflicts. Finally, I assess the state of the literature and discuss the contribution of this thesis to the existing discourse.

Realist versus Liberal Theoretical Frameworks as Applied to Secession

Within the literature, scholars generally examine secession through two theoretical lenses: realism and liberalism. The theory of realism states that actors in the international system make decisions based on their own self-interests. Realists believe that partnerships between states only occur if the actors believe that they stand to gain relative power over the other actor. A realist international system is one dominated by power politics, wherein states will readily break laws and norms if it serves their interests.⁵⁷ The theory of realism stands in contrast to liberalism, which posits that state practice can be shaped through factors like international law. Liberalists believe that laws, norms, and institutions can influence states to act in a manner that results in mutual benefit and international cooperation.⁵⁸ In the literature, scholars applying the realist framework argue that while the broader right of self-determination exists in international law, in practice states oppose the concept, especially the external, secession aspect because it undermines state sovereignty and territorial integrity. Scholars applying the liberalist framework argue that secession is an absolute right, focusing on the permissibility of the right in theory rather than in practice.⁵⁹

Seminal scholars Hannum and Cassese, often cited in the field because of their comprehensive examination of the history of self-determination and the various cases of

⁵⁷ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (USA: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1979).

⁵⁸ Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

⁵⁹ Anne-Marie Gardner, *Democratic Governance and Non-State Actors* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 15-18.

secession, tend toward a realist view. Writing *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination: The Accommodation of Conflicting Rights* in 1990, Hannum is primarily concerned with how conflicts between group and state rights can be reconciled. He concludes that groups have a right of autonomy within a state, but that the right of secession is permissible only when groups have been severely oppressed by the state.⁶⁰ Cassese, writing *Self-determination of Peoples: A Legal Reappraisal* in 1996, provides a comprehensive historical and political contextual approach to the right of secession in international law, especially of how states have affected its definition in the law. He examines legal documents such as the UN Charter and the ICCPR and ICESCR, customary law such as the decolonization norm, and state practice regarding cases of secession.⁶¹ He finds that the law has had a limited and selective acceptance of self-determination due to the fact that states are opposed to the formation of any hard legal rule granting a right to secession. Like Hannum, he concludes that the law and state practice indicate an inclination towards granting groups internal autonomy instead. Cassese determines that secession in international law is accepted in two instances: (1) when armed conflict breaks out or (2) there is systemic oppression of a group by a state.⁶²

Other scholars agree that there is an inherent tension between the right of a group to secession and of a state to territorial integrity, with Harry Beran noting that “this political problem is likely to exist as long as there are any states at all.”⁶³ These conflicting rights have created a lively debate within the literature on the right of secession, with Beran applying a liberal theoretical framework focused on individual

⁶⁰ Hannum, *Autonomy, Sovereignty, and Self-Determination*, 471.

⁶¹ Cassese, *Self-Determination of Peoples*, 37-59.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 320.

⁶³ Harry Beran, “A Liberal Theory of Secession,” *Political Studies* 32, no. 1 (1984): 22.

rights. In contrast to Hannum and Cassese, Beran argues that groups have an absolute right to secede. Focusing on the permissibility of secession rather than its desirability, Beran believes that, following the liberal tradition of upholding individual rights, individuals wishing to secede can do so if they can demonstrate that their rights have been violated by the state. Individuals cannot be forced to remain within a state, and thus the unity of the state must derive from the consent of individuals.⁶⁴

In response, scholar Anthony Birch notes that Beran's theory is impractical. In contrast to Beran, whose theory is based upon the presumption that groups are justified in any attempts to secede if it demonstrates oppression by the mother state, Birch proposes that secession is not justifiable unless one out of the following four circumstances exist: 1) the group was included in the state by force, and has repeatedly refused the union; 2) the state has failed to protect the basic rights of the group; 3) the representation system of the state government is biased against the political and economic interests of the group; 4) the state government has entered into a bargain with the group in order to protect the group's interests, but has ignored or rejected the bargain.⁶⁵ Birch argues that in placing stricter requirements on the right to secede, groups will not exit from a government if they simply disagree with the decisions of the majority.

Beyond these theoretical considerations, there are scholars who examine whether state practice has an effect on the outcomes of secessions at all. The most prominent of these scholars is James Crawford, who argues that state practice shows a reluctance to accept unilateral secession. Citing attempts to unilaterally secede by groups including Tibet from China and Chechnya from Russia, he argues that when the mother state

⁶⁴ Beran, "A Liberal Theory of Secession," 25-6.

⁶⁵ Anthony H. Birch, "Another Liberal Theory of Secession," *Political Studies* 32, no. 4 (1984): 599-601.

opposes unilateral secession, the international system favors preserving territorial integrity instead. These attempts to secede gain little support by other states, even if there is evidence of humanitarian crises against the group.⁶⁶ For example, Crawford references the U.S. response to Russia's suppression of Chechen separatists in 1995:

*We support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation ... We oppose attempts to alter international boundaries by force, whether in the form of aggression by one State against another or in the form of armed secessionist movements such as the one led by Dzhokhar Dudayev. That is why we have said that we regard Chechnya as a matter which the Russian Government and the people of Chechnya will have to resolve together peacefully by political means...*⁶⁷

Crawford agrees with Hannum and Cassese that groups are encouraged to exercise internal self-determination within a state, but territorial integrity is favored over the right to secession.⁶⁸ Ultimately, it appears that there is a general agreement in the literature that self-determination, particularly secession, is a right limited by a mother state's interests. In addition, another interesting component that requires elaboration is how third-party interests can also affect secession claims.

How Third Party Involvement Impacts Intrastate Conflicts: Implications for Cases of Secession

Keeping in mind this realist framework, scholars agree that third-party influence makes a difference in the outcome of intrastate conflicts, which includes secession conflicts. Their studies vary on exactly *how* outside involvement can change these outcomes. Regan argues that third-party intervention in these conflicts can have a

⁶⁶ Crawford, "State Practice and International Law in Relation to Secession," 111.

⁶⁷ Deputy Secretary of State S. Talbot, "Supporting Democracy and Economic Reform in the New Independent States," US Department of State Dispatch, 6 (1995), 119.

⁶⁸ Crawford, "State Practice and International Law in Relation to Secession," 111.

significant impact on their likelihoods of success. He argues that third parties intervene in order to end the conflict on terms agreeable to intervener and stabilize the region.⁶⁹ Conducting an empirical analysis, Regan tests several variables that could provoke the greatest likelihood of success in intrastate conflicts, including conflict type (ethnic/religious or ideological), number of causalities, the type of intervention (military/economic or a mixed approach), and the target of the intervention (mother state or opposition).⁷⁰ He finds that there is a greater likelihood of success when intervening in an ethnic or religious issue, when there is a mixed intervention approach, and when interveners support the government. The findings also conclude that the characteristic of the intervention rather than the characteristics of a conflict result in the greatest likelihood of success of an intervention.⁷¹ Unlike the other scholars discussed, Regan relies heavily on statistical analysis, forgoing case studies and using a large-n study to data from all intrastate conflicts initiated between 1944 and 1994.

Like Regan, Deepa Khosla examines third party intervention in intrastate conflicts, specifically ethnic conflicts in the third world. She identifies three factors that affect how third party intervention can affect the success of these conflicts: the type of intervener, the type of aid, and the characteristics of the disputants.⁷² She divides the types of intervening state into five categories: major powers (same as great powers), regional powers, neighbors, regional states, and others. Her findings conclude that major powers and regional powers were the most active interveners.⁷³ Additionally, she divides

⁶⁹ Patrick Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*, 10.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 83-4.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 94-5.

⁷² Deepa Khosla, "Third World States as Interveners in Ethnic Conflicts: Implications for Regional and International Security," *Third World Quarterly* 20, no. 6 (December 1, 1999): 1144.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 1147-8.

aid into diplomatic, economic, and military aid, and finds that the most common form of aid, military assistance, accounted for 41 percent of all interventions, then diplomatic actions at 36 percent, and economic support at 23 percent. She also finds that regional powers are more likely to supply military aid.⁷⁴ Finally, she divides the types of ethnic conflict into ethnonationalists, indigenous peoples, ethnoclasses, communal contenders, religious sects, and national minorities. Her findings indicate that ethnonationalists, or those seeking autonomy or secession, are most likely to obtain third-party support.⁷⁵ Khosla draws these trends from a sample of 975 interventions.

Likewise, Alexis Heraclides tests assumptions regarding third-party interventions specifically on secessionist movements. His seminal 1990 study tests these assumptions using seven cases: Katanga (from the Democratic Republic of the Congo), Biafra (Nigeria), South Sudan (Sudan), Bangladesh (Pakistan), Iraqi Kurdistan (Iraq), Eritrea (Ethiopia), and the Moro (Philippines). His study has several findings: 1) secessionist movements were not always instigated by foreign interests, 2) diplomatic support was just as impactful as military and economic support, 3) superpowers usually did not position themselves on opposite sides of a conflict (according to Heraclides, they “were hardly keen to antagonize each other in the periphery on secessionist issues”⁷⁶), 4) neighboring states of a secessionist region are likely to support the secessionists. Most interestingly, he concludes that “if a secessionist movement is unable to win a military victory and is not prepared to compromise on independence, it can only be ‘saved’ if

⁷⁴ Khosla, “Third World States as Intervenors in Ethnic Conflicts,” 1150-1.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 1152-3.

⁷⁶ Alexis Heraclides, “Secessionist Minorities and External Involvement,” *International Organization* 44, no. 3 (July 1, 1990): 377.

there is high-level external state intervention and diplomatic recognition.”⁷⁷ Heraclides’s tests on superpowers and neighboring states touch upon the debate regarding the relative impact of great versus regional powers on conflicts, the focus of the following section.

Which Intervener Makes a Greater Impact?: The Debate Regarding Great and Regional Powers

Out of all the intervention conditions tested in this study, the one that generates the greatest amount of debate within the literature is whether great or regional powers have a larger impact on intrastate conflicts. Scholar Milena Sterio posits a theory of the great powers’ rule in external self-determination, with great powers defined as the permanent members of the UN Security Council (the U.S., U.K., France, China, and Russia) and economic powers such as Japan or India. Her theory identifies four criteria groups must demonstrate in order to successfully secede: 1) severe oppression by the mother state, 2) a weak mother state government that fails to effectively administer the group, 3) involvement of an international organization that has facilitated power-sharing between the group and the mother state, and 4) the support of great powers.⁷⁸ However, she argues that the fourth criterion, the support of great powers, is the most important. Great powers that support a secessionist group, they will often utilize their diplomatic power to help the group demonstrate the first three criteria.⁷⁹ In terms of methodology, Sterio considers cases in both colonial and non-colonial contexts, and demonstrates her theory through the use of East Timor, Kosovo, Chechnya, Georgia, and South Sudan as case studies.

⁷⁷ Heraclides, “Secessionist Minorities and External Involvement,” 378.

⁷⁸ Sterio, *The Right to Self-Determination Under International Law*, 4-5.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Sterio builds upon the work of Michael Kelly, whose own research on sovereignty and self-determination suggests a realist international system ruled by the interests of the great powers. Echoing the work of Crawford and citing the struggle of the Basques and Catalans in Spain to the Kurds in Iran/Iraq/Syria/Turkey, Kelly argues that great powers fundamentally oppose equating the concept of self-determination with secession. He believes that great powers have actively opposed self-determination since President Woodrow Wilson first advocated for the principle in 1918, noting that “the history of self-determination is also the history of Great Powers attempting to put Wilson’s genie back in the bottle...”⁸⁰ This aligns with the realist view of secession, and Kelly concludes that with their greater economies, military capabilities, and favorable positions in international institutions such as the UN Security Council, great powers have dictated the evolution of self-determination.⁸¹

In contrast, other scholars argue that regional powers are more impactful in the settlement of conflicts. Fen Osler Hampson’s study on the influence of third parties in conflict resolution examines the relative influences of great and regional powers. In evaluating the dynamics of third parties, he observes that they aid in resolving conflicts through restructuring issues, identifying alternatives, modifying adversaries’ perspectives, packaging and sequencing issues, building trust, offering side payments, or threatening penalties and/or sanctions.⁸² According to Hampson, “Through their intervention in the peacemaking process, third parties can change disputants’ perceptions

⁸⁰ Michael J. Kelly, “Pulling at the Threads of Westphalia: Involuntary Sovereignty Waiver - Revolutionary International Legal Theory or Return to Rule by the Great Powers,” *UCLA Journal of International Law and Foreign Affairs* 10 (2005): 388.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 437.

⁸² Fen Osler Hampson, *Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1996), 12.

of the costs, risks, and benefits associated with an agreement versus a non-agreement situation.”⁸³ Although he acknowledges the influence of great powers on the success of conflict resolutions, he ultimately concludes that regional powers are more influential, and that “the success of a peace settlement is inextricably tied to the interests of neighboring regional powers and their overall commitment to the peace process.”⁸⁴

Hampson’s conclusions concur with studies by Barry Buzan, who examines regional security. Buzan crafts a theory diametrically opposite to that of Sterio, arguing that regional powers’ interests and the specifics of a case are more influential than the interests of great powers. He believes that regional powers are not merely the proxies of great power rivalries, but that they have their own interests, rivalries, and stakes in a conflict. In some cases, such as with minority groups in Burma and the South Sudanese in Sudan, regional interests will triumph despite great power influences.⁸⁵ However, Buzan does acknowledge that great powers have some measure of influence, even if not to as large an extent as regional powers.⁸⁶ The next section explains how this study addresses this debate regarding great and regional powers.

Responding to the Literature

There is no shortage of scholarly works written on secession and self-determination, and debates within the literature continue as the concept evolves in the present day. The strength of the existing literature is in its examination of all the various

⁸³ Hampson, *Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail*, 12.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁸⁵ Barry Buzan, “Third World Regional Security in Structural and Historical Perspective” in *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States*, ed. Brian L. Job. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 181-2.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 182.

facets of self-determination: cases in both post- and non-colonial contexts, autonomy and secession, its relation to outside interventions, and its relation to concepts outside the scope of this thesis, such as human rights, minority rights, and indigenous groups. Due to widespread claims of secession, the literature benefits from the abundance of cases from which to test theories and draw conclusions. It also illustrates the contrast between liberalism and realism as applied to secession and the different questions scholars pose, from its permissibility to how it can be achieved in practice. For example, Beran posits a purely theoretical argument of an absolute right to secession based upon a liberal framework. In contrast, Crawford, Sterio, and Kelly apply a realist framework in examining how state practice affects secession conflicts. Methodologies in the literature also range from case studies like Heraclides's to purely empirical studies like Regan's.

However, the existing literature is not without gaps. Predictably, case studies are the primary methodology used in the field, one of the strengths of the literature is that scholars draw upon the variety of cases available to conduct in-depth analyses. While there have been quantitative studies, they have primarily focused on the characteristics of the group claiming secession (not within the scope of this thesis and therefore not discussed in this chapter) rather than the impact of third-party interventions. While Regan's study does focus on the conditions of interventions, it studies intrastate conflicts generally, which includes conflicts that are not secession conflicts. His data also end in 1994 and fail to account for additional cases, such as South Sudan, that have emerged since. There have not been explicit quantitative analyses that look specifically at a large number of secession cases and analyze the impact of third parties.

Additionally, while Sterio concludes that the success of cases of secession depends solely on the intervention of great powers, Buzan argues that regional powers have a larger impact on the resolution of a conflict. There has not yet been research that unites these disparate strands of literature and specifically evaluates the relative impact of great and regional powers on the outcome of secession conflicts. This is a debate that requires further examination.

Therefore, this study will be able to make a unique contribution by applying Regan's framework and the great and regional powers debate – previously disconnected studies – to a specific sample of secession conflicts. Additionally, Regan notes that his study does not account for the permanent resolution of a conflict because it only measures whether an intervention was successful. He acknowledges that a successful intervention does not necessarily lead to a lasting resolution of the overall conflict. This study therefore contributes to the literature by pushing his framework further; in addition to testing the temporary impact of third-party interventions by measuring whether an intervention was successful, I also test the permanent impact by measuring whether a secession was successful. Various theories discussed here touch upon this idea, but no single coherent argument has yet been offered. My research expands upon this existing literature and finds a place within the existing discourse. In this study, I will use a quantitative analysis to examine the likelihood that various factors have a temporary impact on the outcome of a secession conflict, and case studies to examine the permanent impact on the outcome of a conflict. These methodologies will be discussed further in the next chapter on research design.

Chapter Four: Research Design

This thesis will address the following research question: *how do third-party interventions affect the outcome of secession conflicts?* I adopt a mixed methods approach of both quantitative and qualitative analysis. For the quantitative portion of this thesis, I conduct a logistic regression on a sample of 86 secession cases from 1945 to 2011. I select the cases from three datasets on secession movements, totaling over 200 movements from 1890 to 2011. For the qualitative portion of my analysis, I conduct a historical analysis of two cases: East Timor from 1975 to 2002, and the Western Sahara from 1975 to 2011.

This chapter explains the design of my quantitative and case study analyses. I first describe my hypotheses and independent and dependent variables. I then explain the methodology and data collection of my quantitative analysis, describing the statistical models and datasets I will use. Next, I turn to the methodology and data collection of my qualitative analysis, exploring the primary sources used in my case studies. Finally, I lay out the structure of the following analyses chapters.

Hypotheses and Variables

I examine four hypotheses that test my research question two different ways:

H1a: *Regional powers have a larger temporary impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.*

H1b: *Regional powers have a larger permanent impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.*

H2: *Interveners have a larger temporary impact on the outcome of secession conflicts when targeting the mother state rather than the secessionist group.*

H3: *Diplomatic interventions have a larger temporary impact than military/economic interventions on the outcome of secession conflicts.*

The dependent variable for all four hypotheses is the outcome of a secession conflict, which is expressed two ways. First, in my quantitative analysis, the dependent variable is operationalized by whether an intervention was successful. Success is defined as the cessation of a conflict for at least six months.⁸⁷ This operationalization measures the temporary impact that third-party interventions have on the outcome of a conflict. Although a successful intervention may end a conflict for the moment, there is no guarantee that the conflict will not rekindle. This operationalization of the dependent variable applies to H1a, H2, and H3, and will be tested with a logistic regression model.

Second, in my qualitative analysis, the dependent variable is operationalized by whether a secession was successful, defined as whether the separatist group achieves statehood. This operationalization measures the permanent impact that third-party interventions have on the outcome of a conflict, as the creation of a new state typically resolves the underlying disagreement behind the secession attempt, and new states cannot be involuntarily dismantled. This operationalization of the dependent variable applies to H1b, and will be tested using case studies of East Timor and the Western Sahara. I choose to test only the type of intervener with both the temporary and permanent operationalization of the dependent variable because this variable is the subject of the greatest debate in the literature.

⁸⁷ Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*, 14.

In testing H1a and H1b – *regional powers have a larger temporary/permanent impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts* – the independent variable is the type of intervener (IV1), either great or regional powers. Great powers, as defined in the literature, include the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (the U.S., U.K., France, China, and Russia), and the biggest economic powers in the world, such as Japan or India.⁸⁸ Regional powers are “larger, powerful countries who through their public expressions or actions reveal their ambitions towards a greater role and/or status within their respective regions.”⁸⁹ These states will be defined by their primary characterizations. For example, if the mother state is a regional power, it will still be defined as a mother state and not an intervener. A great power will consistently be defined as a great power, even if it is also a regional power.⁹⁰ Finally, because this study focuses on cases arising from decolonization disputes, the mother states listed are former colonies and not great powers (in the case of India, its separatist conflicts occurred before it became a rising economic power). Therefore, this study avoids complications that may arise when a great power is also a mother state.

For H2 – *interveners have a larger temporary impact on the outcome of secession conflicts when targeting the mother state rather than the secessionist group* – the independent variable is the target of intervention (IV2), which is the mother state, neither party, or the secessionist group. This variable accounts for interventions that support neither party (usually when a third party acts as a mediator) due to the fact that even supposedly neutral interventions may uphold the status quo, which ultimately benefits the mother state more than the secessionist group.

⁸⁸ Sterio, *The Right to Self-Determination Under International Law*, Preface.

⁸⁹ Khosla, “Third World States as Interveners in Ethnic Conflicts,” 1147.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

In testing H3 – *diplomatic interventions have a larger temporary impact than military/economic interventions on the outcome of secession conflicts* – the independent variable is the type of intervention (IV3), defined as military/economic or diplomatic aid. Military and economic aid is collapsed into one component because in the sample there are few strictly economic interventions; additionally, in practice, economic aid is often tied to military aid, such as subsidies towards arms sales. Like Regan, I recognize that there are instances in which military/economic and diplomatic aid overlap; however, in this study they are tested separately, as the goal is to see whether the former or the latter is more impactful. Military/economic interventions can include “the supply or transfer of troops, hardware, or intelligence and logistical support,” while diplomatic aid can include unilateral statements of support, political support in international organizations, or mediation efforts.^{91,92} However, official recognition is not coded. This is simply a logistical issue, since in some cases (such as the Western Sahara) there are up to dozens of recognitions, and coding each as a separate intervention is not feasible. Additionally, acts of recognition without backing from another form of diplomatic support may in some instances amount to an empty gesture rather than a desire by the intervener to impact the outcome of the conflict. Figure 4a illustrates the operationalization of all variables.

⁹¹ Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*, 25.

⁹² Patrick M. Regan and Aysegul Aydin, “Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 5 (October 1, 2006): 737.

	IV1: type of intervener	IV2: target of intervention	IV3: type of intervention	DV: the outcome of a secession conflict	
Components of variable	Great power OR regional power	Mother state OR neither party OR secessionist group	Military/economic intervention OR diplomatic intervention	Temporary outcome: success or failure of an intervention (tested in quantitative analysis)	Permanent outcome: success or failure of a secession (tested in qualitative analysis)
Operationalizing/measuring the variable	Presence of great power intervention coded 1 (yes) or 0 (no); presence of regional power intervention coded 1/0	Mother state coded 2, neither party coded 1, secessionist group coded 0	Presence of military/economic intervention measured by arms transfers/military aid/training troops/etc. and coded 1/0; presence of diplomatic aid measured by public statements of support or support in international organizations and coded 1/0	Whether or not the conflict ceased for a period of at least six months (1/0)	Whether or not the group achieves statehood

Table 4a – Operationalization of All Variables

There are two definitions I adopt from the literature. As previously mentioned, success is defined as the cessation the conflict for at least six months.⁹³ Additionally, “intervention” is broadly defined as “assistance with the apparent purpose of influencing the course of an ongoing civil conflict”⁹⁴ I also adopt two assumptions made by Regan. First, I assume that third-party interventions in self-determination conflicts affect the outcome at all. Second, I assume that third parties intervene to *end* rather than to *prolong* the conflict.⁹⁵ While not all interventions have this exact goal, stopping a conflict temporarily may be the first step towards achieving the interveners’ other goals.

These hypotheses are drawn from the field of intrastate conflicts, as cases of secession are a subset of intrastate conflicts. These hypotheses build upon existing

⁹³ Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*, 14.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

frameworks established by Regan and Khosla, who examine the conditions of successful third-party intervention in intrastate conflicts. This study tests whether their conclusions hold for a sample of secession conflicts, with my hypotheses corresponding to the three intervention conditions that Regan and Khosla examine: the type of intervener, the target of the intervention, and the type of intervention.⁹⁶

These hypotheses are also situated within several debates in the literature. First, scholars disagree regarding whether great or regional powers have a larger impact on the success of a conflict. While Regan concludes that great powers have a larger impact on the outcome of intrastate conflicts, Khosla finds that regional powers tend to be more influential.⁹⁷ H1 addresses that debate, and reasons that regional powers have the greater impact. H2 concurs with Regan's conclusion that aiding the mother state rather than the secessionist group has a greater impact on the conflict.⁹⁸ Second, while Dylan Balch-Lindsay and Andrew Enterline (2000) argue that external military and economic intervention in a conflict can prolong the conflict, recent studies, especially those by Regan, have tended to conclude that interveners can contribute to resolution of conflicts, especially when diplomatic efforts are involved.⁹⁹ H3 agrees with Regan's findings that diplomatic interventions are more likely than military/economic interventions to resolve a conflict.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*; Khosla, "Third World States as Interveners in Ethnic Conflicts."

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*, 83-4.

⁹⁹ Dylan Balch-Lindsay and Andrew J. Enterline, "Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820-1992," *International Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (2000): 615-42.

¹⁰⁰ Regan and Aydin, "Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars."

Quantitative Section: Methods

A quantitative approach best allows me to examine the characteristics of many secession conflicts. The datasets from which I draw my sample provide information regarding various facets of these conflicts, including nationalist groups involved, whether there were third-party interventions, and the current status of the secession claim. Therefore, a quantitative analysis is the best way to manipulate large amounts of information to examine the type of interveners (IV1), the targets of the intervention (IV2), and the type of intervention (IV3). This large-n analysis will allow me to look at more cases and at broader trends, and will provide my study with great external validity. This study also utilizes the same datasets widely used in the literature.

Using STATA software, I will run a logistic regression model to measure the effect of the impact of the type of intervener (IV1), target of intervention (IV2), and type of intervention (IV3) on the outcome of a secession conflict (DV). The unit of analysis in this model is each individual intervention. The type of intervener is either a great or regional power. The target of the intervention is coded as mother state, neither party, or secessionist group. The type of intervention is coded as either military/economic or diplomatic. I use a logistic regression model because my dependent variable is a discrete, dichotomous variable. I assign a dummy variable of 1 to successful interventions, and 0 to unsuccessful interventions.

This regression also accounts for the Cold War, a confounding variable. A majority of the interventions in my sample occurred during the Cold War, and rivalry during this period may have led great powers to intervene on opposing sides of a conflict and negate each other's impacts, affecting the other variables tested. In order to account

for the existence of this dynamic, this statistical model notes interventions that occurred during the Cold War (1947-1991), and interventions that occurred outside of this period in order to enhance the validity of my conclusions about the independent variables of interest.¹⁰¹

While a logistic regression will provide the direction and significance of a statistical relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the data will also be run through the Clarify for STATA program in order to determine the magnitude of the relationship. This program will provide the probability that an individual variable will lead to a successful intervention, holding all other variables at their mean values. Overall, I expect to find that regional powers, targeting the mother state, and diplomatic aid will lead to a greater likelihood of a successful intervention.

Finally, although the primary goal of the quantitative analysis is to measure whether an intervention rather than whether a secession attempt was successful, it is still useful to utilize the available data to test this permanent operationalization of the dependent variable, outcome of a secession conflict. Additionally, instead of observing only the success or failure of a secession attempt, I provide additional nuance into the outcome with an ordinal scale, coded as follows:

- 1 indicates a failed secession claim with no autonomy rights and no further attempts to secede
- 2 indicates a failed secession claim with no autonomy rights and an ongoing attempt to secede;
- 3 indicates a failed secession claim with autonomy rights and an ongoing attempt to secede
- 4 indicates an abandoned secession claim with autonomy rights and no further attempts to secede
- 5 indicates a successful secession

¹⁰¹ Note that great powers behaved differently during the different periods of the Cold War. For the sake of statistical simplicity I, like scholars discussed in the literature review, assume a static level of great power rivalry for the duration of the conflict.

Because a successful secession is assumed to be the goal of the intervention, this will be conducted only on instances of interventions targeting the secessionist group. Therefore, I run an ordered logistic regression to test whether the type of intervener (IV1) and the type of intervention (IV3) impact the outcome of a secession conflict. This provides a preliminary, quantitative view of the variables tested in my case studies, and I expect to find that regional power interventions are more likely to move up the ordinal scale and result in a successful secession.

Quantitative Section: Data Collection

The sample for this thesis is all secession conflicts in a post-colonial context, selected from three separatist datasets: James Minahan's *Nations Without States: A Historical Dictionary of Contemporary National Movements* (1996),¹⁰² Christopher Hewitt and Tom Cheetham's *Encyclopedia of Modern Separatist Movements* (2000),¹⁰³ and Brian Beary's *Separatist Movements: A Global Reference* (2011).¹⁰⁴ While Minahan and Hewitt and Cheetham list historical separatist movements, Beary lists contemporary and ongoing conflicts, with South Sudan as the most recent. In selecting my sample, I first picked nations in Minahan's dictionary that declared independence in or after 1945. I then picked contemporary movements from Beary's encyclopedia that declared independence or have the goal of independence (even if not yet explicitly declared). This established the list of 29 countries in my sample. Afterwards, I browsed through all three

¹⁰² James B. Minahan, *Nations without States: A Historical Dictionary of Contemporary National Movements* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1996).

¹⁰³ Christopher Hewitt and Tom Cheetham, *Encyclopedia of Modern Separatist Movements* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2000).

¹⁰⁴ Brian Beary, *Separatist Movements: A Global Reference* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2011).

datasets in order to pull the following information: 1) the interveners in the conflict and whether they were a great or regional power (IV1), 2) the target of the intervention (IV2), and 3) the type of intervention provided (IV3).

If there were any missing data points, additional information regarding military/economic interventions came from the 2006 Center for International Development and Conflict Management Minorities at Risk (MAR) database, which “analyzes the status and conflicts of politically-active communal groups in all countries with a current population of at least 500,000,”¹⁰⁵ and the comprehensive International Military Intervention (IMI) database, which tracks “the movement of regular troops or forces...of one country inside another, in the context of some political issue or dispute” from 1946 to 2005.¹⁰⁶ Finally, additional information on diplomatic interventions came from Patrick Regan, Richard Frank, and Aysegul Aydin’s 2009 dataset, “Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War: A New Dataset.”¹⁰⁷

One issue I encountered was determining whether an intervention was successful. It is often difficult to measure the linkage between aid whether it successfully impacts a conflict. In assessing the effect of an intervention on a conflict, I follow Regan’s example and look for explicit causes and effects; for example, if an intervener’s use of air support directly resulted in a secessionist group signing a ceasefire. Another issue is the possibility of a selection bias in the sample, in that states may only intervene when they

¹⁰⁵ Minorities at Risk Project. 2009. “Minorities at Risk Dataset.” College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management. Retrieved from <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/data.aspx> on 17 November 2014.

¹⁰⁶ Emizet F. Kisangani and Jeffrey Pickering, *International Military Intervention, 1989-2005*, Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, Data Collection No 21282 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2010); Frederic S. Pearson and Robert A. Baumann, *International Military Intervention, 1946-1988*, Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, Data Collection No 6035 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2010).

¹⁰⁷ Patrick M. Regan, Richard W. Frank, and Aysegul Aydin, “Diplomatic Interventions and Civil War: A New Dataset,” *Journal of Peace Research* 46, no. 1 (January 1, 2009): 135–46.

have a reasonable expectation of a successful intervention. This is an issue that is prevalent in studying third-party interventions, and therefore it's necessary to be aware that this sample represents interventions that occurred when there was some expectation of success.

Case Study Section: Methods

The qualitative portion of this thesis will test H1b: *regional powers have a larger permanent impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts*, measured by whether the secession attempt was successful. This analysis consists of process tracing two cases: East Timor and the Western Sahara. This analysis will examine the historical backgrounds and great and regional power involvement before, during, and after the mother state occupation of these two secession conflicts. A purely quantitative analysis cannot accurately capture the many unique details of each case. Therefore, it is imperative that this study presents a thorough examination of these cases in order to assess content that cannot be easily quantified and present more nuanced conclusions. Moreover, there is an abundance of data to draw upon for these case studies, as both East Timor and the Western Sahara have received intervention from great and regional powers that have contributed military, economic, and diplomatic support. With plenty of data, these are the ideal cases to trace the causal mechanisms between the type of intervener, either great or regional powers (IV1) and the outcome of a secession conflict (DV).

There were two considerations in the case selections: (1) the cases had to have substantial involvement from great and regional powers and (2) the cases had to have similar background conditions, in order to exercise control on potential conditional

variables. I chose East Timor and the Western Sahara because they are both classic examples of secession in a post-colonial context, with similar background conditions. In 1975, East Timor declared independence from Portugal, but was occupied by Indonesia shortly thereafter. In the same year, the Western Sahara was on the verge of gaining independence from Spain when Morocco occupied the territory. Despite these similarities, each case is worthy of studying on its own. The case of East Timor included involvement from the U.K., the U.S., Australia, and Portugal, and the Western Sahara included the involvement of France, the U.S., and Algeria. I compare these two because East Timor is an example of a successful case, while the Western Sahara is considered an unsuccessful case, and therefore useful to compare in examining how interventions by great and regional powers have impacted the different outcomes.

In these case studies, where I only test the impact of the type of intervener (IV1) on the outcome of the conflict, the other independent variables tested in the quantitative analysis may be confounding variables. For example, perhaps target of the intervention (IV2) from third parties or type of intervention (IV3) provided had a greater influence on the outcomes of East Timor and the Western Sahara than the actual variable I test. Unlike in a quantitative analysis, confounding variables in case studies are more difficult to control for, and this is simply a factor to account for and evaluate as I conduct my historical analyses of these cases.

Case Study Section: Data Collection

In order to trace the details of the cases, I will look at a wide range of sources for both East Timor and the Western Sahara. In the case of East Timor, official UN reports

are consistently produced over the course of the conflict, and detail comprehensive developments in the conflict and official statements by interested third parties, including European nations and Australia. UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions after the occupation of East Timor by Indonesia reveal the positions of the interveners and their diplomatic support of either Indonesia or East Timor. Official records of the General Assembly debates on the situation also reveal Indonesia's position and how it intends to utilize third-party aid.¹⁰⁸

Information on great and regional power interventions and their impact on the conflict come from government reports from the U.K., Australia, and post-independence East Timor, which provide data regarding how third-party aid helped Indonesian military efforts. These sources are especially important because they will allow me to ascertain the relationship between the type of intervener, either great or regional powers (IV1) and the outcome of a secession conflict (DV). Statements made by Indonesia, the East Timor government, and Portugal can also provide insight into their respective official intentions. Furthermore, the 1995 International Court of Justice *Case Concerning East Timor (Portugal v. Australia)* illustrates Australia's regional power intervention. The background on these cases will come from the existing literature on East Timor, think tank reports, and magazine and newspaper articles during the course of the conflict.

Similarly, in the case of the Western Sahara, UN documents are the most informative because of the long existence of UN attention on the territory. The 47 reports of the Secretary-General contain comprehensive overviews of the situation in the territory, and because these documents are consistently produced from the beginning of

¹⁰⁸ Heike Krieger, *East Timor and the International Community: Basic Documents* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

the conflict in 1975 through 2011. These reports contain coverage of the general state of affairs in the Western Sahara, military action on the ground, the official statements of the Moroccan government and the Polisario opposition group, the actions and official statements of relevant third parties, and major milestones in the conflict.

Government reports from the U.S. and Morocco provide additional information on third-party interventions. Both the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. House of Representatives have conducted reports regarding the amount and impact of U.S. military support for Morocco in relation to the conflict. This allows me to observe the extent to which these interventions aided Morocco's military efforts during armed conflict with the Western Saharan separatists. The historical background come from academic studies and think tank reports that examine the history of third-party intervention in the territories. Other documents relevant to the legal history include the ICJ's *Western Sahara* Advisory Opinion.

In order to supplement my analysis with quantitative information, I will use the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) arms transfer database to assess arms transfer trends during periods of increased fighting between the mother state and secessionist group. By looking at the history and the details of the cases from multiple types of sources, I can trace the progression of how third-party intervention affected the success or failure of the secession attempts of both East Timor and the Western Sahara.

Despite the comprehensiveness of the sources, there are a few biases, especially in sources that involve individual states' statements. While government statements describe the official stance of the state in question, they may not reflect the government's actual position. In some instances, government reports better reflect the state's true intentions;

for example, in the East Timor case, reports from part of the British and Australian governments questioned the amount of military support for Indonesia during the occupation of East Timor. I also utilize a wide variety of sources without depending solely on government statements, which will balance out these biases.

In terms of limitations, since my hypothesis is based on the assumption that third-party intervention has an effect at all on the success of the secession conflict, similar to the difficulties I face with my quantitative analysis, I anticipate some trouble directly connecting great and regional power intervention with the success or failure of the secession attempt. Like in my quantitative analysis, I remedy that by only looking at instances when foreign intervention made a direct impact or dramatic impact that corresponded with a change in the conflict. The established literature makes the same assumptions about the effect of third-party interventions on the outcome of a conflict, indicating that this is generally acceptable assumption to make.

Structure of the Following Quantitative and Qualitative Chapters

Building upon the frameworks in the literature, this thesis is grounded in existing quantitative and qualitative methods in the field. By utilizing a mixed method approach, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of how various external factors affect the outcome of secession conflicts. The quantitative section will assess the temporary impact of the type of third-party interveners (H1a), the target of the intervention (H2), and the type of intervention (H3) on such conflicts by measuring whether the intervention was successful. The qualitative section, in examining East Timor and the Western Sahara, will look at the permanent impact of the type of intervener (H1b), either great and regional

powers, on these cases by measuring whether the secession was successful. The findings of these quantitative and qualitative analyses will be described in the following chapter.

Chapter Five: Quantitative Analysis

In the chapters that follow, I test the research question – *how do third-party interventions affect the outcome of secession conflicts?* – in the quantitative analysis by measuring whether an intervention was successful, and in the qualitative analysis by measuring whether a secession was successful. The quantitative analysis of this chapter will test the following hypotheses on a sample of interventions in secession conflicts:

H1a: Regional powers have a larger temporary impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.

H2: Interveners have a larger temporary impact on the outcome of secession conflicts when targeting the mother state rather than the secessionist group.

H3: Diplomatic interventions have a larger temporary impact than military/economic interventions on the outcome of secession conflicts.

The unit of analysis is each individual intervention, and in this section, I run a logistic regression on a sample of 86 third-party interventions in secession conflicts from 1945 to 2011. This model will determine the effect of the type of intervener (IV1), the target of the intervention (IV2), and the type of intervention (IV3) on the outcome of a secession conflict (DV), operationalized by the success or failure of an intervention.

The following quantitative analysis includes four sections. In the first section, I present descriptive statistics of my sample. In the second section, I test H1, H2, and H3. A logistic regression is the most suitable model for these hypotheses because in each case, the dependent variable – success of the intervention – is dichotomous. The observed result is either yes, the intervention was successful, or no, the intervention was unsuccessful. As discussed in the research design, a successful intervention is defined as

a cessation of the conflict for at least six months. For this section, I display a table showing the results of the analysis, and explain the meaning of each variable and their statistical significance. In the third section, I build upon the findings of the logistic regression by utilizing the Clarify for STATA program to ascertain the magnitude of variables that were statistically significant in the logistic regression. I display a table of results illustrating the effect of individual variables on the probability of a successful intervention. In the final section, looking only at interventions targeting the secessionist group, I run an ordered logistic regression to test H1b and H3 with the permanent operationalization of the dependent variable. The results of this section is peripheral to the primary set of hypotheses I test, and serve only to discover whether this quantitative data matches the results of the case studies, which will also test this operationalization. Discussion of the wider implications of the results will be in the next chapter.

Descriptive Statistics

My sample contains a total of 86 unique interventions. These interventions are noted from 29 mother state-secessionist group dyads. Of the 86 interventions, 62 resulted in a successful intervention and 24 resulted in failure. In terms of the type of intervener (IV1), there was a fairly even distribution, with 36 interventions by great powers, 38 by regional powers, and 12 by interveners not considered either (such as former colonial powers of the secessionist group). In the distribution of the target of the intervention (IV2), there appeared to be more interventions that supported secessionist groups: 48 interventions targeted the secessionist group, 32 targeted the mother state, and 6 were neutral (by providing mediation efforts). In terms of the type of intervention (IV3), there

were 67 instances of military/economic intervention, 33 instances of diplomatic intervention, and 14 instances of both military/economic AND diplomatic interventions. Finally, 76 interventions occurred during the Cold War (1947-1991), and 10 outside the Cold War (see Table 5a).

Variables	Components of Variables	Frequency	Percentage
IV1	Great power intervention	36	41.86%
	Regional power intervention	38	44.19%
	Other state intervention	12	13.95%
IV2	Mother state as target of intervention	32	37.21%
	Neither party as target of intervention	6	6.98%
	Secessionist group as target of intervention	48	55.81%
IV3	Military/economic intervention	67	77.91%
	Diplomatic intervention	33	38.37%
	Both	14	16.28%
DV (temporary)	Successful intervention (out of 86 total interventions)	62	72.09%
	Failed intervention	24	27.91%
DV (permanent)	Successful secession (out of 29 total conflicts)	4	13.79%
	Failed secession	25	86.21%
Confounding	Interventions during Cold War	76	88.37%
	Interventions outside Cold War	10	11.63%

Table 5a – Variable Frequencies

The tables below provide additional details of the sample. Because the scope of this study is limited to secession conflicts arising from decolonization disputes, I would expect to see more conflicts and interventions in regions that were previously heavily colonized. Indeed, the geographical distribution displayed below in Table 5b shows that nearly half of the conflicts are located in Asia and the Pacific, where Western powers had numerous colonial holdings. The second largest concentration of conflicts is in sub-Saharan Africa, another region of considerable colonization. Similarly, the greatest

number of interventions occurs in these two regions, with 81.4 percent of all interventions concentrated therein.

Region	Number of Conflicts	Percentage of All Conflicts (out of 29)	Number of Interventions	Percentage of All Interventions (out of 86)
Asia and the Pacific	14	48.28%	35	40.70%
Sub-Saharan Africa	10	34.48%	35	40.70%
The Middle East and North Africa	4	13.79%	15	17.44%
Europe	1	3.45%	1	1.16%
The Americas	0	0%	0	0%
Total	29	100%	86	100%

Table 5b – Geographical Distribution of Conflicts and Interventions

Table 5c illustrates the six most active interveners. The U.S. is the most active, with 13 distinct interventions overall, nearly double the number of China, the second-most active intervener. Predictably, the five members of the UN Security Council – all considered great powers – are listed. Libya is the only unexpected member on the list. Its active presence may be due to its eager support for Islamic secessionist groups around the world.

Intervener	Number of Interventions	Percentage of All Interventions (out of 86)
U.S.	13	15.12%
China	7	8.14%
Soviet Union/Russia	6	6.98%
France	5	5.81%
U.K.	4	4.65%
Libya	4	4.65%

Table 5c – Third Parties with Greatest Number of Interventions

Table 5d below lists the conflicts that have received the greatest number of interventions. South Sudan, with eight different instances of interventions, is likely at the

top of this list due to the long-running nature of its conflict, which emerged in some form in 1955 and was only resolved in 2011 with its secession. Of these conflicts, three are located in sub-Saharan Africa, two in Asia and the Pacific, and two in the Middle East and North Africa. It's also interesting to note that South Sudan, East Timor, and Eritrea ended in successful secessions, while the Moro conflict, Palestine, and the Western Sahara are unresolved cases and Katanga ended its secessionist claim willingly. My case studies will be on two of the listed conflicts: East Timor (with six interventions), and the Western Sahara (with five interventions). The next section will look at the relationship between these independent and dependent variables.

Conflict	Number of Interventions
South Sudan (Sudan)	8
East Timor (Indonesia)	6
Katanga (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	6
The Moro (Philippines)	6
Eritrea (Ethiopia)	5
Palestine (Israel)	5
Western Sahara (Morocco)	5

Table 5d – Conflicts with Greatest Number of Third-Party Interventions

Testing the Type of Intervener (H1a), the Target of the Intervention (H2), and the Type of Intervention (H3) on Whether an Intervention was Successful

In this section I will test my hypotheses using a logistic regression on my sample of 86 interventions. This model measures the impact of the type of intervener (great or regional power), target of the intervention (mother state, neither party, or secessionist group), and the type of intervention (military/economic or diplomatic) on the likelihood that the intervention will be successful (coded 1 for success, 0 for failure). For H1a, the presence of a great power intervention (coded 1 for yes, 0 for no) and the presence of a

regional power intervention (coded 1 for yes, 0 for no) are each its own observation and tested against the outcome of a secession conflict (DV). Similarly, for H3, both military/economic intervention and diplomatic intervention are each its own observation. For H2, the target of the intervention is the observation, with the mother state coded as 2, neither party coded as 1, and secessionist group coded as 0. If the observation results in a coefficient, it indicates that interventions targeting the mother state are more likely to be successful. “Neither party” as the target of the intervention is included in this test because neutral interventions to end a conflict may in fact maintain the status quo, an outcome more favorable to the mother state than secessionist group. The Cold War confounding variable is also tested to control for its effect on the other variables. Table 5e shows 1) the coefficients, 2) the odds ratios, 3) the robust standard errors, and 4) the probability levels (p-values).

Variable	Coefficient	Odds Ratio	Robust Standard Error (of coefficient)	P-Value
Great power intervention	0.0695524	1.072028	0.7219495	0.923
Regional power intervention	1.234468	3.43655	0.7011034	0.078*
Target of intervention	0.7606841	2.13974	0.3080441	0.014**
Military/economic intervention	0.2523221	1.287011	1.008949	0.803
Diplomatic intervention	0.519991	1.682013	0.9079735	0.567
Intervention during Cold War	1.16379	3.202047	0.6865163	0.090*

*Note: *significant at the 0.10 level, **significant at the 0.05 level*

Number of observations: 86
Wald chi-square(6): 12.80
Prob > chi-square: 0.0463
Log pseudolikelihood: -45.110355
Pseudo R-squared: 0.1141

Table 5e – Variables Explaining Successful Interventions

For IV1, the type of intervener, the test verifies a positive coefficient (1.234) for the regional power intervention variable, indicating that the presence of a regional power

intervention increases the likelihood a successful intervention. With a p-value of 0.078 ($p < 0.10$), the relationship is statistically significant. For the presence of a great power intervention, although there is also a positive coefficient (0.069), the p-value, at 0.923 ($p > 0.10$), suggests that I cannot reject the null hypothesis, at the 90 percent confidence level, that great power interventions *do not* have an impact on the success of the intervention. These results support H1, that regional powers have a larger temporary impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.

In terms of the target of the intervention (IV2), there is also a positive coefficient (0.761) that is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level, with a p-value of 0.014 ($p < 0.05$). Since this variable is coded on an ordinal scale ranging from targeting the separatist group to targeting neither party to targeting the mother state, this indicates that moving up on the scale towards more support for the mother state results in an increased likelihood of a successful intervention. This result supports H2 that targeting the mother state rather than the secessionist group results in a larger temporary impact on the outcome of secession conflicts.

For the type of intervention (IV3), while both the military/economic interventions and diplomatic interventions variables resulted in positive coefficients, neither was statistically significant. With p-values of 0.803 and 0.567 ($p > 0.10$), respectively, neither military/economic interventions nor diplomatic interventions seem to be significantly correlated with the success of an intervention. Therefore these results do not support H3, that diplomatic interventions have a larger impact than military/economic interventions on the outcome of secession conflicts.

Finally, the Cold War interventions confounding variable, which tested the impact interventions occurring during the Cold War resulted in a positive coefficient of 1.164, meaning that interventions during the Cold War had a greater likelihood of success. This relationship was also significant, with a p-value of 0.090 ($p < 0.10$). This result is slightly surprising, as one would expect that interventions in the Cold War would be less likely to be successful due to great powers – particularly the U.S. and USSR – supporting opposing sides and canceling out each other's impacts on a conflict. The fact that the relationship is positive may indicate that great powers were reluctant to oppose each other on such peripheral issues as secession conflicts, a conclusion supported by Heraclides, as discussed in the literature review.

Illustrating the Magnitude of Statistically Significant Relationships

While the logistic regression results indicate the direction (positive or negative) and level of statistical significance of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, additional analysis is required to ascertain the *magnitude* of the relationship of variables that were significant in the logistical regression. This section will utilize the Clarify for STATA program to display the effect of individual variables on the probability of a successful intervention, holding other all variables constant at their mean values. Table 5f shows 1) the effect of individual variables on the probability of a successful intervention and 2) the change in probability of success between the variables.

Variable	Probability of Intervention Success	Change in Probability of Success
Presence of regional power intervention		
Yes	84.53%	21.67%
No	62.86%	
Target of intervention		
Secessionist group	47.96%	18.07%
Neither party	66.03%	13.88%
Mother state	79.91%	

Table 5f – Effects of Variables on Probability of Intervention Success, Holding All Other Variables Constant

These results corroborate the results of the logistic regression in Table 5e. For IV1, the type of intervener, the presence of a regional power intervention had an 84.53 percent chance of success, while the absence of a regional power intervention had just a 62.86 percent chance. This difference of 21.67 percent shows that the presence of a regional power intervention increases the likelihood a successful intervention. For IV2, the target of the intervention, targeting the secessionist group results in only a 47.96 percent chance of success, but the probability increases to 66.03 percent when the target is neither party, and further increases to 79.91 percent when the target is the mother state. Between targeting the secessionist group and targeting the mother state, the change in probability of success increases by 31.95 percent. These results indicate that regional power interventions and interventions targeting the mother state are considerably more effective at temporarily impacting the outcome of a conflict, supporting both H1 and H2.

Testing Type of Intervener (H1a) and the Type of Intervention (H3) on Whether a Secession was Successful

Although this additional model is not part of the primary results that test my hypotheses, the data in my sample allow me to examine the second operationalization of

my dependent variable in the quantitative analysis by testing whether the independent variables affect whether a secession was successful. Before conducting my case studies with this operationalization, I test it in this section to see if it holds with a larger sample of cases. The operationalization of the dependent variable, outcome of a secession conflict, now measures secession success rather than intervention success. The assumption is that the interveners *intend* for a successful secession to be the goal. Therefore, this test is run on only instances where third parties target the secessionist group. In this section, using an ordered logistic regression, I test whether the type of intervener (IV1) and the type of intervention (IV3) impact whether a secession is successful. Table 5g shows 1) the coefficients, 2) the robust standard errors, and 3) the probability levels (p-values).

Variable	Coefficient	Robust Standard Error	P-Value
Great power intervention	-0.2033874	1.030784	0.844
Regional power intervention	0.5368499	0.8250413	0.515
Military/economic intervention	-1.164781	0.9800048	0.235
Diplomatic intervention	-0.4401677	0.6333066	0.487
Intervention during Cold War	0.5394454	0.6879062	0.433
Number of observations: 48			
Wald chi-square(5): 2.82			
Prob > chi-square: 0.7272			
Log pseudolikelihood: -74.451808			
Pseudo R-squared: 0.0174			

Table 5g - Variables Explaining Successful Secessions

However, from the results above, it appears that none of the variables were significant at the 90 percent confidence level. Out of all the variables, the one with the lowest p-value is military/economic interventions. With a negative coefficient, this indicates that military/economic interventions may result in a decreased likelihood of a successful intervention, which support studies that have argued that military/economic

interventions tend to prolong and exacerbate armed intrastate conflict. However, even this variable, with a 0.235 p-value ($p > 0.10$), is not particularly indicative of a relationship, as I cannot reject the null hypothesis, at the 90 percent confidence level, that this variable does not actually have an impact on whether a secession was successful. Additional study would be needed to better determine how variables impact whether a secession was successful, which is the goal of my case studies. I discuss the implications of these quantitative results in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Discussion of Quantitative Results

This chapter evaluates and compares the three hypotheses of the quantitative section and whether they answered my research question regarding how third party interventions affect secession conflicts. I also analyze the wider implications of my results and some limitations and potential confounding factors in this study. Finally, I discuss the external validity of the results and how I will use case studies to supplement this quantitative analysis.

Evaluating the Temporary Impact of the Type of Intervener (H1a)

There exist various studies that examine how third party interventions impact intrastate conflicts.¹⁰⁹ Based on conclusions in the literature that emphasize the importance of regional powers, my hypothesis predicts that regional powers will have the larger impact on the outcome of secession conflicts. Regional powers are not merely the proxies of great powers, and may in fact have greater stakes in a conflict due to struggles over regional hegemony, as they have more to gain or lose in a local conflict. The results of the logistic regression offer support for this prediction. When regional powers choose to intervene, there is a greater likelihood that their interventions are successful. For great powers, the statistical evidence is weaker, and the null hypothesis that great power influence doesn't necessarily result in a successful intervention cannot be rejected. The results of the Clarify for STATA program verifies that the magnitude of regional powers interventions are quite large, as the probability of a successful intervention increases by

¹⁰⁹ For further reference, the studies of Regan and Khosla are discussed in chapter 3, the literature review.

21.67 percent when regional powers intervene versus when they do not. This hypothesis is therefore supported by the results.

Evaluating the Temporary Impact of the Target of Intervention (H2)

Regan's study confirms that in intrastate conflicts, support for the mother state is more impactful than support for the secessionist group. H2 attempts to find out whether this holds true specifically in cases of secession. The logistic regression indicates that when the target of an intervention moves from the secessionist group to neither party to the mother state, there is an increasing likelihood of a successful intervention. The Clarify data verifies this finding, as there is a 31.95 percent increase in the probability of a successful intervention when targeting the mother state rather than the secessionist group. This hypothesis is also supported by the results.

Evaluating the Temporary Impact of the Type of Intervention (H3)

H3, based off existing arguments that diplomatic interventions resolves intrastate conflicts more effectively than military/economic interventions, cannot be verified by the analysis. Neither the military/economic nor diplomatic intervention variables were statistically significant, meaning that I cannot reject the null hypothesis, at the 90 percent confidence interval, that these interventions do not lead to a successful intervention. This indicates that the type of intervention likely does not affect the temporary outcome of a secession conflict. This hypothesis is not supported by the results.

Evaluating the Permanent Impact of the Type of Intervener (H1b) and Type of Intervention (H3)

This test sought to illustrate the impact of independent variables on the second, permanent operationalization of my dependent variable in the quantitative analysis before testing it in my case studies. However, testing the impact of H1b and H3 on whether a secession was successful found that none of the variables were statistically significant. Although military/economic interventions might result in a decreased likelihood of a successful secession, this variable was not significant enough to be confident in the results. A likely explanation for these results is that the outcome of a secession exists on such a wide spectrum that the ordinal scale created for this set of data, coded from 1 to 5 for clarity, does not completely capture the range of outcomes in reality, which vary from successful secessions to failed secession attempts with agreements on autonomy, etc. This disconnect between the nuances of reality and the clarity required for statistical analysis may have affected the significance of the tested variables. This further supports the need for a qualitative analysis, which will more accurately reflect the details of a case. Therefore, the actual affect of H1b on whether a secession was successful will be tested in the case studies section, where a thorough study will provide stronger results.

Conclusions: Affecting the Temporary Outcome of a Secession Conflict

From the quantitative results, a few conclusions can be drawn. Decision-makers are regularly faced with the option of intervening in a conflict in order to end the conflict, and there is often uncertainty regarding how to intervene successfully. While not all options discussed in this study are feasible to all decision-makers, where there is a wider

availability of choices, the conclusions below seek to shed some light on how to maximize success when interventions occur in secession conflicts.

1. **Regional powers are more likely to impact the outcome of a secession conflict, at least temporarily.** When operationalizing outcome as whether an intervention was successful, regional power interventions are more likely than great power interventions to be successful. Out of all the variables, regional power interventions had the highest chance (84.53 percent) of a successful intervention. Therefore in order to maximize the probability of a successful intervention, a regional power intervention must occur. However, although a successful intervention and the temporary cessation of conflict can lead to negotiations and potentially a permanent resolution, the conflict may not necessarily end permanently. I leave the exploration of great and regional powers' permanent influence to the case studies, wherein I can observe their impact on whether a secession was successful.
2. **Despite a greater number of interventions supporting the secessionist group, targeting the mother state is more likely to lead to a successful intervention.** When the objective is a successful intervention, supporting the mother state will result in a much greater likelihood of success. This hypothesis also had the strongest statistical significance out of all three hypotheses. However, the decision of which side of a conflict to target is often influenced by political considerations. Nevertheless, this information may be valuable in that “understanding of the *ex ante* likelihood of a successful intervention is vital information to the policymaker, even if politics restrict the range of options available.”¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*, 136.

3. Purely military/economic interventions or purely diplomatic interventions likely will not affect whether an intervention is successful. The results were not statistically significant enough to support such a relationship. However, it is important to note that there were not enough observations of interventions with all three kinds of aid present. Further study would be required to determine whether the presence of all three kinds of aid affects the success of an intervention.

One limitation in this study is that only recorded interventions are coded; that is, accusations of intervention are not counted. Although the datasets from which I draw my sample occasionally list accusations of interventions by third parties, I chose not to record those because accusations, especially from the mother state, were less reliable than actual recorded instances of interventions. Additionally, there are few accusations of interventions in the conflicts examined, and therefore will not considerably distort my results.

In terms of the external validity of this study, these results can be generalized to secession conflicts that arise from either 1) the implementation of self-determination during the decolonization era, such as Eritrea's secession from Ethiopia, or 2) the territorial definition of former colonies, such as the Kachin and Karen ethnic groups in Burma. The results do not apply to non-colonial secession cases, such as Chechnya in Russia and the Basque and Catalan in Spain. Further study would be needed to incorporate these cases that do not arise in the post-colonial context.

Finally, because the situation of each secession conflict is unique, case studies are necessary for a more comprehensive examination of my research question. Out of all of the quantitative hypotheses, H1, the type of intervener, generated the most debate in the literature over whether great or regional powers were most impactful. If regional powers

are more likely to instigate a successful intervention, how do they impact the eventual secession of the separatist group? I will utilize case studies to further explore the question of how third party interventions affect the outcome of secession conflicts, operationalizing “outcome” as whether a secession was successful. The next chapters will study two cases that have received among the greatest number of interventions since 1945: East Timor and the Western Sahara.

Chapter Seven: Case Study 1 – East Timor, A Successful Secession (1975-2002)

Overview of Case Studies

The quantitative section of this study found statistically significant evidence that for a sample of secession conflicts, interventions by regional powers result in a larger likelihood of a successful intervention. In the following case studies on East Timor and the Western Sahara, I will conduct an in-depth examination of H1b: *regional powers have a larger permanent impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.* I will conduct a process tracing of these cases, investigating in particular how great and regional power interventions ultimately resulted in the successful secession of East Timor and the intractability of the Western Sahara conflict. My independent variable remains the type of intervener, measured as either great or regional power and my dependent variable remains the outcome of secession conflicts, but this time it is measured by whether the attempted secession was successful. As previously discussed in the literature review, this study seeks to shed some light onto the existing debate of whether great and regional powers have a greater impact on secession conflicts. My hypothesis reasons that regional powers have greater stakes and are more motivated to influence regional power dynamics, and therefore end up exerting a larger impact on local secession conflicts.

East Timor and the Western Sahara are the ideal case studies for this study. Out of the sample 29 mother state-secessionist group dyads from my quantitative study, East Timor and the Western Sahara received among the most military, economic, and diplomatic aid from third parties. These two cases also have similar background conditions: both conflicts arose during the decolonization era and quickly became

internationalized. Both declared independence from Western colonial powers in the mid-1970s, but were subsequently occupied by neighboring former colonies. Colonized by Portugal, East Timor declared independence during Portugal's decolonization period. However, it was subsequently invaded by neighboring Indonesia. Third parties that intervened in the conflict include the U.K., the U.S., Australia, (and to an extent Portugal), but East Timor eventually gained independence in 2002.

Similarly, as Spain considered granting the Western Sahara a referendum on self-determination, Moroccan occupation of the territory in 1975 forced Spain to relinquish control. France, the U.S., Algeria – and tangentially Spain and Libya – intervened in the conflict. However, unlike East Timor, the Western Sahara conflict remains unresolved, and Morocco now refers to the territory as “the southern provinces.” If my hypothesis is correct, this study will find that regional power intervention in both cases had the larger impact on the different status of the conflicts. While the scope of this thesis begins in 1945, analysis of both cases begins in 1975 because the first major events in their secessionist attempts occurred that year, by coincidence within two weeks of each other – Spain relinquished control of the Western Sahara to Morocco on November 14th, and East Timor declared independence from Portugal on November 28th. Analysis of the East Timor case will end in 2002, when it formally gained independence, but analysis of the Western Sahara case, which is still ongoing, will end in 2011.

In this first chapter of my qualitative analysis I focus on East Timor from when it declared independence in 1975 to when it actualized its independence in 2002. I explain its historical background until 1975, before turning towards great and regional power involvement before, during, and after Indonesia's occupation. I conclude by assessing the

effects these third-party interveners have had on the success of East Timor's self-determination claim. Similarly, the second chapter of this qualitative analysis examines great and regional power interventions in the Western Sahara conflict. The final chapter of this analysis discusses the results of the study and compares the cases.



Figure 7a – Map of East Timor

Source: BBC News

Historical Background: Indonesia's 1975 Invasion and East Timor's Legal Right to Self-Determination

East Timor, officially the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, is comprised of the eastern half of the island of Timor and the Oecusse district, an enclave within Indonesia West Timor. The island of Timor is located at the southern end of maritime Southeast Asia, 300 miles north of Australia.¹¹¹ The Portuguese first arrived in 1551, maintaining trading ties with local islanders. In the 1700s, the Dutch gained a foothold on the western end of the island, and in 1914, the Permanent Court of Arbitration divided the

¹¹¹ "Timor-Leste." *CIA World Factbook*. Accessed February 22, 2015, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tt.html>.

island into east and west, between Portuguese and Dutch influence, respectively.¹¹² In addition to the western half of Timor, the Dutch had also colonized Indonesia, known at the time as the Dutch East Indies. After WWII, with anti-colonial movements sweeping the world, Indonesia declared independence from the Dutch, and joined the United Nations in 1950.¹¹³ During this period of decolonization, Indonesia gained former Dutch possessions in Southeast Asia, including West Timor.

At the same time, the Portuguese attempted to develop East Timor and strengthen its colonial influence on the territory. However, the East Timorese resented colonial rule by the Portuguese, and a nationalist movement emerged, helmed by the Timorese elite and influenced by the independence movements of African Portuguese colonies like Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau.¹¹⁴ Legally, as a people living in a colonial holding of Portugal, East Timor possessed a right of self-determination in the classical sense: that is, the right of former colonies to independence and self-governance. Beginning in 1962, the UN General Assembly adopted a series of annual resolutions regarding former Portuguese territories, urging the “immediate recognition of the right of the peoples of the Territories under its administration to self-determination and independence.”¹¹⁵ However, Portugal considered East Timor an “overseas province” rather than a colony, despite the fact that East Timor was over 14,000 miles away.¹¹⁶ Ignoring East Timor’s legal right to independence, Portugal refused to comply with these UN resolutions until after the

¹¹² “Boundaries in the Island of Timor (Netherlands v. Portugal)” (Permanent Court of Arbitration, June 25, 1914).

¹¹³ “Admission of New Members to the UN: Indonesia, S/RES/86 (1950)” (United Nations Security Council, September 26, 1950).

¹¹⁴ Manooher Mofidi, “Prudential Timorousness in the Case Concerning East Timor (Portugal V. Australia),” *Journal of International Law and Practice* 7 (1998): 40.

¹¹⁵ G.A. Res. 1807 (XVII), U.N. GAOR, 17th Sess., U.N. Doc. A/C.4/SR.17 (1962).

¹¹⁶ Roger S. Clark, “East Timor, Indonesia, and the International Community,” *Temple International and Comparative Law Journal* 14 (2000): 78.

Portuguese Carnation Revolution in 1974, during which a group of leftist military officials took power. The new ruling party, which supported decolonization, then began considering granting independence to its former colonial holdings.¹¹⁷

After the Portuguese coup, the East Timorese quickly founded nationalist political parties, among which included the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) and the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN).¹¹⁸ Under the Portuguese sphere of influence, the East Timorese had a colonial experience unique from the inhabitants of the western half of the island, and had no desire to unite with Indonesian West Timor. Indonesia originally stated that it had no designs on East Timor, yet clandestinely destabilized relations between UDT and FRETILIN in the early 1970s. Deteriorating relations and suspicion between the two parties resulted in a brief civil war and the withdrawal of Portuguese forces from the territory. As a result, FRETILIN took control of East Timor and established a de facto government in September 1975.¹¹⁹

By then, Indonesia had increased its military patrols near the West Timor border, launching attacks on the East Timor town of Atabe.¹²⁰ Seeking international support, FRETILIN declared the independence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor on November 28, 1975, the same day that Atabe fell to Indonesia. Nine days later, on December 7, Indonesia invaded East Timor, and on December 18, Indonesia declared the establishment of a provisional government in East Timor, insisting that few “rebels” remained.¹²¹ While Indonesia did not attempt to justify its occupation through legalistic

¹¹⁷ Mofidi, “Prudential Timorousness in the Case Concerning East Timor (Portugal V. Australia),” 41-2.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 43.

¹¹⁹ Clark, “East Timor, Indonesia, and the International Community,” 79.

¹²⁰ Mofidi, “Prudential Timorousness in the Case Concerning East Timor (Portugal V. Australia),” 44.

¹²¹ “Australian Policy: Indonesia’s Incorporation of East Timor,” text, accessed February 22, 2015, http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Foreign_Affairs_Defence_and_Trade/Completed_inquiries/1999-02/east_timor/report/c06.

arguments of satisfying East Timorese self-determination, it did make the case that the territory could not be self-sufficient and was vulnerable to Communist influence.¹²²

At the UN, both the General Assembly and the Security Council denounced Indonesia's invasion and reiterated East Timor's right to self-determination, even as Indonesia proclaimed East Timor its 27th province.¹²³ However, a 1975 Security Council resolution denouncing Indonesia was adopted unanimously, but by 1976, a similar resolution resulted in the abstention of the U.S. and Japan.¹²⁴ Between 1975 and 1982, international support for East Timor's right to self-determination dwindled, and the Security Council was reluctant to force Indonesia's withdrawal.

Great Power Intervention: The Role of the British and American Military Aid in Indonesian Suppression

For the duration of the conflict, the U.K. and U.S. were the primary great power interveners. Even before the invasion of East Timor, both countries, viewing Indonesia as a strategic ally against the Soviet Union's influence in Southeast Asia, supported the regime of Indonesian President Suharto. Recognizing and applauding Indonesia's turn away from Communism, Richard Nixon declared in 1967 that "with its 100 million people, and its 3,000-mile arc of islands containing the region's richest hoard of natural resources, Indonesia constitutes by far the greatest prize in the Southeast Asian area."¹²⁵

Military and economic aid comprised the majority of British and American support for

¹²² Clark, "East Timor, Indonesia, and the International Community," 79.

¹²³ G.A. Res. 3485 (XXX), U.N. GAOR, 30th Sess., Supp. No. 34, at 118, U.N. Doc. A/10034 (1976); S.C. Res. 384, U.N. SCOR, 30th Sess., Resolutions and Decisions 10, U.N. Doc. S/Res/384 (1975).

¹²⁴ Security Council resolution 384, S/RES/384 (22 December 1975); Security Council resolution 389, S/RES/389 (22 April 1976).

¹²⁵ Richard M. Nixon, "Asia After Viet Nam," *Foreign Affairs*, October 1, 1967, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/23927/richard-m-nixon/asia-after-viet-nam>.

Indonesia – either arms sales, subsidies for these sales, or training programs for Indonesian military officers.

In the latter half of the 20th century, the U.S. and the U.K. were among Indonesia's primary and most consistent arms suppliers.¹²⁶ Starting in 1976, military aid to Indonesia jumped sharply (see Figure 7b). From 1996-1997, the U.K. sold weapons and equipment to Indonesia, including armored personnel carriers, Tactical water cannons, and Hawk aircraft, all of which were subsequently used against the East Timorese.¹²⁷ A 1996 report of the British National Audit Office questioned how development aid to Indonesia was being allocated to protect arms orders from Indonesia.¹²⁸ Similarly, following the invasion of East Timor by Indonesia, the U.S. increased both military aid and arm sales to Indonesia. By 1994, U.S. weapons sales amounted to \$1.1 billion, or upwards of \$30 million a year.¹²⁹ As a result, both British and American arms aided the Indonesian control and suppression of the East Timorese separatist movement and were utilized in attacks against the East Timor militia.¹³⁰ In January 1985, Indonesian Air Force Chief of Staff Marshall Sukardi announced that the Hawk aircraft delivered from the British were used “for purposes of advanced training and tactical combat.”¹³¹ Additionally, B.J. Habibie, then Indonesian Minister of Research

¹²⁶ TIV of arms exports to Indonesia, 1950-2002, *SIPRI Arms Transfers Database* (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute), accessed February 22, 2015.

¹²⁷ *Indonesia: Arms Trade to a Military Regime* (Amsterdam, The Netherlands: European Network Against Arms Trade, June 1997), 81.

¹²⁸ National Audit Office, *Aid to Indonesia* (London, 1997, The Stationery Office, HC 101 Session 1996-97).

¹²⁹ William D. Hartung and Jennifer Washburn, “Report: U.S. Arms Transfers to Indonesia 1975-1997,” *World Policy Institute*, March 1997, <http://www.worldpolicy.org/projects/arms/reports/indoarms.html>.

¹³⁰ “General Assembly Official Records, Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, 1435th Meeting” (United Nations General Assembly, July 13, 1994).

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

and Technology, stated in April 1994 that the aircrafts “will be used not only to train pilots but also for ground attack.”¹³²

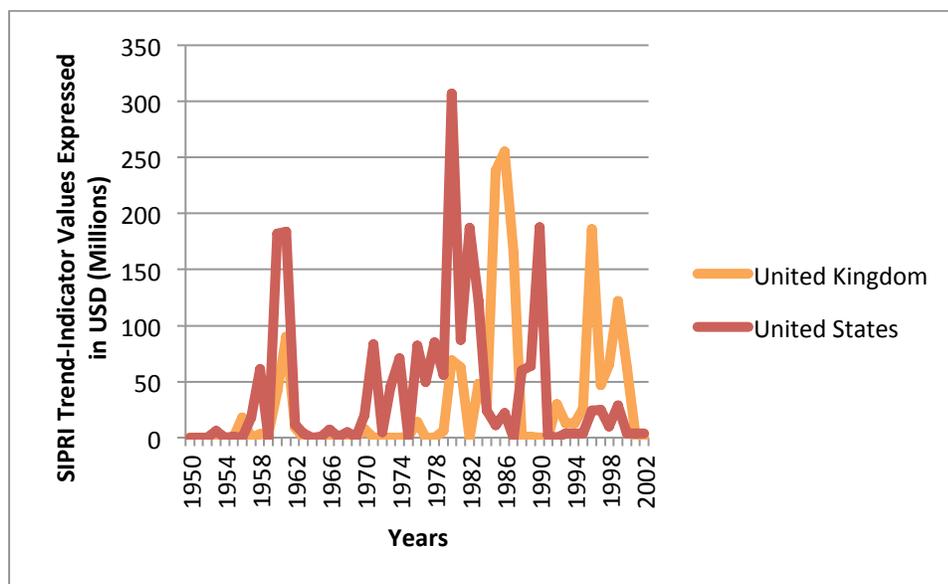


Figure 7b – British and American Military Aid to Indonesia (1950-2002)

Source: data obtained from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

Note: data before 1950 not available

In addition to supplying Indonesia with arms, the U.S. and U.K. both instituted official training programs for Indonesian officers, continuing this training even after the invasion of East Timor. A 1995 study by Ann Clwyd MP, chair of the British Parliamentary Human Rights Group, acknowledged the training of Indonesian police and aid going to internal surveillance by Indonesian authorities, concluding, “...the Government is looking to foster its influence over senior officers...who are potential buyers of British arms/security equipment.”¹³³ Similarly, the U.S. operated the international military education and training (IMET) program, an official U.S.-based

¹³² “General Assembly Official Records, Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, 1435th Meeting” (United Nations General Assembly, July 13, 1994).

¹³³ Ann Clwyd, *British Aid to Indonesia: The Continuing Scandal*, 1995, p. 28.

military training program that taught strategy and techniques to Indonesian officers.¹³⁴ Moreover, since 1992, the U.S. has trained Indonesian soldiers in Indonesia under the joint combined exchange training (JCET) program.¹³⁵

Besides the suppression of FRETILIN's military forces, Indonesia's arms and training allowed it to remain in control of the territory itself. In 1975, the East Timor population numbered 680,000, but a report by the East Timor Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation estimates that 100,000 to 180,000 – nearly a third of the population – were killed during the early years of the occupation.¹³⁶ Villagers were resettled into towns to perform forced labor, or directly into concentration camps. Although Indonesia had closed the territory to outsiders since the occupation began in 1975, in 1989 the Suharto administration began settling Indonesian Javanese in East Timor. By the 1990s, up to 20 percent of the population in East Timor was Indonesian.¹³⁷ Additionally, after bombing from the Indonesian army in the early to mid-1980s, FRETILIN forces were reduced by 80 percent and unable to fight a traditional war against Indonesia. In 1981, the military branch split into various units and adopted guerrilla tactics.¹³⁸

Although the U.S. was wary of providing explicit approval of Indonesia's occupation of East Timor, it was also reluctant to voice support for self-determination. Indonesia was a bastion against Communism's encroachment into Southeast Asia, and it

¹³⁴ Charles Scheiner, "The United States: From Complicity to Ambiguity," in *The East Timor Question: The Struggle for Independence from Indonesia*, ed. Paul Hainsworth and Stephen McCloskey (New York: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2000), 121.

¹³⁵ Allan Nairn, "Secret US Training for Indonesia's Killers," *The Nation*, March 30, 1998.

¹³⁶ *Chega! The Report of the Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation in Timor-Leste* (Timor-Leste: Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, October 31, 2005), 6.

¹³⁷ John G. Taylor, *East Timor: The Price of Freedom* (New York: Zed Books Ltd., 2000), 105-6.

¹³⁸ Amanda Wise, "East Timor: A History of the Present," in *Exile and Return Among the East Timorese* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 29.

was in the U.S.'s interests to support Indonesian unity. Consequently, David Newsom, the American ambassador to Indonesia, gave implicit support to Suharto's administration in 1975, stating that the invasion should be done "effectively, quickly, and not use our equipment."¹³⁹ More tangibly, from 1975 to 1982, the U.S. voted against all resolutions regarding East Timor.¹⁴⁰ The U.S. recognized the illegality of the occupation and yet still accepted the incorporation of East Timor into Indonesia.

Regional Power Intervention: Australia's Recognition of Indonesian Sovereignty over East Timor

Although Portugal was East Timor's former colonial power, it did not possess strong economic or political ties to the territory. Eager to rid the country of East Timor, the post-coup Portuguese government quickly proclaimed its support for Timorese self-determination. The administration originally planned on reconciling East Timor's right to self-determination with Indonesia's designs on East Timor, as evidenced by a series of meetings in Lisbon from an Indonesian delegation in October and November 1974. Portugal assured the delegation that while it did not explicitly endorse an Indonesian occupation of East Timor, it also "did not wish to continue its rule in the territory," and that East Timor independence was "unrealistic."¹⁴¹ Indonesia took this to indicate Portugal's implicit support should Indonesia invade East Timor.

In August 1975, following the conflict between FRETILIN and UDT, Portugal lost control of the territory. Fearing incorporation into Indonesia, FRETILIN declared

¹³⁹ "Australian Policy: Indonesia's Incorporation of East Timor."

¹⁴⁰ Scheiner, "The United States: From Complicity to Ambiguity," 119.

¹⁴¹ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Australia and Indonesia's Incorporation of Portuguese Timor, 1974-76* (Carlton: Melbourne University Publishing, 2000), 109.

independence in December, but days later, Indonesia launched its pre-planned invasion nonetheless. Portugal, still internally divided following the 1974 coup and without strong ties to East Timor, ruled out military resistance to Indonesia, deciding instead to mount a diplomatic response to Indonesia's invasion. Portugal brought the issues to the UN, resulting in General Assembly Resolution 3485 on December 12, 1975, and Security Council Resolution 384 on December 22, 1975, both of which demanded that Indonesia withdraw from East Timor.¹⁴² However, Portugal's diplomatic intervention in the conflict was limited to annual resolution submissions. Facing a dwindling support for the resolutions in the General Assembly, this too ended in 1982. As a result, Portugal's involvement in the conflict did little to change the situation.

Like the U.K. and U.S., Australia recognized the strategic importance of Indonesian stability, with defense analyst Paul Dibb writing that "a unified Indonesia is vital to Australia's national interest."¹⁴³ While Australia provided Indonesia with military aid, it was nowhere to the extent of British and American efforts (see Figure 7c). From 1972 to 1980, military aid from Australia to Indonesia totaled roughly A\$50.5 million (around USD \$40 million).¹⁴⁴ More important, however, was Australia's diplomatic support for Indonesia. In August 1975, months before Indonesia's invasion, Richard Woolcott, Australian ambassador to Indonesia, endorsed the possibility of an Indonesian invasion, stating, "We leave events to take their course, and act in a way which would be designed to minimize the public impact in Australia and show private understanding to Indonesia of their problems. I am recommending a pragmatic rather than a principled

¹⁴² G.A. Res. 3485 (XXX), U.N. GAOR, 30th Sess., Supp. No. 34, at 118, U.N. Doc. A/10034 (1976); S.C. Res. 384, U.N. SCOR, 30th Sess., Resolutions and Decisions 10, U.N. Doc. S/Res/384 (1975).

¹⁴³ Paul Dibb. *Australian Financial Review*. May 23, 1998.

¹⁴⁴ John Waddingham, "Keeping Suharto on Top," *Inside Indonesia*, 1984, p. 34.

stand but that is what national interest and foreign policy is all about.”¹⁴⁵ Following the invasion, Australia evolved from abstaining from UN General Assembly resolution regarding the Indonesian occupation of East Timor to direct votes against these resolutions, starting in 1978.¹⁴⁶

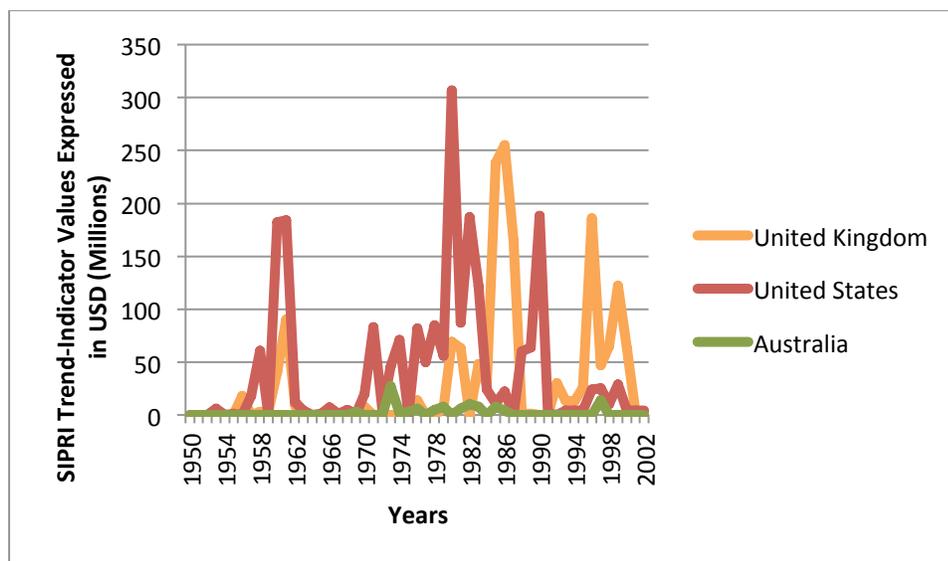


Figure 7c – British, American, and Australian Military Aid to Indonesia (1950-2002)

Source: data obtained from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

Note: data before 1950 not available

In addition to its value as an ally against Communist influence, Indonesia also provided Australia with economic advantages. For Australia, cooperation with Indonesia spelled possibilities for “open[ing] the way to accessing a share of the oil and gas reserve in the Timor Sea.”¹⁴⁷ While Australia’s approval of Indonesia’s invasion amounted to de facto recognition of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor, Australia’s pursuit of resources in the Timor Sea took this recognition a step further. In 1989, Australia accorded the occupation with further legitimacy through a treaty with Indonesia

¹⁴⁵ Bruce Juddery, “Do Not Accuse Jakarta: Ambassador,” *Canberra Times*, May 31, 1975.

¹⁴⁶ Christine Chinkin, “Australia and East Timor in International Law” In *International Law and the Question of East Timor*, (London: CIIR, 1995), 277.

¹⁴⁷ Paulo Gorjão, “The End of a Cycle: Australian and Portuguese Foreign Policies and the Fate of East Timor,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 23, no. 1 (April 1, 2001): 108.

regarding East Timor resources. The “Treaty on the Zone of Cooperation in an Area between the Indonesian Province of East Timor and Northern Australia,” also known as the Timor Gap Treaty, allowed for the joint use of resources in the ocean between northern Australia and East Timor and along the East Timorese continental shelf.¹⁴⁸ In recognizing that Indonesia possessed the rights to the waters of East Timor, Australia recognized Indonesia’s legal claims to the territory, thus providing de jure recognition of Indonesia’s invasion. The text of the treaty even explicitly designated East Timor as a province of Indonesia, reading, “A Zone of Cooperation is hereby designated in an area between the Indonesian Province of East Timor and northern Australia...”¹⁴⁹

Portugal, which objected to Indonesia’s use of East Timor’s waters and resources, brought suit against Australia in 1991 at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the East Timor (Portugal v. Australia) case. Portugal based its claims on the fact that only Portugal had the right to make treaties on behalf of East Timor, since Portugal still possessed legal administrative control of the territory.¹⁵⁰ Portugal and Australia both submitted to the jurisdiction of the ICJ, but at the time Indonesia was not party to the ICJ. The Court did not have the right to hear a case involving a party that had not recognized the Court, and as a result rejected the case. In avoiding the question of the legal guardianship of East Timor and by extension the question of the legality of Indonesia’s occupation, the Court avoided having to adjudicate a politically sensitive issue.¹⁵¹ This

¹⁴⁸ “Treaty between Australia and the Republic of Indonesia on the Zone of Cooperation in an Area between the Indonesian Province of East Timor and Northern Australia” (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, December 11, 1989).

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ “East Timor (Portugal v. Australia)” (International Court of Justice, June 30, 1995).

¹⁵¹ Mofidi, “Prudential Timorousness in the Case Concerning East Timor (Portugal V. Australia),” 47-8.

again was part of the larger trend of the international community ignoring the occupation, and again, Portugal's attempt to advocate for East Timor had little effect.

Reversals in Third-Party Support in the 1990s: Growing Attention to East Timor

Despite the relative inconsequence of the conflict to the attention of the international community in the 1980s, several events in the 1990s resulted in policy changes from the great and regional powers involved. The first event was the Santa Cruz (Dili) Massacre on November 12, 1991. A crowd had gathered at a church in the East Timor capital Dili for a Catholic mass in honor of a student who had been shot by Indonesian troops week earlier. During the event, Indonesian troops began shooting indiscriminately into the crowd, killing an estimated 250 to 400 people. Unlike previous instances of Indonesian brutality, this event was captured on camera by a British cameraman. The film was then smuggled out of the country, and was particularly impactful to the international community, mobilizing nongovernment organizations to advocate for Timorese independence.¹⁵² Additionally, along with the Santa Cruz Massacre, the award of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize to East Timor's diplomat-in-exile Jose Ramos-Horta and Bishop Carlos Belo for their work championing East Timor independence, served to keep international attention on East Timor.¹⁵³

From 1992 to 1996, despite the willingness of Portugal to meet with Indonesian officials to reach a resolution, eight round of negotiations yielded no results. Indonesia, though appearing keen to negotiate, seemed satisfied that little progress was being

¹⁵² Wise, "East Timor: A History of the Present," 28.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 30.

made.¹⁵⁴ However, another turning point in the conflict occurred in 1998. Faced with the Asian economic recession and internal unrest, Indonesian President Suharto resigned that year and B.J. Habibie took his post. Portugal then seized the opportunity to pressure the new president to grant self-determination to East Timor. Australia, seeing the emergence of a new Indonesia president, and pressured by international and domestic activists lobbying for East Timor independence, took the opportunity to influence the course of events in line with its national interests. In 1998, Australian Prime Minister John Howard penned a letter to Habibie, urging the new president to resume negotiations with East Timor. This was the first indication that Australia was beginning to support self-determination in East Timor, and “with Howard’s letter, Jakarta lost its most important Western ally and became seriously isolated internationally.”¹⁵⁵

At the same time, with the end of the Cold War, great power support for Indonesia began to wane as well, though the U.K. and the U.S. had less of a role during this era than in previous years. The Santa Cruz massacre of November 12, 1991, received widespread American media coverage, and afterwards, U.S. attitudes began to shift, due also to the end of Cold War support for autocratic, anti-Communist governments.¹⁵⁶ Pressured by public opinion, both British and American policies evolved in the 1990s from military support to disengagement from Indonesia. For example, U.S. arms supplies dwindled after 1999 (see Figure 7b, above). Citing East Timor specifically, the EU also

¹⁵⁴ Gorjão, “The End of a Cycle: Australian and Portuguese Foreign Policies and the Fate of East Timor,” 107.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 114.

¹⁵⁶ Scheiner, “The United States: From Complicity to Ambiguity,” 120.

enacted an embargo in 1999, “in view of the current appalling situation...where serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law are taking place.”¹⁵⁷

In May 1999, President Habibie finally agreed to a self-determination referendum. Indonesia offered East Timorese voters the choice of autonomy within Indonesia or full independence. Balloting fell under the auspices of the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), but Indonesia was responsible for security. On August 30, 1999, with 98 percent voter turnout, 78.5 percent of the East Timorese voted in favor of independence.¹⁵⁸ Indonesia, which had expected East Timor to vote for autonomy instead of independence, reacted violently, and at least 1,000 Timorese died in the aftermath of the referendum.¹⁵⁹ Australia and Portugal soon realized the need for a peacekeeping force in East Timor, but in order to do so without provoking war, Indonesia had to accept the presence of foreign troops. With international attention on the issue, Australia and Portugal applied diplomatic pressure on the U.S., and in turn the U.S. threatened to cut military ties with Indonesia.¹⁶⁰

Consequently, Indonesia accepted the peacekeeping force and eventually the results of the referendum. Australia led the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET), which was deployed in September 1999. Afterwards, the UN enacted the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in 1999 in order to “establish an effective administration and...to support capacity-building for self-

¹⁵⁷ “Council Common Position of 16 September 1999 Concerning Restrictive Measures against the Republic of Indonesia (1999/624/CFSP)” (The Council of the European Union, September 17, 1999).

¹⁵⁸ United Nations, *Assembly Hails Onset of East Timor's Transition to Independence; Creates New Haiti Mission, Calls on Afghan Parties for Dialogue*. GA/9691, 17 December 1999, <http://www.un.org/press/en/1999/19991217.ga9691.doc.html>.

¹⁵⁹ Wise, “East Timor: A History of the Present,” 34.

¹⁶⁰ Gorjão, “The End of a Cycle: Australian and Portuguese Foreign Policies and the Fate of East Timor,” 116.

government.”¹⁶¹ Gradually, the East Timor government regained control of the territory, and on May 20, 2002, East Timor formally gained independence.

Assessing the Impacts of Great and Regional Powers on East Timor’s Successful Secession

In assessing the role of great powers (the U.K. and U.S.) and regional powers (Australia) in this conflict, events suggest that Australia had the larger impact on East Timor’s eventual secession. It was Australia’s de facto and de jure recognition of Indonesia’s invasion that first granted Indonesia the legitimacy to remain in East Timor. Its implicit approval allowed Indonesia to invade in the first place, and it provided Indonesia with continued support in the UN. More so than the U.S. and U.K., Australia had stronger security and economic ties with Indonesia, which gave Australia more motivation to support Indonesia at first. Australia was Indonesia’s strongest advocate and Western ally, and when it withdrew its support and began advocating for East Timor self-determination in the late 1990s, Indonesia was forced to reevaluate its policy. Without Australia legitimizing its claims, Indonesia finally allowed a self-determination referendum to occur in East Timor. Finally, following Indonesia’s violent reaction after the referendum, Australia led the call for a peacekeeping force in East Timor, and headed the resulting INTERFET.

Although neither the U.K. nor U.S. impacted the outcome of the conflict to the degree that Australia did, their interventions cannot be completely dismissed. The steady supply of arms and training from the U.K. and U.S. aided Indonesia in defeating armed resistance and consolidating military control over East Timor, and indicated to Indonesia

¹⁶¹ Security Council resolution 1272, S/RES/1272 (25 October 1999).

that the two countries were willing to turn a blind eye to these activities. Additionally, both great powers abstained and voted against UN resolutions regarding East Timor, which lent implicit legitimacy to Indonesia's occupation. However, unlike Australia, the U.K. and U.S. were unwilling to offer diplomatic support to the point of de facto or de jure recognition of Indonesia's sovereignty over the territory. Eventually in the 1990s, both reversed their support for Indonesia and joined in on condemnation of the occupation, which partially contributed to Indonesia's decision to allow a self-determination referendum in East Timor. Though it is important to note that this change in policy only occurred after pressure from Australia, Portugal, and domestic public opinion.

As the former colonizer, Portugal fits neither under the category of great nor regional power in this study. Unlike the other interveners, Portugal had few stakes in East Timor, and wished to rid itself of the territory as quickly as possible. Although its presence could act as a confounding factor, it largely failed to affect substantial change during the conflict. Even its attempts to push through annual General Assembly resolutions regarding East Timor failed after 1982. After the regime change in Indonesia, Portugal's role in calling a self-determination referendum was certainly was not as large as Australia's. Ultimately, in the case of East Timor's successful secession, Australia's interventions had the greatest impact on the outcome of the case. Next, I test my hypothesis on the unsuccessful Western Sahara case. The next chapter will examine the Western Sahara conflict from 1975 to 2011.

Chapter Eight: Case Study 2 – Western Sahara, An Intractable Conflict (1975-2011)



Figure 8a – Map of the Western Sahara (*al-Sahra al-Gharbiyah*)

Source: BBC News

In this chapter, I seek to test whether in the unsuccessful case of the Western Sahara, regional powers still play a larger role than great powers. I first discuss the historical background of the Western Sahara until its declaration of independence in 1976 before examining great and regional power involvement before, during, and after Morocco's occupation of the territory in 1975. I analyze the differing influence of great and regional power interventions, both military/economic and diplomatic. I conclude by summarizing the effect that these third parties have had on the case's intractability. Great power involvement includes France and the U.S., and regional power involvement includes Algeria, (and to an extent Libya).

Historical Background: Morocco's 1975 Invasion and Western Sahara's Legal Right to Self-Determination

Comparable in size to Great Britain, the Western Sahara (originally known as the Spanish Sahara) is populated by the *Sahrawi*. The term means “Saharan” in the dialect of Arabic spoken in the region, but is a fairly recently ethnic category, referring to just peoples living in the Sahara. The territory is rich with phosphates and hydrocarbons, with access to a large stretch of coastline and the adjoining fishing waters. In 1884, the Spanish established a colony in the region called Rio de Oro. In 1900, France – the colonial power of Morocco to the north and Mauritania to the south – and Spain reached an agreement dividing their respective spheres of influence.¹⁶²

After Morocco achieved independence from France in 1956, it began campaigning for the fulfillment of a “Greater Morocco” (*al-Maghrib al-Kabir*), or the annexation of nearby territories that it claimed were historically under Moroccan rule, including the Western Sahara. However, in 1965, the UN General Assembly decided that the Spanish Sahara possessed the right to self-determination. The legal basis for the Western Sahara's this right stems from the classical definition of self-determination, or the right of a previously colonized people to independence from the colonial power.¹⁶³ Although Spain objected, Morocco initially supported Western Saharan self-determination, believing that the territory would vote for unification with Morocco. Mauritania, which also claimed historical ties to part of the territory, supported the Moroccan view.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Stephen Zunes and Jacob Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution* (Syracuse, N.Y: Syracuse University Press, 2010), 100.

¹⁶³ General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), A/RES/1514(XV) (14 December 1960).

¹⁶⁴ General Assembly resolution 2072 (XX), A/RES/2072(XX) (16 December 1965).

In 1973, the first serious challenge against Spanish rule of the Western Sahara emerged with the formation of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Río de Oro (*Frente Popular de Liberación de Saguía el Hamra y Río de Oro*, or Polisario). The movement applied pressure to Spain, which began to consider granting a self-determination referendum to the territory. However, in 1974, King Hassan II of Morocco, in an attempt to appease domestic unrest and consolidate royal power, declared that Morocco had a claim to the Western Sahara due to historical ties to the territory.¹⁶⁵

In 1975, in an attempt to establish legal ties to the territory, Morocco and Mauritania approached the ICJ for an advisory opinion on two questions regarding the Western Sahara:

- I. *Was Western Sahara (Rio de Oro and Sakiet El Hamra) at the time of colonization by Spain a territory belonging to no one (terra nullius)?*
- II. *What were the legal ties between this territory and the Kingdom of Morocco and the Mauritanian entity?*¹⁶⁶

On the first question, the Court ruled unanimously that at the time of colonization the Western Sahara was *not* considered *terra nullius*, “a territory belonging to no one.” This meant that the people living in the territory deserved a right to exercise their self-determination. Regarding the second question, the Court hinted that, a “legal tie of allegiance existed at the relevant period between the Sultan [of Morocco] and some, but only some, of the nomadic peoples of the territory.”¹⁶⁷ However, the Court ruled decisively that regardless of these historical ties, Morocco did not have a claim to the territory, concluding that “there did not exist between the territory of Western Sahara and

¹⁶⁵ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, xxiii.

¹⁶⁶ “Western Sahara Advisory Opinion of 16 October 1975” (International Court of Justice, October 16, 1975).

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

the Mauritanian entity any tie of sovereignty.”¹⁶⁸ Therefore, the Court ultimately ruled that there did not exist a tie between the Western Sahara and Morocco and Mauritania that would preclude the application of self-determination to the territory, as determined by the 1960 General Assembly Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.¹⁶⁹

However, intent on reclaiming the territory, King Hassan seized upon the Court’s hints of “legal ties of allegiance” between Morocco and the Western Sahara and declared Morocco’s claim to the territory legitimate.¹⁷⁰ Mauritania expressed similar sentiments. Based on this claim, Hassan began planning the Green March (green for the color of Islam), a symbolic march of Moroccan civilians and soldiers into the Western Sahara. These territorial ambitions alarmed neighboring Algeria, which protested that Morocco planned on violating the Sahrawi’s right of self-determination. Spain protested as well against Morocco’s planned takeover. France and the U.S., however, viewed Morocco as a strategic partner against the spread of Communism in North Africa and an Arab state with a favorable stance towards Israel, and therefore made no objections to the march.¹⁷¹

The Green March occurred on November 6, 1975, with 350,000 Moroccan civilians entering the Western Sahara. With the march backed by Moroccan soldiers, King Hassan had effectively gained control of the territory. Referencing the occupation of the Western Sahara, international lawyer Thomas Franck remarked that “nothing in international relations succeeds like success,” and indeed, faced with this *fait accompli*,

¹⁶⁸ “Western Sahara Advisory Opinion of 16 October 1975” (International Court of Justice, October 16, 1975).

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ United Nations, Security Council, *Report by the Secretary-General in Pursuance of Security Council Resolution 377 (1975) Relating to the Situation Concerning Western Sahara*, S/11863 (31 October 1975), undocs.org/S/11863.

¹⁷¹ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 64.

Spain had no choice but to hand over administrative control to Morocco.¹⁷² The subsequently Madrid Accords between Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania officially ceded two-thirds of the territory to Morocco and one-third to Mauritania. On February 26, 1976, Spain withdrew completely. Turning their attention from Spain to Morocco, a provisional Sahrawi government declared the independence of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) the next day. On March 6, 1976, Algeria recognized the state, resulting in Morocco breaking off diplomatic relations with Algeria.¹⁷³

Great Power Intervention: French and American Aid during and after the Western Saharan War (1975-1991)

From Morocco's occupation in 1975 until a ceasefire in 1991, Morocco and the Polisario engaged in armed conflict. During the Western Sahara War, great power interveners France and the U.S. supplied two-thirds and one-third, respectively, of Morocco's military needs.¹⁷⁴ Over the duration of the war, France provided \$1.5 to \$2.0 billion in aid and arms to Morocco.¹⁷⁵ By 1980, the U.S. had provided close to \$1 billion in arms to Morocco.¹⁷⁶ In addition to assistance from American military personnel, Moroccan forces also received intelligence and training from the U.S. Between 1976 and 1984, the U.S. spent around \$1 million annually training the Moroccan Royal Armed

¹⁷² Thomas M. Franck, "The Stealing of the Sahara," *The American Journal of International Law* 70, no. 4 (October 1, 1976): 695.

¹⁷³ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 64.

¹⁷⁴ Daniel Volman and Yahia H. Zoubir, *International Dimensions of the Western Sahara Conflict*: (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1993), 159-62.

¹⁷⁵ John Damis, *Conflict in Northwest Africa: The Western Sahara Dispute*, (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1984), 116.

¹⁷⁶ Daniel Volman, *A Continent Besieged: Foreign Military Activities in Africa since 1975* (Institute for Policy Studies, 1980), 10.

Forces.¹⁷⁷ Additionally, economic aid was closely tied to military aid. For example, military sales were largely subsidized by grants; in 1983, \$100 million in loans for U.S. arms purchases was made available to Morocco, half of which were at subsidized interest rates.¹⁷⁸

In 1977, Polisario raided Mauritania's largest mining operation in the town of Zouerate, resulting in direct intervention from Moroccan and Mauritanian allies. In December 1977, France flew its air force from a base in Senegal and attacked Polisario positions, and remained after the airstrikes to aid Mauritania, justifying the intervention as retaliation for Polisario's killing of two French citizens at Zouerate.¹⁷⁹ After the 1977 attack, French aid – including military technologies and military advisors for Mauritania and aircraft and paratroopers for Morocco – increased to the extent that scholar Keith Somerville remarked, “France was more or less running the Mauritanian armed forces.”¹⁸⁰ As a result, the Polisario began limiting its operations in Mauritania.¹⁸¹ However, even with French aid, an economic recession and national fatigue over the war began burdening Mauritania. In a bid for peace, it finally signed a ceasefire agreement with Polisario on August 5, 1979. The agreement entailed Mauritania giving up all claims to the Western Sahara, although with Moroccan troops bolstering Mauritania throughout the war, Morocco quickly moved in to annex the Mauritanian areas of the territory. In

¹⁷⁷ U.S. Department of Defense. Defense Security Assistance Agency (DSAA). *Foreign Military Sales, Foreign Military Construction Sales, and Military Assistance Facts as of September 30, 1983*. (Washington, D.C.: DSAA, 1984), 82-3.

¹⁷⁸ John Damis, “The United States and North Africa” In *Polity and Society in Contemporary North Africa*, edited by I. William Zartman and William Mark Habeeb, (Boulder: Westview, 1993), 226.

¹⁷⁹ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 11-12.

¹⁸⁰ Keith Somerville, *Foreign Military Intervention in Africa*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 117.

¹⁸¹ Gerard Chaliand, *The Struggle for Africa: Conflict of the Great Powers*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980), 107.

1984, Mauritania formally recognized the independence of SADR, although its stance has since remained neutral towards the territory.¹⁸²

While third-party aid greatly bolstered the Moroccan military, Polisario's guerilla tactics and knowledge of the landscape proved to be increasingly effective against Morocco. The war sank into stalemate until 1980, when Morocco began receiving a massive influx of weapons and financial aid (see Figure 8b). U.S. arms sales increased in 1980 following a series of Polisario attacks in 1979. The U.S. proposed \$250 million in new arms sales agreements, whereas previous arms sales had been capped at \$10 million in a single transaction.¹⁸³ The U.S. justified increased spending based on Morocco's "willingness to help achieve a cease-fire to negotiate the relevant Western Sahara issues, and to cooperate with international efforts to mediate the dispute."¹⁸⁴ In 1981 Morocco began constructing the Moroccan Defensive Wall, comprised of a series of berms, in order to block Polisario's ease of movement. Both the foreign interventions and the construction of the wall turned the war in Morocco's favor, although it still could not deal a decisive victory over the Polisario. Nevertheless, by 1984, Morocco had "drastically shrunk the number and value of targets as well as options for retreat." In September 1991, the UN called a permanent ceasefire, which both parties have since observed.¹⁸⁵ The ceasefire also included the 1991 Settlement Plan, an agreement between Morocco and the Polisario to organize a self-determination referendum on the status of the Western Sahara.

¹⁸² Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 13-14.

¹⁸³ U.S. Department of Defense, *Foreign Military Sales*, 3.

¹⁸⁴ U.S. House of Representatives. Committee on Foreign Affairs. *Report on International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1960*. 96th Cong., 2d sess., Apr. 16, 1980, 15.

¹⁸⁵ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 24.

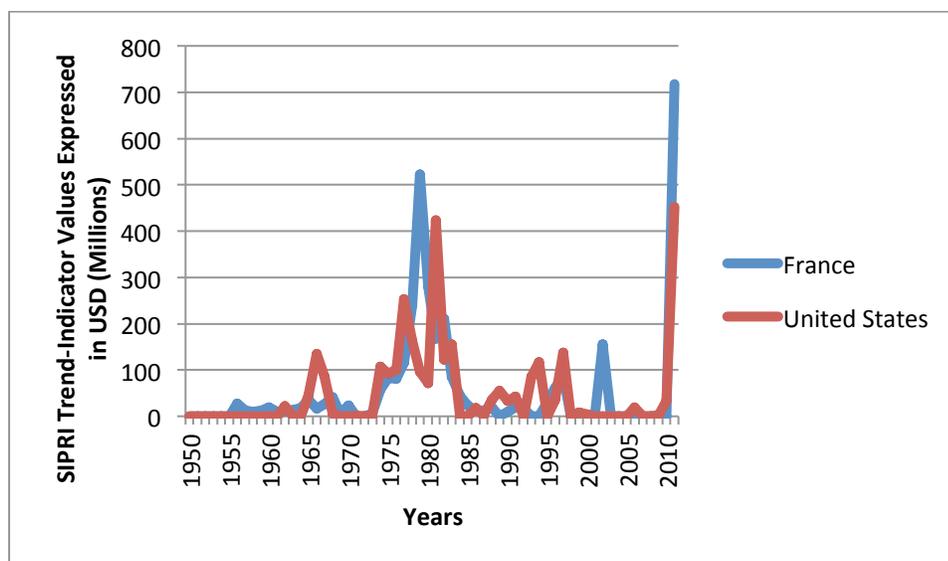


Figure 8b – French and American Military Aid to Morocco (1950-2011)

Source: data obtained from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

Note: data before 1950 not available

Although the ceasefire ended armed fighting, the conflict continued as a politicized battle over the possibility of a self-determination referendum. Again, France and the U.S. supported Morocco, continuing the support they've provided Morocco in international institutions since 1975. Even during the invasion of the Western Sahara, France blocked a UN Security Council vote regarding Morocco's aggression against Spain, with French president Valery Giscard d'Estaing justifying his support for Morocco by warning against "the multiplication of microstates."¹⁸⁶ Similarly, U.S. abstained from most General Assembly votes regarding the issue since 1975.¹⁸⁷ After the ceasefire, the U.S. showed only tepid support for a UN self-determination referendum in the territory, declaring, "The United States opposes any solution being imposed on the parties."¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ Philip Chiviges Naylor, "France and the Western Sahara: Colonial and Postcolonial Intentions and Interventions" In *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the French Colonial Historical Society*, (Medford, Mass.: French Colonial Historical Society, 1987), 211.

¹⁸⁷ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 60.

¹⁸⁸ U.S. House of Representatives. Committee on International Relations, Subcommittee on Africa. *UN Referendum for Western Sahara: 9 Years and Counting*. Hearings. 106th Cong., 2d sess., Sept. 13, 2000, 4.

In terms of the referendum itself, the Polisario demanded that the eligible voter registry include only those listed in the 1974 census conducted by Spain and descendants of those listed. This census recorded 73,397 Sahrawis living in the territory, all of whom were likely to vote for Western Saharan independence.¹⁸⁹ Morocco, who had for years been settling Moroccans into the territory, protested and attempted to register Moroccans living in the territory. This fundamental disagreement over voter eligibility complicated and stalled the referendum, and in 1995 UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali made proposals altering the process. However, France and the U.S. blocked any official UN denouncements of Morocco's practices, and as a result, the referendum faltered and Polisario withdrew from the process in June 1995.¹⁹⁰ In 1997, Morocco and Polisario agreed to resume the identification process. When the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) published a list of eligible voters in January 2000, most of Morocco's applicants were rejected, indicating that the outcome of a referendum would likely be independence.¹⁹¹ Morocco appealed more applications than MINURSO could process, and the Security Council, after gauging Secretary-General Kofi Annan's "sobering assessment" of the referendum stalemate, abandoned plans for identification in 2000.¹⁹²

Even though the referendum process failed, as the occupying power, Morocco benefited from the lack of a resolution. Both France and the U.S. supported this intractability as "going through the motions of a referendum was better than letting the war simmer throughout the 1990s and beyond. All along, the French and U.S.

¹⁸⁹ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 191.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 202.

¹⁹¹ United Nations, Security Council, *Report of the Secretary on the Situation Concerning Western Sahara*, S/2000/131 (17 February 2000), undocs.org/S/2000/131, par. 6.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

governments knew that they would eventually have to stop the process if it came too close to threatening their interests vis a vis Morocco.”¹⁹³ Although Morocco gradually became less important as an ally against encroaching Communism, after September 11th, 2001, it once again became essential to French and American interests as an ally against global terrorism.

Regional Power Intervention: Algeria’s Role in Sustaining the Conflict

During the initial Moroccan occupation of the Western Sahara, Sahrawi refugees fled into Algeria, which had been advocating for their right to self-determination. Tensions and competition for regional hegemony between Algeria and Morocco originated with border disputes following the independence of both countries. A 1972 treaty settled the borders between the two, but as Spain departed from the Western Sahara, Algeria saw an opportunity to once again vie for regional dominance and began supporting Polisario and the self-determination principle. Although Algeria failed to prevent Moroccan occupation of the Western Sahara, it quickly began to back Polisario in the Western Sahara War.¹⁹⁴

Before armed conflict with Morocco, Polisario had waged war against Spain from 1973 until 1975. Following the 1975 handover of the territory, Morocco and Mauritania attempted to defend their positions from Polisario, which turned its attentions to its new occupiers. Polisario was well funded with aid from Algeria and Libya, and had received training from the Algerian military. Most importantly, Algeria provided the Polisario with a base in the city of Tindouf in Algeria, which gave it a decisive advantage. The

¹⁹³ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 217-8.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

only way Morocco could completely destroy Polisario resistance would be to invade Algeria, which constitutes an act of war. Therefore, “with that extraterritorial home base, where nearly half of Western Sahara’s population came to reside, Polisario’s political and military health was virtually guaranteed by Algeria.”¹⁹⁵ With this kind of aid, in 1979, the Polisario was able to drive back Mauritania. Although Morocco benefitted from strong, centralized power, Mauritania was a weak, fragmented, post-colonial state, which in 1975 had only 2,550 soldiers.¹⁹⁶ It was no match for the Algerian-funded Polisario, and quickly sued for peace.

Another regional power, Libya, supplied arms to Polisario from 1979 to 1982 and recognized SADR in 1980, albeit with a generally neutral stance regarding the conflict. However, after SADR received a seat in the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1984 due to Algerian diplomatic efforts, Morocco retaliated by signing the Treaty of Oujda with Libya, which stipulated that Libya agree not to challenge Morocco’s sovereignty over the Western Sahara and cut off supplies to Polisario. Although Libya revoked the treaty in 1986, it has not since renewed ties with Polisario.¹⁹⁷ Ultimately, Libya’s involvement in this conflict has been peripheral, especially when compared to Algeria’s involvement. A 1983 study conducted by the U.S. House of Representatives concluded that even when Libya supplied the Polisario, it was “under the general supervision of Algeria.”¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 9.

¹⁹⁶ International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1975/1976*, (London: IISS, 1976), 47.

¹⁹⁷ Tony Hodges, "After the Treaty of Oujda," *Africa Report*, (November-December 1984).

¹⁹⁸ U.S. House of Representatives. Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on International Security and Scientific Affairs and Subcommittee on Africa. *Review of U.S. Policy toward the Conflict in the Western Sahara*. Hearings. 98th Cong., 1st sess., Mar. 15, 1983, 37.

Although France and the U.S. intervene on behalf of Morocco without openly recognizing Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara, Algeria has explicitly recognized the territory's independence. Algeria's support of the Polisario keeps the issue alive in the international community. According to scholar Anne-Marie Gardner, "a realist framework would predict that the international community would press for resolution in favor of Morocco. But the legal case for a referendum in the Western Sahara was successfully pushed by small states...keeping the issue active within a broad legal framework." Algeria's influence has even to an extent affected the policy of France, which since Algerian independence has sought to balance positive relations with both Morocco and Algeria. The negative Algerian reaction in 1979 to France's participation in the Western Sahara War redirected French policy from active involvement to "passive supporter of a referendum, hoping to preserve a positive image in the Third World."¹⁹⁹ By positioning itself as a champion of the right to self-determination, Algeria can claim the upper moral hand. In hopes of preserving their perceptions abroad, France and the U.S. are both forced to frame their diplomatic interventions via legal arguments, as international pressure keeps the focus on the territory's deprived right to self-determination, despite great power interests.

Algeria's support of Polisario has also allowed SADR to assume seats in international organizations, including the OAU.²⁰⁰ While Morocco is the only country that recognizes its own claims to the Western Sahara, due to Algeria's influence there are

¹⁹⁹ Philip Chiviges Naylor, "Spain, France, and the Western Sahara: A Historical Narrative and Study of National Transformation," in *International Dimensions of the Western Sahara Conflict*, ed. Daniel Volman and Yahia H. Zoubir (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1993), 37.

²⁰⁰ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 42.

40 current states that have recognized the legitimacy of SADR.²⁰¹ Additionally, Algeria's demand for a position in negotiations regarding the Western Sahara allows it to provide further support for Polisario during negotiations. In some instances, Algeria's refusal to participate in negotiations that it deems are unfavorable towards Polisario has stalled the negotiations completely. For example, after the original self-determination referendum failed, the UN appointed former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker as a special envoy to the Western Sahara in 2000. Baker engaged in a series of talks with Morocco, Polisario, and Algeria. Eventually Baker proposed the 2001 Framework Agreement, which did not explicitly offer a referendum for independence, but proposed autonomy instead with the possibility of a referendum after five years.²⁰² However, the details of the referendum allowed for the possibility of Moroccans living in the territory to vote, and while Morocco enthusiastically accepted the agreement, Algeria rejected it.²⁰³ Baker's revised 2003 Peace Plan brought more pressure on Morocco, but the Security Council's evasive language regarding the proposal led this plan to fall through as well. Realizing the loss of support from the U.S. in the negotiations, Baker resigned in 2004.²⁰⁴ By 2006, Morocco proposed its new autonomy without independence plan, which was soundly rejected by the Polisario and Algeria. With Morocco rejecting any mention of independence, and Algerian-backed Polisario rejecting Moroccan sovereignty over the Western Sahara, the conflict has remained intractable as of 2011.

²⁰¹ Kingdom of Morocco, "Morocco's Tally of Countries Rejecting/Supporting Recognition of Independent Sahara" (WikiLeaks, March 6, 2009).

²⁰² United Nations, Security Council, *Report by the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara*, S/2001/613 (20 June 2001), undocs.org/S/2001/613, Annex I: par. 5.

²⁰³ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 223-4.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 237-8.

Assessing the Impacts of Great and Regional Powers on the Western Sahara Conflict's Irresolution

In a case where the outcome is the continued irresolution of the conflict, it appears that regional powers – in this instance, Algeria – also have the larger impact. Even with extensive interventions from great powers, Morocco “did not always use its arms, training, and intelligence with success,” failing to fully utilize all the aid that was offered.²⁰⁵ Diplomatically, great powers may be interested in Morocco as an ally, but otherwise were not as invested in the conflict, as “neither the United States nor France, the most important external powers...has been prepared to make the fate of the Sahrawis the defining touchstone of its relations with Algeria and Morocco.”²⁰⁶ Instead, Algeria – with its greater vested stakes in the conflict because it had more to gain or lose depending on the outcome – has been the most influential third-party intervener. When the war started in 1975, “few observers...would have predicted a Moroccan defeat. On paper, Morocco was clearly dominant.”²⁰⁷ However, a 1979 Polisario raid of a Moroccan city and the capture of a Moroccan garrison “were a clear message from Algeria that support for Polisario would continue.”²⁰⁸ It therefore appears that in both successful and unsuccessful cases of secession, regional powers had a larger impact than great powers in either aiding or preventing the realization of secession, thus supporting H1b of this study. The next chapter will focus on more detailed comparisons of great and regional power interventions in both instances.

²⁰⁵ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 20.

²⁰⁶ Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall, *Taming Intractable Conflicts: Mediation in the Hardest Cases* (US Institute of Peace Press, 2004), 33.

²⁰⁷ Zunes and Mundy, *Western Sahara: War, Nationalism, and Conflict Irresolution*, 14-5.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

Chapter Nine: Discussion of Case Study Results

This chapter summarizes the conclusions of the case study analysis and the results for H1b, type of intervener. I first compare the great power and regional power involvements. I then turn towards some conclusions, comparing the merits of the quantitative and qualitative analyses. I conclude with an assessment of the relevance and value of the results and possible limitations of the analysis.

Evaluating H1b

From the results of the case study analysis, H1b – *regional powers have a larger permanent impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts* – is verified. For East Timor, the great power interveners were the U.K and U.S., and for the Western Sahara, the great power interveners were France and the U.S. In both cases, the great powers primarily provided arms and economic aid. In the Western Sahara conflict, France and the U.S. also provided diplomatic aid as well, although in neither case did the great powers actually recognize the mother state's sovereignty over the secessionist group. The Cold War certainly played a factor in the decision to intervene. Both Indonesia and Morocco were seen as strategic anti-Communist allies, which led to large amounts of military support in order to ensure the stability of these regimes. At the end of the Cold War, Indonesia was no longer useful as a buffer in Southeast Asia, and the need to prop up the regime waned, leading to reversal of great power support to East Timor. In contrast, Morocco, located at the crossroads of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, remains a strategic ally in the fight against militant Islam, and continues to receive

support from France and the U.S. However, although the results indicate that regional power interventions were more impactful, that does not mean that great power interventions made no difference. At times, great power interventions were certainly influential, especially during the initial phases of Indonesian and Moroccan occupations of these territories, when military interventions helped suppress armed separatist resistance.

The interventions of regional powers, however, ultimately proved more effective in changing the course of these conflicts. In the case of East Timor, Australia also provided arms to Indonesia; however, its diplomatic interventions – de facto and de jure recognition of Indonesian sovereignty of East Timor – were more impactful, granting legitimacy to Indonesia's occupation. Once Australia withdrew its support, Indonesia was forced to allow a self-determination referendum in the territory. In the case of the Western Sahara, Algeria provided arms to the Polisario to fight the Western Sahara War. After the ceasefire, Algeria's housing of the Sahrawi refugees and the government-in-exile allowed the Polisario to persist in its separatist claim, and Algeria's insistence on making the issue the cornerstone of regional politics has sustained the conflict.

Conclusions: Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses and The Influential Role of Regional Powers

While a quantitative analysis depicted the broader trends from a large sample of secession conflicts, the case studies provided a more detailed examination of the great and regional power interventions involved. H1a in my quantitative analysis tested the type of intervener's (IV1) temporary impact on the outcome of secession conflicts (DV)

by observing whether an intervention was successful, and concluded that regional powers are more impactful. The quantitative analysis also found that while the presence of a regional power increased the likelihood of a successful intervention, there was not enough evidence to conclude that great power interventions had the same effect.

With the selection of East Timor (a successful case), and the Western Sahara (an unsuccessful case), I used case studies to bolster the findings from the quantitative analysis and offer a more nuanced view on H1b, looking at great and regional powers' permanent impact on such conflicts. While the results supported my hypothesis that regional powers were more impactful on the outcome, it also demonstrated that great powers cannot be completely dismissed, contrary to the suggestion in the quantitative analysis that great power interventions might not impact the outcome at all. In particular, both the U.K. and the U.S.'s initial support of Indonesia and France and the U.S.'s support of Morocco aided these mother states in maintaining control over the disputed territory. Although they were less impactful than regional powers on the ultimate outcome, their presence did help shape the development of the cases.

With a mixed methods approach, this study provided a thorough examination of the impact of great and regional powers on the outcome of a secession conflict, both temporarily (through testing the success of an intervention), and permanently (through testing the success of a secession). This provided a comprehensive answer to my research question – *how do third-party interventions affect the outcome of secession conflicts?* Both types of analyses have their merits and combined, they result in a more robust study. Additionally, despite the complexity and uniqueness of the case studies, the results, combined with the results of the quantitative analysis, can be generalized to other

secession cases that arose in the post-colonial context. It is reasonable to expect, extrapolating the results in this thesis, that in these instances, regional powers interventions likely have a larger impact on the outcome of the case, temporarily and permanently.

However, this case study analysis is not without its limitations. H2 in the quantitative analysis, which tested the target of the intervention (IV2), may have been a confounding factor in the case studies. My quantitative analysis found that supporting the mother state rather than the secessionist group had the greater impact on the success of an intervention, which in the case studies could have confounded the relationship between the type of intervener (IV1) and whether the secession was successful. For example, the argument could be made that interveners' support for Indonesia and Morocco – the mother states – was the more impactful factor, regardless of whether the intervener was a great or regional power. While I acknowledge the effect this confounding variable may have had on the initial control of the territories, ultimately, it was Australia's shift in support to East Timor and Algeria's staunch support for the Western Sahara that resulted in East Timor's secession and the intractable status of the Western Sahara. Therefore this confounding variable, while adding to the complexity of these cases, did not significantly obscure the relationship between the type of intervener (IV1) and the outcome of the conflict (DV).

A final limitation is that like other scholars in the field, I assume that foreign interventions have a strong and decisive influence on the outcome of a conflict – and indeed the outcomes of the two cases in this study were associated with third-party interventions. One aspect not factored into my analysis was the characteristics of the

conflict. For example, does the type of conflict (either ethnic/religious or ideological) or the number of causalities affect the final outcome of the conflict? Additionally, some scholars conclude that the internal workings of the mother state and separatists groups may also affect the secession conflict, a theory that is outside of the scope of this thesis.²⁰⁹ However, in instances where interventions did occur, this study strongly suggests that outside interventions by regional powers are the most impactful on the outcome of a secession conflict, temporarily and permanently. Having presented and assessed the results of both my quantitative and qualitative analyses, I discuss concluding thoughts in the final chapter.

²⁰⁹ Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, *Inside the Politics of Self-Determination* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

Chapter Ten: Conclusion

This thesis has studied the impact third-party interventions have on secession conflicts. Specifically, I explored secessionist conflicts arising in the post-colonial context and in the time period between 1945 and 2011. My research question – *how do third-party interventions affect the outcome of secession conflicts?* – sought to determine conditions under which outside interventions affect the resolution of these conflicts. This research question has several important implications. First, the idea of secession is interrelated to the principle of self-determination and the creation of states. The two newest states – South Sudan (2011) and Kosovo (2008) – both claimed the right to self-determination in seceding from Sudan and Serbia, respectively. In studying *how* third party interventions affect the outcome secessionist conflicts, my research shed some light on policies that can maximize the success of ending these conflicts.

To answer this research question, I utilized four hypotheses:

H1a: *Regional powers have a larger temporary impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.*

H1b: *Regionals have a larger permanent impact than great powers on the outcome of secession conflicts.*

H2: *Interveners have a larger temporary impact on the outcome of secession conflicts when targeting the mother state rather than the secessionist group.*

H3: *Diplomatic interventions have a larger temporary impact than military/economic interventions on the outcome of secession conflicts.*

For all four hypotheses, my dependent variable was the outcome of a secession conflict.

My study operationalized this dependent variable two different ways. First, testing H1a (type of intervener), H2 (target of the intervention), and H3 (type of intervention) in the

quantitative analysis, the dependent variable measured whether an intervention was successful, defining success as a cessation of a conflict for at least six months. This measured the temporary impact that third parties have on the outcome of a conflict, as a successful intervention may not address underlying disagreements causing the secessionist attempt. I tested this operationalization of the dependent variable with a logistic regression of 86 unique interventions from 29 mother state-secessionist group dyads, which provided the direction and significance of the relationship between variables. I then ran the statistically significant variables from the logistic regression through the Clarify for STATA program in order to provide further information on the magnitude of the relationships.

The second way I operationalized my DV was by measuring the outcome of the conflict as the success or failure of a secession attempt, success defined as the achievement of statehood. This measured the permanent impact that third-party interveners have on the outcome of a conflict. The creation of a new state typically resolves the disagreement behind the secessionist attempt, and new states, once created, cannot be involuntarily dismantled. This version of the dependent variable tested H1b (type of intervener) by process tracing two case studies: East Timor (a successful secession) and the Western Sahara (an unsuccessful secession).

The results of the quantitative analysis reveal several conclusions in terms of how third parties can maximize the possibility of a successful intervention. First, the type of intervener in a conflict has an impact on the temporary outcome of secession conflicts by affecting the likelihood that intervention will be successful. Regarding the debate on the relative impacts of great and regional powers on intrastate conflicts, the results of this

study concur with the conclusions of Buzan emphasizing the larger impact that regional powers have on a conflict. The fact that a third-party intervention makes an impact at all supports the realist framework of secession. Regional powers have greater stakes in regional hegemony and are therefore more committed to achieving their goals, whether they are to destabilize a rival by supporting its secessionists or to stabilize the region by helping preserve another state's territorial integrity. Similarly, the results of the qualitative analysis found that the type of intervener also has an impact on the permanent outcome of secession conflicts by affecting the likelihood that a secession will be successful. The case studies found that for East Timor and the Western Sahara, regional powers were more impactful than great powers. In the case of East Timor, Australia's reversal of support from Indonesia to East Timor forced Indonesia to acquiesce to a self-determination referendum. In the Western Sahara, Algeria's staunch support for the resistance movement has sustained the Polisario's cause.

Second, interventions are more likely to be successful when the target of the intervention is the mother state rather than the secessionist group. The quantitative results showed that this was the case, even though a greater overall number of interventions supported secessionists. This may be that unlike secessionist groups, which often have to resort to guerrilla tactics, the mother state can more effectively utilize third-party aid to end the conflict.

Finally, the results do not support the idea that diplomatic interventions are more likely to be successful than military/economic interventions. Previous studies by Regan, Frank, and Aydin have suggested that military/economic interventions tend to prolong a conflict rather than end it, while diplomatic interventions tend to shorten the duration of a

conflict.²¹⁰ This study indicates that when measuring the success of an intervention rather than the length of the conflict, the type of intervention did not impact the likelihood of intervention success. Additional study and perhaps a larger sample would be required to further clarify the impact of the type of intervention on a conflict.

Based on the quantitative results of this study, a policy suggestion is available, particularly if policy-makers seek to maximize the likelihood of intervening successfully. While policy-makers have no control over their power status as either a great or regional power, they certainly have the option of choosing whether to support the mother state or the secessionist group. Though other political consideration may be a factor, if *the success of the intervention* is the goal, the results indicate that supporting the mother state will help achieve that goal. Specifically, supporting the mother state over the secessionist group increases the likelihood of intervention success by 31.95 percent. With a large sample spanning 66 years, 86 unique interventions, and 29 mother state-secessionist group dyads, the results of this study can be considered quite strong.

However, there are a few limits to this thesis. First, while focusing on East Timor and the Western Sahara in my case studies provided a nuanced measure of the permanent impacts of great and regional power interventions, more case studies may be needed to provide greater external validity to these results. A second limitation is that the results of this thesis only apply to post-colonial secession conflicts. Do the same results apply in newer secession claims arising from peoples who have never been colonized? Nevertheless, this study provides robust results within the scope of the thesis. The limits also point to further research that might be able to extrapolate the results of this study to other instances. One avenue for future research may be to study internal self-

²¹⁰ Regan and Aydin, "Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars."

determination, or autonomy, rather than secession and whether third-party interventions impact those conflicts. Additionally, it could also be worthwhile to study whether the characteristic of the secession conflict (rather than the characteristics of third party interventions) have any impact on the outcome of the conflict.

Beyond the results of the analyses, the broader topic of this thesis poses some interesting real-world considerations regarding secession and self-determination. For example, is it *desirable* that a group claiming self-determination becomes an independent state? An unfortunate reality is that if a secession dispute is resolved with the emergence of a new state, it often faces the possibility of state failure, especially if its internal institutions were not prepared for secession in the first place. In the instance of East Timor, in 2008, rebel soldiers attempted to assassinate Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão and then-President José Ramos-Horta (the same Ramos-Horta who won the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize for championing East Timor independence). Additionally, with unemployment rates at 20 percent and with 37 percent of the population below the international poverty line as of August 2014, East Timor has gained the dubious status of “the world’s youngest failed state.”²¹¹ Similarly, South Sudan, after seceding from Sudan in 2011, is currently embroiled in civil war. After independence, South Sudan “had virtually no civil institutions, about 120 doctors for a population of roughly 9 million, and a total of 35 miles of paved roads spanning a territory the size of France... In other words, it faced every major challenge identified by social scientists as a predictor of state failure.”²¹²

²¹¹ Madhu Narasimhan, “The World’s Youngest Failed State,” *Foreign Affairs*, August 12, 2014, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/features/letters-from/the-worlds-youngest-failed-state>.

²¹² Ty McCormick, “Unmade in the USA: The Inside Story of a Foreign-Policy Failure,” *Foreign Policy*, February 25, 2015, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/25/unmade-in-the-usa-south-sudan-bush-obama/>.

On the other hand, for failed or unresolved secessionist movements, the irresolution of the underlying disagreement can give rise to intractable conflicts. 2015 marked the 40th anniversary of the Moroccan occupation of the Western Sahara, and according to a February 2015 New York Times article, “the Sahrawis were adamant that the only solution for them was independence.”²¹³ Yet the principle of self-determination continues to be invoked as secession cases evolve and emerge in the present day. The Kurds, numbering 30 million and interspersed throughout Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, comprise the world’s largest nation without a state. As recent as July 2014, the Kurdistan Regional Government of northern Iraq began preparations for an independence referendum, and as Kurdish-controlled territories in Iraq have expanded following the rise of the Islamic State, predictions have emerged that an independent Kurdistan could become the world’s next country.²¹⁴ That, however, may depend a great deal on third party interventions, especially since the Kurds are “overwhelmingly pro-American.”²¹⁵

In the ICJ’s *Western Sahara* Advisory Opinion, Justice Dillard made the now well-known observation that “It is for the people to determine the destiny of the territory and not the territory the destiny of the people.”²¹⁶ But much like the Advisory Opinion itself, this conviction has been largely reduced to sound and fury, signifying little beyond a belief of what *should* happen. From the beginning, secession was not without interventions. In 1919, referring to machine gun holes in the city’s walls as “Wilson’s Points,” a citizen of Lviv, a disputed city between Poland and Ukraine, lamented, “We

²¹³ Carlotta Gall, “Fighting Is Long Over, but Western Sahara Still Lacks Peace,” *The New York Times*, February 22, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/23/world/fighting-is-long-over-but-western-sahara-still-lacks-peace.html>.

²¹⁴ Christian Caryl, “The World’s Next Country,” *Foreign Policy*, January 21, 2015, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/01/21/the-worlds-next-country-kurdistan-kurds-iraq/>.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

²¹⁶ “Western Sahara Advisory Opinion of 16 October 1975” (International Court of Justice, October 16, 1975).

are now engaged in self-determination, and God knows what and when the end will be.”²¹⁷ Similar sentiments regarding secession continue to exist, as self-determination is an enduring issue that is as significant today as it was when Wilson advocated for the principle in 1918. It poses important questions about an international system dominated by realist interests – particularly, how will existing states affect the membership of the system? Will only those with the support of allies be able to realize a claim to statehood? By studying how interventions specifically affect the outcome of secession conflicts, my thesis offers a contribution to a topic that will continue to define statehood struggles.

²¹⁷ Mark Mazower, “Minorities and the League of Nations in Interwar Europe,” *Daedalus* 126, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 50.

Appendix A: Sample of Interventions

Secessionist Group	Mother State	Intervener	Successful Intervention?	Successful Secession?	Type of Intervener	Target of Intervention	Type of Intervention	Cold War Intervention?
Aceh	Indonesia	Libya	No	No	Other	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Anjouan	Comoro Islands	France	No	No	Great power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	No
Baluchistan	Pakistan	USA	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	No
Baluchistan	Pakistan	Iran	Yes	No	Regional power	Mother state	Military/economic	No
Baluchistan	Pakistan	UK	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Diplomatic	No
Bangladesh	Pakistan	India	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Secessionist group	Both	Yes
Biafra	Nigeria	Soviet Union	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Biafra	Nigeria	France	No	No	Great power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Biafra	Nigeria	UK	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Biafra	Nigeria	Niger	Yes	No	Regional power	Mother state	Diplomatic	Yes
Bougainville/ North Solomons	Papua New Guinea	Australia	Yes	No	Regional power	Mother state	Both	Yes
Bougainville/ North Solomons	Papua New Guinea	Solomon Islands	No	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Cabinda	Angola	Soviet Union	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Cabinda	Angola	Cuba	Yes	No	Other	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Casamance	Senegal	Guinea-Bissau	No	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Casamance	Senegal	France	No	No	Great power	Mother state	Diplomatic	Yes
East Timor	Indonesia	USA	Yes	Yes	Great power	Mother state	Both	Yes
East Timor	Indonesia	USA	Yes	Yes	Great power	Secessionist group	Diplomatic	Yes
East Timor	Indonesia	UK	Yes	Yes	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
East Timor	Indonesia	Portugal	No	Yes	Other	Secessionist group	Diplomatic	Yes
East Timor	Indonesia	Australia	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Mother state	Both	Yes
East Timor	Indonesia	Australia	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Secessionist group	Diplomatic	Yes
Eritrea	Ethiopia	Syria	Yes	Yes	Other	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Eritrea	Ethiopia	Libya	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Eritrea	Ethiopia	Saudi Arabia	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Eritrea	Ethiopia	Sudan	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Eritrea	Ethiopia	Soviet Union	Yes	Yes	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Kachinland	Burma	China	No	No	Great power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Karen/ Kawthoolei	Burma	Thailand	No	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes

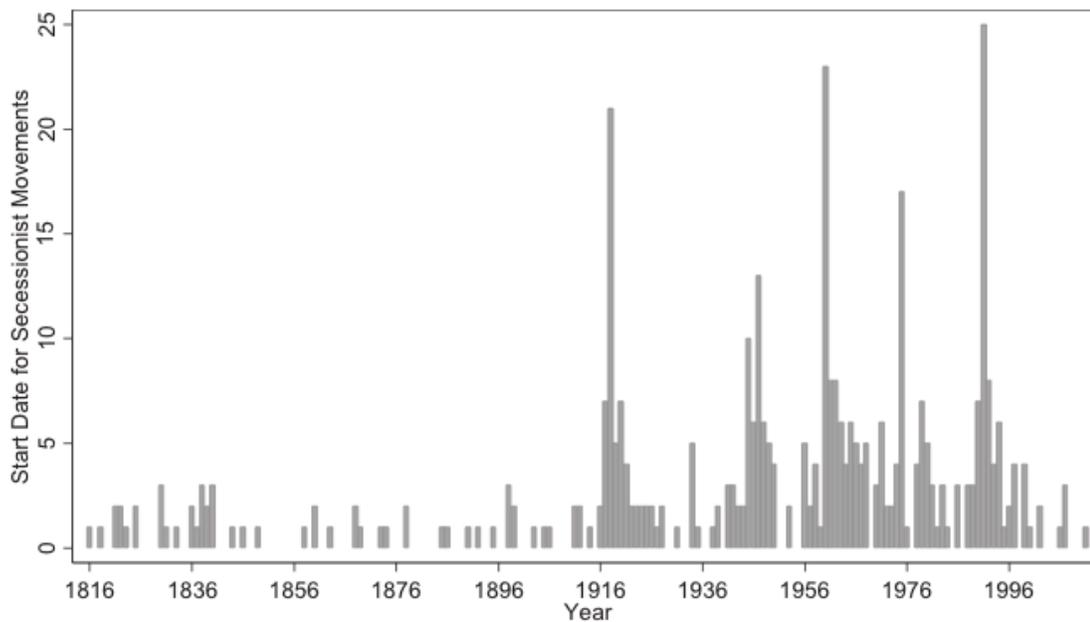
Kashmir	India	Pakistan	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Both	Yes
Kashmir	India	China	Yes	No	Great power	Neither	Military/economic	Yes
Kashmir	India	USA	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Diplomatic	Yes
Katanga	DRC	Belgium	Yes	No	Other	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Katanga	DRC	Belgium	Yes	No	Other	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Katanga	DRC	France	Yes	No	Great power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Katanga	DRC	South Africa	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Katanga	DRC	Rhodesia (Zimbabwe)	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Katanga	DRC	Republic of the Congo	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Diplomatic	Yes
Kurdistan (Iranian Kurds)	Iran	USA	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Diplomatic	Yes
Kurdistan (Iranian Kurds)	Iran	Soviet Union	Yes	No	Great power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Mizoram	India	Pakistan	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Mizoram	India	China	Yes	No	Great power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Moros	Philippines	Sabah (Malaysia)	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Moros	Philippines	Indonesia	Yes	No	Regional power	Neither	Diplomatic	Yes
Moros	Philippines	Malaysia	Yes	No	Regional power	Neither	Diplomatic	Yes
Moros	Philippines	Libya	Yes	No	Other	Secessionist group	Both	Yes
Moros	Philippines	Egypt	Yes	No	Other	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Moros	Philippines	USA	No	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Nagaland	India	Pakistan	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Nagaland	India	China	Yes	No	Great power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Northern Cyprus	Cyprus	Turkey	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Both	Yes
Ogaden (Somalis)	Ethiopia	Somalia	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Ogaden (Somalis)	Ethiopia	Cuba	Yes	No	Other	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Ogaden (Somalis)	Ethiopia	Soviet Union	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Oromia	Ethiopia	Eritrea	No	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Oromia	Ethiopia	Somalia	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Oromia	Ethiopia	USA	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Palestine	Israel	USA	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Both	Yes
Palestine	Israel	Jordan	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Diplomatic	Yes
Palestine	Israel	USA	Yes	No	Great power	Neither	Diplomatic	Yes
Palestine	Israel	Russia	No	No	Great power	Secessionist group	Diplomatic	No
Palestine	Israel	China	No	No	Great power	Secessionist group	Diplomatic	No

Pushtunistan	Pakistan	USA	No	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
South Kasai	DRC	Belgium	No	No	Other	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
South Sudan	Sudan	China	No	Yes	Great power	Mother state	Both	Yes
South Sudan	Sudan	USA	Yes	Yes	Great power	Neither	Diplomatic	No
South Sudan	Sudan	Uganda	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
South Sudan	Sudan	Ethiopia	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
South Sudan	Sudan	Ethiopia	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Neither	Diplomatic	No
South Sudan	Sudan	Eritrea	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
South Sudan	Sudan	Israel	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
South Sudan	Sudan	Iran	Yes	Yes	Regional power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
South Yemen 1963	Yemen (North Yemen)	UK	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
South Yemen 1994	Yemen (North Yemen)	Saudi Arabia	No	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	No
South Yemen 1994	Yemen (North Yemen)	Kuwait	No	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	No
Tamils	Sri Lanka	India	No	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Both	Yes
Tamils	Sri Lanka	India	No	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
Tamils	Sri Lanka	China	No	No	Great power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
West Papua/West Irian	Indonesia	Papua New Guinea	Yes	No	Regional power	Mother state	Military/economic	Yes
West Papua/West Irian	Indonesia	USA	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Both	Yes
West Papua/West Irian	Indonesia	Dutch	No	No	Other	Secessionist group	Diplomatic	Yes
Western Sahara	Morocco	Algeria	Yes	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Both	Yes
Western Sahara	Morocco	Libya	No	No	Regional power	Secessionist group	Military/economic	Yes
Western Sahara	Morocco	France	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Both	Yes
Western Sahara	Morocco	USA	Yes	No	Great power	Mother state	Both	Yes
Western Sahara	Morocco	Cuba	No	No	Other	Secessionist group	Diplomatic	Yes

Total number of conflicts: 29

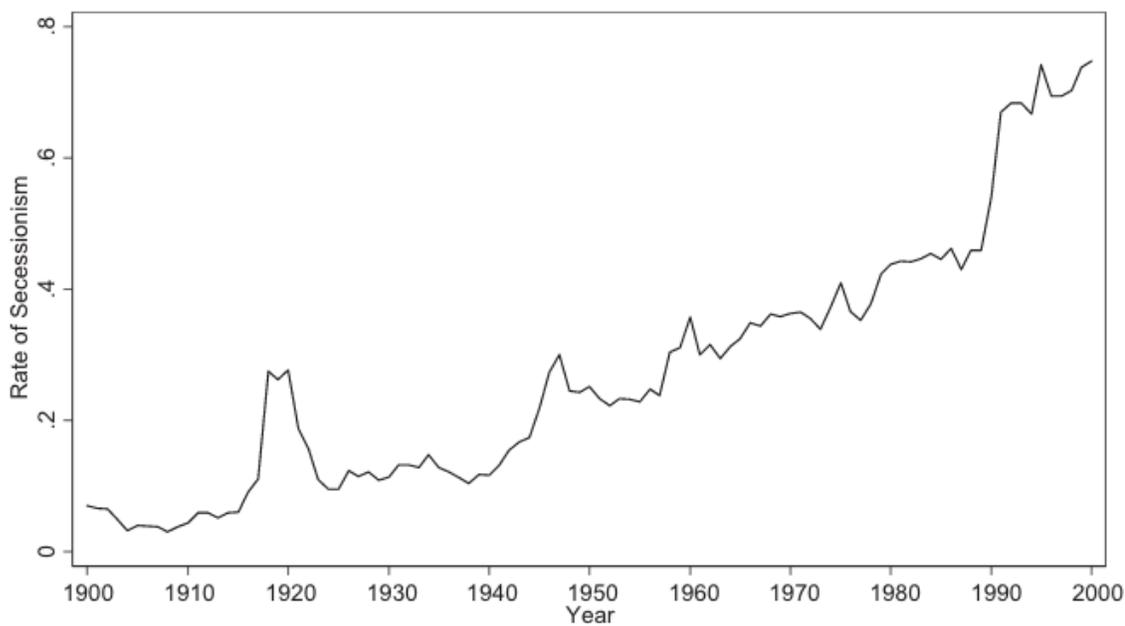
Total number of interventions: 86

Appendix B: Supplementary Figures Illustrating Secession Trends



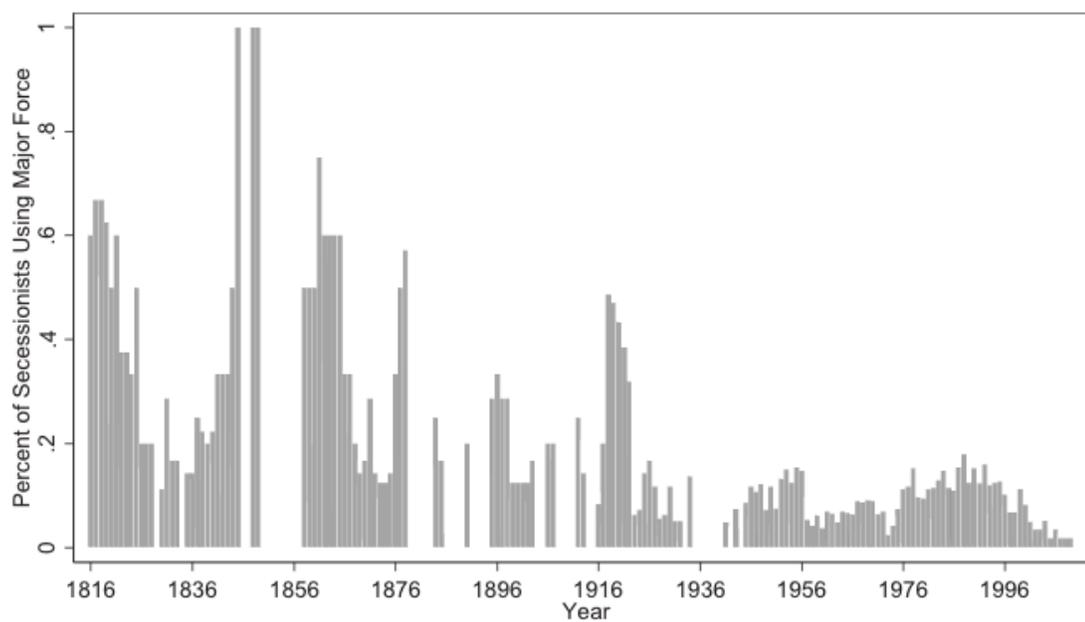
State Date for Secessionist Movements (1816-2011)

Source: Fazal and Griffiths 2014



Rate of Secessionism (1900-2000)

Source: Fazal and Griffiths 2014



Percent of Secessionists Using Major Force (1816-2011)

Source: Fazal and Griffiths 2014

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