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THE IMPACT OF EXTERNAL AID ON MODERN DAY SECESSION MOVEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

The intent of this thesis is to determine the impact of external actors on independence movements, and which types of aid are most successful in assisting these secessionist efforts.

Secondary questions which will also be addressed include assessing which types of outside groups may affect said efforts, and to what degree of success, as well as determining the various forms that support can take (political, economic, and military, or any combination of these). Determining the correlation between the size and relative importance of an external actor, and its significance to independence movements will be another goal of the study. I hypothesize that concrete methods of support have a greater impact on independence efforts than less tangible ones, and that significant external aid is necessary for a group to secede. The validity of the hypothesis is tested through the completion of six case studies: the Kosovar Albanians, the Eritreans, the Basques, the Southern Sudanese, the Tamils, and the Tibetans. Each case study will be completed by presenting a historical background to the conflict and discussing the role of external actors in the conflict. Finally, I draw conclusions about the importance of the aid received by the secessionist in the outcome of each case, or in other words, whether they were able to achieve independence, autonomy, or no degree of political freedom.

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Introduction

Secession movements have originated in almost all areas of the globe, impacting the lives of countless people, and as such have emerged as highly salient social and political phenomena. The desire for a separate national identity has fueled struggles which have often additional actors other than the separatists and the home government, drawing in other nations who have a stake in the outcome of the conflict. For this reason, the goal driving my study is to determine whether increased support from external forces increases the likelihood a group attempting to secede will obtain its desired political independence. The purpose of this thesis is to address the following: What is the impact of external actors on independence movements, and which types of aid are most successful in assisting these secessionist efforts?

In the development of this research project, secondary questions have inevitably arisen. These include assessing the various forms of aid that can be provided, such as political, economic, and military, or any combination of these. Assessing the relationship between the size and relative importance of an external actor, and its significance to independence movements will be another goal of the study. I hypothesize that concrete methods of support have a greater impact on independence efforts than less tangible ones (that is, I expect that providing troops rather than simply recognizing the legitimacy of a group's demands, makes independence more likely).

For the duration of this study, the terms secession movement and independence movement will be used interchangeably, and will be defined as a movement which has the goal of becoming independent of a country or an area of government (Cambridge Dictionary). For clarification purposes, I would also like to elaborate on what exactly is meant by external actors.

Many studies that have focused on secession movements have chosen only to consider state-actors. I have broadened the scope of my research to include both nation states and other outside elements as well. These can include organizations composed of countries, like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or the United Nations (UN).

Methods

A quantitative analysis was originally my preferred method for conducting this research, but there is a paucity of utilizable data within the field of secession movements. The Minorities at Risk Dataset, compiled at the University of Maryland, is the most comprehensive relevant dataset. It does provide codes for ethnic minorities (many of which have secessionist components) but coded the four phases of the project using different series of variables, which they modified in the most recent update. Thus a quantitative analysis made using MAR data would either be outdated or based on variables that are inconsistent over time. Alternatively, the most recent version only covers the years from 2004 to 2006, and the brevity of this time span does not allow for a serious analysis of secessionist movements, as this type of conflict often stretches over decades. Until the MAR publishes the dataset bridging the gap between the two sets of variables, consistent conclusions cannot be drawn with it.

Therefore, my research was conducted utilizing case study analysis. I have developed several control variables based on adaptations of Walter's and Heraclides' works. All the groups I am considering have expressed the goal of attaining independence or autonomy, which has in turn granted them a considerable amount of in-group legitimation (Heraclides, 344). All cases target an official-state government as the principal actor in the conflict, and both the secessionists and government have carried out effective resistance (Walters, 343). The groups included in this study have all posed a credible military and political threat to the countries from which they are attempting to secede, and have prompted the government to take action against them.

Cases were selected in order to represent a range of types of aid as well as outcomes (see Table I). Thus, three cases were selected in which secession was successfully achieved, two in which autonomy was granted, and one in which no significant political gains were made. The cases chosen span several continents, with the Basques and the Kosovars in Europe, the Southern Sudanese and the Eritreans in Africa, and the Tamils and the Tibetans in Asia, in order to avoid reaching conclusions only applicable to a specific geographic region. These factors increase the comparability of cases and increase the generalizability of conclusions. Furthermore, the secessionists in the selected cases operated under a range of differing regime types, another variable which could skew results if not taken into account.

In terms of research design, each case study begins with an historical background. The roots of most secessionist movements span several centuries, making it necessary to have an understanding of each conflict's past. After the historical context is set, each case study then transitions chronologically to the outcomes of the conflict, or the most recent developments if the secessionist movement is still in progress. Particular attention is paid to tracing the role of external aid and intervention in the secessionist movements. The case studies conclude with an analysis of the role of foreign actors in the conflict, focusing on the degree to which it influenced the outcome.

Table I.

<i>Political Outcome</i>	<i>Case Study</i>		
<i>No independence</i>	Sri Lankan Tamils		
<i>Autonomy</i>	Basques	Tibetans	
<i>Independence</i>	Kosovars	Eritreans	Southern Sudanese (tentative)

Literature Review

As mentioned earlier, a significant base of knowledge exists with regard to secession movements. My review of relevant literature indicated, however, that there is no single accepted conclusion about the consequences of involvement of external actors in independence movements. The three primary motivations for involvement or lack thereof that have been presented are: vulnerability (states experiencing their own secessionist movements will not support those in other countries (Walter 2002)), ethnic ties (ethnic linkages constrain and compel leaders in the creation of policy towards other nations (Saideman, 1997)) and democracy (democratic countries stand by each other and do not support independence movements in other democracies (Belanger et al., 2005)). However, none of these has emerged as the dominant theory, and evidence against each has been provided. Much of the literature that deals with the role of external actors in independence movements approaches the issue from a statistical, quantitative perspective. Other political scientists, such as Islam (1985), have approached the question through case studies, but these often focus on a single independence movement (or a very limited number—Islam looks at 3) rather than comparing them across a slightly broader range. My thesis will attempt to fill the gap between single case study research and statistical analysis by conducting six case studies at an in-depth level.

The works of Barbara Walter (2002) and Stephen Saideman (1997) are particularly prominent within the field, and both use large-*n* analysis as their method. Walters' "Building Reputation: Why Governments Fight Some Separatists but Not Others" investigates the theory that governments which are dealing with an independence movement will be much more likely to repress it if there are other potential separatist groups within the country that may also pose a threat to its sovereignty, and the long term losses suffered by the nation may be high (Walters,

324). To test this theory, Walters uses all cases of self-determination efforts between 1956 and 2002. Her findings confirm her initial hypothesis and disprove the common idea that a government will fight or accommodate separatist groups based on the value of the land they wish to take or the strength of the disputants. Walter's work adds to the literature supporting what is generally identified as the vulnerability theory.

Saideman seeks to disprove this theory in his work by focusing instead on the importance of ethnic ties in secessionist conflicts in his work "Explaining the International Relations of Secessionist Conflicts: Vulnerability vs. Ethnic Ties" (1997:724). His research does a convincing job of disproving the vulnerability theory, but fails, by his own admission, to make a totally believable case for the ethnic ties argument (Saideman, 1997:747).

A third possible theory involves regime type as a factor that deters democracies from supporting secessionist movements in other democratic countries, while autocracies are not bound by the same "normative consideration". The principal exponents of this hypothesis are Belanger et al. (2005) in their work "Foreign Intervention and Secessionist Movements: The Democratic Factor." They evaluate the other contending hypotheses of vulnerability and ethnic ties, but that preliminary evidence undermines them and instead supports the democracy theory. At the same time, the span of their study is extremely limited (1990-1992) and this may skew their results if those years are not representative of all times.

Another important scholar in the field is Alex Heraclides, who studies external state involvement in secessionist conflict in his work "Secessionist Minorities and External Involvement" (1990). This study distinguishes itself from much of the literature on the topic because Heraclides approaches the issue by conducting a medium-*n* analysis rather than using

statistical methods. In this work, he seeks to verify or disprove seven common hypotheses about the topic. His results are particularly interesting because he is only able to confirm one of these, namely that external actors find it hard to avoid becoming involved in conflicts that are geographically proximate (Heraclides, 1990:376). The cases he analyzes are Katanga, Biafra, Bangladesh, Southern Sudan, Iraqi Kurdistan, Eritrea and the Moro region of the Philippines, in the period from 1960 to 1980.

Like Heraclides, Rafiquel Islam uses a case study method to analyze the secession movements in Katanga, Biafra and Bangladesh to determine why the former two failed and the latter succeeded. Islam's method of study is a small-n case study, with analysis focused on these three specific cases (Islam,1985:211). His objective is to provide information about how the international community reacts to independence movements and the reasons for these reactions. He concludes that third party states are willing to accept (and in some cases assist) limited and orderly secession, particularly in the face of blatant human rights violations or territorial mismanagement. Despite the limited number of case studies, he stresses the point that these were not isolated instances and lessons learned from them can be applied to secession movements at large. Islam concludes that external aid contributed significantly to the independence of Bangladesh (Islam,1985:219). Heraclides' and Islam's works relate well to each other, as both study Katanga, Biafra, and Bangladesh and reach similar conclusions.

Theory

The theory I have developed is that the greater the involvement of external actors, the greater the chance that independence will be achieved. On a more detailed level, I hypothesize that military aid is the most effective means through which a third party can provide assistance. Maintaining territorial integrity is a primary concern of all nations, and thus it is unlikely that any government will be inclined to make significant concessions to rebel groups unless a credible military threat is posed. Since most secessionist groups lack substantial channels of funding with which to purchase arms and other military equipment, I foresee the role of external actors to be particularly in this area.

I test my theory with information about independence movements from the start of the 21st Century to 2011. I have chosen this time frame because it is large enough to allow for a variety of case studies to analyze. Although the outcomes of several secession movements are still being determined, which may make research more challenging for certain cases, particularly because literature on these events is still being developed, choosing this time frame will make my study relevant to current events. Also, secessionist movements are often drawn-out conflicts, and a wide time window is needed to capture this. One of the main criticisms of Bélanger et al. (2005), is the narrow period of time that is looked at (2 years). In order to avoid this I have selected a much longer study period.

Due to the very nature of secessionist conflicts, they often lack official start and end date, which means that the years I have listed above will be the outermost temporal boundaries. Specific dates will vary for each independence movement, but in order to maintain consistency, I have developed a set of fixed indicators for determining the start and end of each case. If a

secessionist movement has a clear end, such as the signing of an armistice, or the disbanding of a guerrilla army, that will be considered the end date of the case study. In cases where no official treaty has been signed, the ceasefire will be considered the end of the conflict. For example, the LTTE issued a statement in May of 2009 that it would end hostilities and disband (Bhattacharji, 2009). For this case study, said declaration would mark the end point of the Tamil Tigers' struggle for independence.

Kosovo's Struggle for Independence:

The Role of NATO and the UN in Settling the Balkan Crisis

The following paper about Kosovo's secession is the first case study in my thesis concerning the role of external actors in secession movements. The goal that drives this study is to determine whether increased support from external forces results in an increased likelihood that a group attempting to secede will obtain its desired political independence. Hence, the purpose of this thesis is to address the following: What is the impact of external actors on independence movements, and which types of aid are most successful in assisting these secessionist efforts. This chapter is the first of six case studies, the others being Eritrea, Southern Sudan, the Basques, Tibet and the Sri Lankan Tamils. Cases were selected in order to represent a range of types of aid as well as outcomes. Thus, two cases were selected in which secession was successfully achieved, two in which autonomy was granted, and two in which no significant political gains were made. The cases chosen also span several continents in order to avoid reaching conclusions only applicable to a specific geographic region. In the finished work, this chapter is preceded by an introduction, literature review, methods, and an explication of case selection. It is followed by an analysis and findings.

Introduction

The case of Kosovo differs from others in that it involved one of the most forceful provisions of aid by external actors in the history of modern day secession movements. Instead of simply funding and declaring political support for the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), the case featured direct North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and United Nations intervention. Today, Kosovo has been recognized by 72 UN member states and has authority over its territory and its population. Although it has not been admitted to the UN, it is essentially a self-governing and independent nation. Kosovo is one of the few cases of successful secession in recent history; however, its independence was achieved only after an extremely lengthy struggle on the part of the KLA and its supporters, with the crucial assistance of members of the international community. Through an analysis of Kosovo's historical context and the economic, political, and military aid granted to the independence movement by third-party actors, we can understand the complex dynamics that allowed Kosovo's separation. The case also allows us to draw significant conclusions about the types of assistance that have tangible effects on secessions.

Background and Discussion

The history behind Kosovo's fight for independence is a long and tormented one. A tense relationship between Kosovo Albanians and Serbs can be traced back to the crumbling of the Ottoman Empire. In more recent history, the annexation of Kosovo by Serbia in 1912 was a decisive source of friction (Weller 2009, 26; Mulaj 2010, 96). This annexation was neither constitutional nor legal, and hence should be considered invalid, an argument used by those in

favor of an independent Kosovo. Despite its illegality, the annexation allowed Serbia to occupy Kosovo. Opposition to the Serbian policies of ethnic cleansing commenced immediately, both actively through armed rebellion and passively through peaceful resistance (Mulaj 2010, 97). In 1913, bands of Albanian combatants named Kaçaks began fighting the legitimacy of Serbian rule, but they lacked the resources to achieve much against the Serb army. Mulaj points out that a key contributing factor to the failure of the Kaçaks was their lack of international support (97). Their crushing defeat marked the first of several failed rebellions against Serbian domination, which continued until the international community became involved some 75 years later.

The cycle of protests and repression continued for several decades in Kosovo, but the situation worsened significantly in 1989 once Slobodan Milošević became President of Serbia. His rise to power had important implications for Kosovo's political status, as he revoked the constitutional autonomy it had gained in 1974 (Mulaj 2010, 98). In response to this revocation, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) constructed a number of parallel institutions like local governments, schools, and hospitals, which were declared illegal but allowed to coexist (Paquin 2010, 103). These institutions were to play an important part in attracting US backing for an independent Kosovo. If the US and its NATO allies were to support the secession, they needed to know that Kosovo had the ability to govern itself and maintain a stable state (Paquin, 117). The functionality of these alternative institutions, as well as the fact that Kosovo had been a largely self-run autonomous region for a significant period of time, lent credibility and legitimacy to the Kosovars' demand for secession. Mulaj makes a similar argument when he claims that what accounts most for the Kosovo Liberation Army's success is the acquisition of legitimacy at national and international levels (95). It was thus possible for the United States to intervene first

militarily and later politically by recognizing Kosovo's independence, in the belief that regional stability could only be obtained through the creation of a separate state.

Throughout the period up to 1992, the situation in Kosovo remained relatively stable; US Secretary of State Madeline Albright defined Kosovo as "extremely tense but not at war" (Paquin 2010, 104). Yugoslavia was dissolved in 1991, but this did not lead to deep changes in Kosovo, as it remained under pressure from Serbia. During this time, the Kosovo Liberation Army was formed, although it was to remain relatively passive until 1996. The early guerrilla tactics used by the KLA were important in presenting it as a powerful organization. The media's attention to the KLA's violent actions made the group appear stronger than it actually was, drawing international attention (Mulaj 103). Instead of stigmatizing the KLA as a terrorist group, although some nations, among them the US, did initially attach this label to it, the overall result was the creation of a feeling of solidarity between Kosovo Albanians. The KLA was asserted as their representative body. As Weller states, "it appeared to offer the only recourse in an increasingly desperate situation" (68). Growing feelings of the righteousness of the cause allowed the KLA to gather financial resources through a transnational network which extended across most Western nations. The KLA used these funds to finance its operations in the struggle for an independent Kosovo (Weller, 4).

Much of the KLA's funding came from the Albanian diaspora. The Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), the main right-wing party, required a three per cent tax on all earnings abroad, which it funneled into the KLA's Homeland Calling Fund. The fund, created in 1995, had the intent of paying for a liberation war against Serbia. The fund expanded to the point where it had branches in the US, Canada, Australia, Germany, Austria, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Italy and Belgium. It benefitted greatly from the increased media attention mentioned earlier, and

donations to it increased significantly. Between 1997 and 1999, the US chapter alone raised around 30 million dollars (Mulaj 2010, 104). In addition to its fundraising efforts, the Kosovo Albanian diaspora was also politically active especially within the United States. The Albanian American lobby worked to inform the international community of the human rights violations occurring in Kosovo, meeting with members of Congress and State Department officials on a regular basis (Paquin 2010, 122). However, they were unable to achieve their goal of pushing the US government to back Kosovo's secession efforts. The Clinton administration continued to oppose a separate Kosovo, and without international assistance, the KLA continued to flounder unsuccessfully. In the summer of 1993 the US Department of State sent a document to its embassies in the Balkans titled "U.S. Policy on Kosovo" which stated that although it sought to deter the Serbs from violent action in the region, it had made clear to Albanian Kosovar leaders that it did not support their independence (Paquin 2010, 107).

The situation began to change in 1996, when several serious KLA attacks led to retaliation by the Serbs, and the relative political stability was upset by this aggression. The US had declared that it would not allow Serbia to exert military force in the region, and thus after several failed attempts to reach an agreement with Milošević, NATO began its Operation Allied Force in March of 1999. The air campaign lasted until June 10 of the same year, one day after withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from Kosovo had begun (NATO, 2009). In June 1999, following the air campaign, the UN adopted Resolution 1244. In it, the UN authorized joint UN-NATO military and civilian action in Kosovo, including the peacekeeping force KFOR, but also reaffirmed its commitment to the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and demanded the disarmament of the KLA. It established the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to fortify its civil administration and transfer power to the government in Pristina (UN Security Council 1999).

Soon afterward, in 2000, Milošević resigned from the presidency following contested elections, but a change in Serbian leadership did not solve the problem of determining Kosovo's political status. Throughout the duration of UNMIK, decisions regarding Kosovo's nationhood were put off several times by the Security Council, largely due to opposing opinions among permanent member states. However, this was viewed by many Kosovars as a way to prevent them from becoming independent, and these frustrations erupted into deadly riots in March of 2004.

Paquin argues that the United States eventually decided to intervene in favor of an independent Kosovo because its ultimate aim was to establish stability in the region. By the mid 2000s it had become evident that it was no longer possible for the area to remain under Serbian authority and maintain peaceful conditions. The United States engaged in a dramatic policy shift. Given the international significance of the question of an independent Kosovo, which had for years captured the attention of much of the world, it is not surprising that NATO chose to intervene directly in 1999. As ascertained from prior experience, the funding of a rebel group can indeed have a significant impact on the outcome of an attempt to secede, but generally requires a longer time span. Due to the regional violence and pressing nature of the matter, these third party actors elected what they viewed as the most immediately effective method to assist the KLA in the achievement of its purpose. After the delivery of both economic and military aid, US backing culminated in its diplomatic recognition of Kosovo on February 18, 2008.

Although NATO's air campaign was certainly the most salient international intervention in Kosovo, other efforts were also made to aid the KLA. Given its reliance on guerrilla tactics, the small size of the region was a disadvantage. However, this problem was overcome through Albanian support, as its territory served as a backup camp for Kosovo fighters. Additionally, it

functioned as a transit path for weapons, funds and people to move into Kosovo from Albania as well as from other nations like Germany, the United States and Switzerland (Mulaj 2010, 102).

In the case of Kosovo, UN member states played crucial roles in determining outcomes, but the United Nations as a whole was not a key actor in the provision of aid to the secession movement. This is partially due to the fact that its Charter ensures the maintenance of states' territorial integrity. Supporting the KLA, even under the pretext of ending Serbian human rights violations in the region, would have meant undermining Yugoslavia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, challenging the very foundations on which the UN Charter was written. In addition to the Charter's dedication to territorial integrity, the structural framework of the United Nations itself made backing the KLA impossible. The United States and Russia, on opposing sides of the issue, both held veto power over any possible Security Council resolution, could come to no consensus on Kosovo's political status. The situation thus placed Secretary General Kofi Annan in a challenging position, one of having to support the UN Charter and its principles, condemning NATO for choosing to intervene with force without UN approval, and at the same time feeling the need to stop the human rights violations occurring in the region. In 1998, when he was asked about the legality of a NATO intervention without the approval of the Security Council, he skirted a direct answer by declaring that "Normally the use of force...has required Security Council approval," and failed to speak out against an impending NATO intervention. The Secretary-General thus maintained the authority of the UN Charter, but perhaps implied that in certain cases violations of the Charter could be justified.

As mentioned above, NATO took action without Security Council approval, effectively utilizing force to determine that Serbian domination of Kosovo would no longer be tolerated. Despite this reliance on force, Resolution 1244 combined the role of NATO and that of the UN,

reintroducing a component of political legitimacy to the issue. As Zacklin states, “with the adoption of [Resolution]1244 the Kosovo problem, whatever one’s views on the legality of NATO’s intervention, had been brought back into the jurisdiction of the Security Council” (106). However, the real action in settling the question of Kosovo’s independence had already been taken, thus placing the UN in a position of marginal importance. It thus emerges that the United Nations, tied up as it was in its own structure and the opposing interests it sought to represent, did not contribute in a fundamental way to the secession of Kosovo. Yet it was also unable--or arguably unwilling--to prevent it from happening.

Diplomatic recognition by individual member states began in February 2008, immediately following the Republic of Kosovo’s declaration of independence on the 17th, and continues to date. On a wider scale, the final, legitimizing act of support from the global community came when Serbian President Tadic fruitlessly requested that the UN Security Council condemn Kosovo’s intent to declare its independence (Weller 2009, 230). While not an official avowal of support, the lack of denunciation was tantamount to an endorsement. In choosing not to act, the Council made a decision in favor of a separate Kosovo.

Conclusions

In assessing the degree to which external aid was crucial for the achievement of an independent Kosovo it is necessary to consider other contributing causes, and how the KLA might have fared without such aid. Excluding third party assistance, a possible cause for the KLA’s eventual success in seceding was that in the later years of the struggle, the KLA faced a weaker Serbia, financially and militarily strained from fighting in Bosnia. Additionally, Milošević suffered a loss of credibility and legitimacy in the later years of his rule, a factor

which may have weakened his support base, and consequently loosened his grasp on both Serbia and Kosovo. Although these were undoubtedly significant issues playing into the eventual secession, neither provides a plausible substitute for the importance of external aid in Kosovo. In other words, although these events weakened Serbia's ability to control Kosovo, it remains highly unlikely that the KLA would have been able to successfully break off into a separate nation without the assistance of external actors. It is thus apparent that the military assistance granted to the KLA, primarily by the United States and its NATO allies, is what ultimately allowed it to become independent.

Despite the US' early reticence to aid the KLA, a group it initially classified as a terrorist organization, the support provided by the United States was crucial to the liberation effort. The role of the US in this case, both as an independent entity and through NATO, was significant enough that one really cannot argue that an independent Kosovo could have been achieved without it. While the Albanian diaspora did collect significant sums with which to fund its struggle, the KLA was unable to make any real progress toward independence as long as it only received economic assistance. The international military action that followed was the true catalyst in changing Kosovo's political status.

NATO's intervention, both in the forms of an air campaign and a humanitarian mission, was fundamental for the KLA and its ultimate success in achieving independence (Mulaj 2010, 106). This conclusion is supported by the fact that all prior attempts at secession were muted by Yugoslav or Serbian military might, and independence was achieved only when international powers, mainly the United States, began to support the idea of a separate Kosovo. It would be challenging to attribute such success to mere chance or coincidence, after so many failed

attempts; it is clear that external involvement was crucial in achieving the KLA's desired outcome.

Kosovo's ability to secede and establish itself as a political entity even without official recognition by the United Nations suggests that political backing is not a necessary, or sufficient, condition for the success of an independence movement. The Republic of Kosovo has been formally recognized by 72 UN member states. While this is a significant number, the majority has not extended recognition—regardless, Kosovo exists as an independent entity, with its own government administering the country's affairs. This case implies that political support for a secessionist group is fairly inconsequential in terms of achieving practical objectives, and although diplomatic recognition of the post-secession state is necessary if it is to interact with other nations at the international level, particularly for an extended period of time, this remains of secondary importance. What really mattered was military action, NATO's killing of Serbs to protect the human and political rights of Albanian Kosovars.

Eritrean Secession from Ethiopia:

A Long and Lonely Desert Battle

Introduction

Eritrea emerges as an interesting outlier case in which the secession movement actually succeeded. It stands alone in that it is perhaps the only instance in modern history in which an independence-seeking group has achieved its objective without significant external assistance. Given the extended time period over which the conflict was fought, and the number of rebel movements which sprung up in both Ethiopia and Eritrea, this war seems as though it would have drawn significant international involvement. It did, but aid was almost entirely pro-government. The lack of external participation in favor of Eritrean secessionists is noteworthy considering their eventual success in breaking off from Ethiopia. The case of Eritrea thus presents itself as an interesting counter case to the general trend in which powerful external aid is a key element in successful secessions.

Background and Discussion

The historical colonial context in which Eritrea and Ethiopia developed was a crucial component in setting the stage for this secession. While joint union under the Abyssinian Empire for several centuries gave Eritreans and northern Ethiopians some shared cultural and political values, later Italian colonization of Eritrea led it to develop a separate identity from that of Ethiopia. In 1889 the Italian government officially claimed a colony in Eritrea, expanding upon some territories it had purchased previously. Ethiopia was in the process of national

consolidation at the time of the Italian invasion, and did not yet have a firm grasp on its more distant regions, like Eritrea; consequently these were separated off by the European power (Joireman 2004, 177). The Italian presence in Eritrea had many detrimental effects on the area, but it did allow Eritrea to push far ahead of Ethiopia in terms of development. For all the horrors of mistreatment and hunger that occurred within Mussolini's new Roman Empire, Eritreans were left with significant infrastructure and industrial capacities at the end of Italian rule.

Italy renounced its claims to Eritrea and its other colonies in 1946, when it signed the Treaty of Peace. These territories were then placed under temporary British administration, and their fates were left pending. Four years later, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 390 A (V) and decreed that Eritrea was to be 'an autonomous unit federated under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown'; in the words of Wrong, this was "a phrase that in itself contained a world of potential ambiguity and internal contradiction" (168).

The 1950 decision by the United Nations to unite Ethiopia and Eritrea under a Federation illustrates the organization's poor understanding of the region's cultural and historical subtleties. In addition to a severe power imbalance, part of the problem in federating Ethiopia and Eritrea stemmed from differences in political history. Ethiopia had a strong authoritarian tradition and was also highly centralized, while Eritrea was democratic, with its own laws and constitution (Joireman 2004, 178). However, these political structures were not allowed to stand for long. Around 1955, Ethiopia began to use its superior political and military power for its own purposes; a mere five years after the creation of the federation, Ethiopia was systematically breaking down Eritrea's autonomy. In schools, Amharic replaced Arabic and Tigrinya as the language of instruction, the Ethiopian flag substituted the Eritrean, and Ethiopian officials took over the administration of Eritrea, undercutting the Assembly's powers. The process culminated

in the 1962 vote by the Eritrean Assembly to unify completely with Ethiopia, a decision prompted by the installation of Ethiopian soldiers around the assembly building, clearly a threatening presence (Joireman 2004, 178).

Given the problems associated with the Federation and its unpopularity with many Eritreans, it is not surprising that the emergence of a secessionist group soon followed. The first nationalist organization created for Eritrean independence was the Eritrean Liberation Movement (ELM). It was formed in 1958, and consisted mainly of Christians (Paquin 2010, 130).

Although the ELM failed, it was replaced by the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), an organization originally espousing a pan-Arabic perspective (Dirar 2009, 43-44). For this reason, its main backers were Nasser's Egypt, Ba'athist Syria and Iraq, with the later addition of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and Quaddafi's Lybia. They provided arms, funds and other necessary materials (Heraclides 1990, 350). In the late 1960s, however, the ELM became more leftist and radical, leading the Arab countries that had supported it in its earlier days to become disenchanted, seeing the ELF as more of a Marxist group than one devoted to a religious crusade. The loss of shipments of weapons and funds from the Middle East put Eritrean freedom fighters in an even more challenging position.

Eritrean nationalists had a primary, shared goal of separating Eritrea from Ethiopia, but this common objective did not preclude internecine disagreements. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) splintered off from the ELF, becoming the more radical, dominant Eritrean nationalist force (Dirar 2009, 44). The EPLF and ELM were able to take control of much of Eritrea, but ultimate success was not achieved until the two joined forces with the Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF). While the TPLF was not itself a secessionist group, it

sought to overthrow the Marxist regime headed by Mengistu in Ethiopia, and thus formed an alliance of convenience with the secessionists. Together, they achieved a conclusive military victory over the central government headed by Mengistu in May 1991 (Paquin 2010, 131).

The TPLF then formed a transitional government, recognizing Eritrea's right to self-determination and proclaiming that a referendum would be held in April 1993 to establish the new country's fate. An overwhelming majority of voters chose secession. Although Eritrea was a de-facto independent nation from May 1991, the referendum was postponed for a period of almost two years in order to allow the new Ethiopian and Eritrean governments to "consolidate their power, to facilitate economic negotiations, and to establish favorable conditions for a stable transition toward Eritrea's independence" (Paquin 2010, 143). During this time, Eritrean leaders established democratic institutions, in part due to pressure from the United States. Eritrea was thus able to show that it could indeed function as an independent state, establishing legitimacy. In waiting for a UN-sponsored referendum instead of opting for a unilateral secession, Eritreans obtained Western recognition and UN endorsement. After the government formally declared separation, other nations, including the United States, began to recognize Eritrea; it became a member of the United Nations in June of 1993.

In order to comprehend how Eritrea was able to secede without external aid, it is necessary to consider the secessionists' collaboration with the TPLF. While it was originally the EPLF arming and instructing the less experienced TPLF, the latter soon became a crucial force of support for the former (Wrong 2009, 365). Joint efforts allowed some of the most important military victories against Ethiopia between 1975 and 1991 (Paquin 2010, 131). Indeed, the final offensive that defeated the Mengistu regime was launched in April 1991 by a force consisting of both EPLF and TPLF troops. Although the TPLF was not a foreign entity and thus did not

provide external aid, the assistance granted by the Tigreans to the Eritreans served a similar purpose, making secession possible.

In addition to the fundamental role played by the TPLF, Eritrean separatist groups also drew significant benefit from Emperor Haile Sellase's disdainful consideration of them as little more than "just a bunch of Muslim bandits funded by Arab money" (Dirar 2009, 44). Until the mid-1960s, they were not calculated as a real threat. Furthermore, the Eritreans were able to take advantage of Soviet aid to the Ethiopians, as they frequently seized enemy equipment. As Yevgeny Sokurov, a major in the KGB unit stated,

We were supplying both sides. The separatists wore our uniforms and used our weapons. The stuff wasn't even being captured-it was being abandoned by Ethiopian commanders after the briefest of skirmishes. I'm not just talking about a few tanks. Entire divisions were being allowed to fall into separatist hands (Wrong 2005, 344).

In the course of its 14-year involvement, the Soviet Union contributed around \$9 billion worth of arms and military equipment to the Ethiopian army, including 800-1,000 tanks and 2-3,000 trucks in addition to machine guns, heavy artillery, mortars and rocket launchers (Wrong 2009, 314). When a secessionist movement receives little international assistance, it is generally at a distinct disadvantage. According to an Ethiopian general at the time, however, this was not necessarily the case in Eritrea. He remarked that, "the Russian advisers were nothing but troublemakers. They would give instructions without knowing the area, forgetting that perhaps there was no water there, or no road the tanks could use" (Wrong 2005, 343). The Soviets eventually pulled out of the region in 1989. Furthermore, the Ethiopian army suffered from low

morale and a steady flow of soldiers deserting and joining the rebel side. Collectively, these factors resulted in a lengthier and more difficult struggle for the Ethiopians than had been anticipated, and ultimately the loss of Eritrea.

Conclusion

One of the conclusions that emerges from the Eritrean case is that although Ethiopia received far more aid than the secessionists did, it was so inefficiently distributed and utilized that it was essentially moot. The secessionists managed to seize much of it, and even materials that reached their intended recipients were often ill-suited to the type of fighting being done. This suggests that while the magnitude of external aid is important, its utility is also limited by how well or how poorly it is allocated. Although this conclusion is not a particularly novel one, this does not detract from its validity or applicability to the situation. It does a great deal to explain why a far larger nation like Ethiopia was unable to retain possession of Eritrea, even when it was, at various stages, supported by powers like the Soviet Union and the United States.

The Eritrean case is also unique in that the circumstantial alliance formed between the EPLM and the TPLF, a group that wasn't seeking independence, was an unusual phenomenon. Although uncommon, the joint effort was ultimately quite significant in the eventual defeat of Mengistu's central government. While their ultimate goals differed, collaboration on the first common objective of removing the central Ethiopian government gave the Eritreans a similar type of support to that which they would have received from an external source. Given that the Eritrean secessionists received minimal funding and assistance from outside sources, their capitalization on internal dissidents was a skillful maneuver, and perhaps a necessary one.

At this point, it is necessary to consider what factors in the Eritrean case rendered it such an outlier among secession movements. It did not follow the quasi-universal pattern in which independence-seeking groups must receive considerable external aid to achieve tangible political results. Eritrean secessionists achieved independence largely on their own, but various factors outside sheer determination or uniqueness in the Eritrean character may have made this possible. To some extent, the combination of materials that the rebels were able to seize from Ethiopian troops and the collaboration with the TPLF may have produced a result similar to those granted by external intervention.

In terms of political support, Eritrean secession was largely discouraged by many nations, first among which was the United States. Its commitment to territorial integrity was eventually broken only by its support for the idea of national self-determination. The US justified its policy shift by noting that Eritrea had been illegally annexed by Ethiopia in 1962. Despite the long period in which the United States discouraged Eritrean independence, its new policy was a consequential force in driving the international community to accept a separate Eritrea. Thus, although Eritrea was granted very little external physical aid during the fighting against Ethiopia, political backing in the period between the final military victory and the referendum held two years later were crucial in providing it with international authenticity. Eritrean secessionists fought a long and lonely battle for their independence, to the point where US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Cohen later stated that the United States eventually reached the conclusion that “secession was inevitable and we couldn’t stop it” (Paquin 2010, 140). The international community’s subsequent support for an independent Eritrea was the final stamp of approval used to give legitimacy to what was already essentially a self-governing country.

Basque Independence from Spain: *The Difficulties of an Unaided,*

Violent Secession Movement

Introduction

The case of the Basques in northern Spain provides an example of a secessionist movement in which years of armed struggle have achieved mixed results, obtaining autonomous status but not independence. The ETA, or *Euskadi ta Askatasuna*, Basque Homeland and Freedom, has waged a violent war against the Spanish central government since the 1960s, but has been unsuccessful in establishing the Basque country as a separate state. The majority of Basque activity has been concentrated in the provinces of Álava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya, which today form the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), but Euskera nationalism has traditionally also included Navarre and the three Basque provinces in the South of France. The intensity of Basque nationalism is unevenly distributed throughout the areas; it is strongest in Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya and northern Navarre (Sánchez-Cuenca 2010, 71). The Spanish Basque lands enjoy a high degree of regional autonomy, and can carry out many of the functions usually reserved to national governments. It has a parliament, collects its own taxes, runs its education system, and has a special police force (BBC 2010). It is, however, still part of Spain, and Basque nationalists remain dissatisfied with this arrangement. ETA's violent campaign has thus continued even after the Basque territories made political and administrative gains. External support for the Basque cause has been extremely limited, and this has contributed to ETA's inability to achieve independence.

Background and Discussion

The Basques have had a separate identity and language since ancient times. In 1894 Basque nationalism was consolidated by Sabino Arana Goira who invented Basque symbols and founded the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV). Although the original intent of the PNV was to establish an independent, modern Basque state, it was willing to accept autonomy, but several proposals in this direction were rejected by the Spanish government. When civil war erupted in 1936, Basque desires for independence were heightened, as Franco's forces intentionally targeted the Basques and occupied their territories, crushing dreams of a peaceful autonomous settlement (Roach 2005, 116-117). Franco's bombing of Guernica was devastating, and while it became the most famous, it was not the only attack of its kind. Instead of dissolving Basque nationalism, however, Franco's actions generated anger and cohesion among the population. Opposition to the Francoist dictatorial regime was widespread, and the PNV became a stronger symbol of Basque resistance.

The roots of Basque nationalism go back much further, but most modern-day action for the cause has been undertaken by the ETA (*Euskadi ta Askatasuna*, Basque Homeland and Freedom). The organization was formed in 1959 and remains active today in its ongoing struggle for an independent Basque Country. ETA originated from an ideological split within the PNV. In the words of Muro, "At the root of the problem was the clash of two generations over organizational issues, but also over what should be the priorities of a nationalist movement operating under a dictatorship" (2008, 98). At the time of its inception, ETA was not violent, and engaged in minor acts of disobedience like painting the forbidden Basque flag on buildings and destroying symbols of Franco's regime. In 1968, however, one of the leaders of ETA killed a

member of the Spanish Civil Guard and was later captured and executed, sparking a spiral of mutual violence which was to continue for decades.

During Franco's rule, external support for ETA was essentially non-existent, but internal support was drawn primarily from three main social groups: the wider Basque nationalist community, Spanish opposition, and the Basque clergy (Muro 2008, 110). The main spring of resources was the Basque nationalist base, but Basque culture was traditionally closely linked to the Church, and the clergy was instrumental in providing hiding places for weaponry in convents and churches, as well as a steady influx of new recruits (Muro 2008, 111).

The enactment of the Autonomies Communities System marked a crucial turning point in Basque history. King Juan Carlos assumed power in 1975 after Franco's death, and in October 1977 divided Spain into 13 autonomous communities. This reversed decades of oppression of Basque culture and identity. Each province was thus granted a unicameral parliament as a vehicle of regional control, and was also given the right to levy taxes. The Basques, Catalans and Galicians received more autonomy than the other provinces, but the document's failure to grant the right of self-determination had the specific intention of keeping all of Spain's areas united within a single state (Roach 2005, 124-125).

The autonomous arrangement allowed the Basques more freedom within the Spanish state, but is likely to have harmed ETA's aspirations for total secession. Many moderate Basques were satisfied with the area's new status and the political gains it afforded, and thus no longer felt the need to support a more radical agenda of nationhood. Basque nationalists view their population as suffering from Spanish governance, but in the period after Franco's rule the Basques have not been oppressed economically or politically to the degree seen in many

instances of secession. This is one key reason the Basque cause has not garnered much support among external actors. In the existing literature about the Basques, references to foreign support are few and far between, with many comprehensive works deeming it so negligible that they fail to discuss it altogether. Other sources mention it in passing, but generally only to state that the Basques have not been able to find substantial foreign backing. What little assistance it has received has been primarily limited to training obtained in Libya, Lebanon and Nicaragua. Some ETA members have reportedly received sanctuary in Cuba and South America, but the effect of these forms of assistance is almost negligible when the extensive time span of ETA's activity is taken into account (Sauter Carafano 2005, 421). There has been a notable lack of international interest in an independent Basque Country.

External apathy towards the Basque nationalist cause also derives, at least in part, from perception of ETA as a terrorist organization. Given the compromise made by Spain in granting them considerable self-government rights, ETA is frequently viewed as excessive and selfishly destructive. The precise number of victims of ETA violence is disputed, but most estimates place the total around 800-900. Only 10 per cent of the inhabitants of the BAC contribute to, or form part of, ETA, although they may be sympathetic toward the use of violence. The majority of Basque nationalists are not affiliated with the bombings or ETA's terrorist activity, but differentiating between violent and peaceful actors within the movement has been difficult. Furthermore, the fact that over 40 per cent of those killed were civilians with no direct ties to Spanish politics has generated disapproval in the international community (Sánchez-Cuenca 2010, 91). This has in turn led to a lack of external support for the Basque nationalist movement as a whole.

Estimates of the size of ETA's core membership vary, but there is a consensus that even at times when it was most numerous, the organization counted less than 500 highly involved members. In the 1980s, rates of arrest became so high that ETA could not replace imprisoned members with new recruits quickly enough to maintain its numbers. In recent years, the hard core has numbered only about 100 (Sánchez-Cuenca 2010, 76). This decline has also been reflected in popular support for ETA. As moderate Basque parties have expanded their following, ETA has lost adherents, and "also because there is a growing feeling that ETA is desperately out of touch with public opinion" (BBC 2010).

In the absence of strong foreign backing, the ETA has used robbery and extortion as its main sources of funding. Bank robberies were frequent in the organization's early stage, but were later abandoned due to their high level of risk. Kidnapping has been used in about 80 cases, but only up to 1996, as the unpredictable nature of this type of activity did not allow for a constant, dependable cash flow. Extortion, or levying a "revolutionary tax" from shopkeepers and entrepreneurs, provides more reliable income for the organization. ETA's ability to regularly extract funds in this manner indicates the depth to which it is entrenched in the BAC, as extortion depends on a tight network of people charged with collecting the money (Sánchez-Cuenca 2010, 78-79).

Extortion, kidnapping and robbery have allowed ETA to fund its violent attacks, but have not been able to generate the resources for a full-scale guerrilla warfare that would carry more clout in terms of achieving the group's goals. Even in non-violent, political terms, the absence of forceful political support by an external actor, which would grant legitimacy to ETA's demands, has crippled the movement for an independent Basque Country.

Conclusions

The freedom and relative degree of autonomy that the Basques have enjoyed within the Autonomies Communities System have, rightly or not, decreased the legitimacy of radical demands for independence in the eyes of the international community. ETA's violent terrorist attacks further contributed to this effect, especially in light of the Spanish government's willingness to compromise on the BAC's political status. Largely due to these reasons, ETA has not been able to generate significant international interest in its cause, and has thus had to rely on robbery and extortion as its main sources of income and materiel.

The Basque case suggests the extreme difficulty faced by secessionists who fail to garner external backing. Without this aid, the Basques have only succeeded in gaining a high level of autonomy. Secession is an extremely unlikely possibility for the group, despite the fact that it remains the desire of many Basques. The political pressure exerted by ETA through terrorist attacks has simply not been severe enough to force the Spanish government to grant the group independence. If the Basques are able to find a strong external force in support of their secession, the likelihood of creating a Basque Country will increase, although this is improbable and purely hypothetical. Enthusiasm for separation is declining within the Basque population, and the number of those who speak Euskera as their primary language is also falling. ETA has been far less active in recent years than it was in decades past. It appears far more plausible that the Basque movement for independence will eventually die out, with their political status never moving beyond autonomy.

The Tamil Tigers: *The Quest for Self-Determination in Sri Lanka*

Introduction

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) present the case of a strong secessionist movement which came to a crashing end after several decades of struggle against the Sri Lankan government. The LTTE, a group formed with the purpose of creating an independent Tamil state, emerged in the 1970s as a result of oppressive policies instituted by the Sinhalese majority against the Tamil minority. The LTTE and other pro-Tamil forces were never able to achieve this goal, as the organization suffered a decisive military defeat at the hands of the Sri Lankan military in May 2009. Even prior to the LTTE's disbanding, however, it was not able to garner significant support from the international community (other than from the Tamil diaspora, which it leveraged for resources). A limited degree of aid from India aside, most external actors did not assist the LTTE. Many nations considered the Tamil Tigers to be a terrorist group, despite the UN's reports of human rights violations against Tamils in the affected region. International disapproval of the LTTE's violent tactics became even more marked after the 9/11 attacks, which returned terrorism to the forefront of global security concerns, and this ultimately contributed to the organization's dissolution.

Background and Discussion

Ethnic Tamils are believed to be, together with the Sinhalese, the earliest residents of what is now Sri Lanka. The Tamil Kingdom of Jaffna was autonomous until the Portuguese annexed it in 1619. British rule began in 1796, and this period greatly increased contact between

the Tamils and the Sinhalese, causing tensions. The Tamils, who spoke Tamil and were mainly Hindu, represented the largest minority (17 percent at independence) in a population of almost eighteen million, the remainder of which was composed of Sinhala-speaking Buddhists (Marks 2007, 485-486). When Sri Lanka became independent in 1948, the Sinhalese dominated the government, and imposed policies which severely limited Tamils' rights. Sinhalese was declared the sole official language, and Tamils faced difficulties including 'access to higher education, absence of economic opportunities, unequal land distribution, and agricultural settlements which Tamils described as 'colonization'' (Hussain 2010, 389). Serious riots took place in 1956, 1981 and 1983. In the 1983 riots, over 400 died, 100,000 were left homeless and 200,000-250,000 fled to India (Marks 2007, 490). The fear instilled in the Tamil population resulted in the creation of a number of violent groups supporting independence from Sri Lanka. Extensive infighting between groups characterized the movement at the outset, but the LTTE emerged as the most active, primarily due to its belief that the struggle should be waged through combat operations. Ideology and organization would be dealt with at a later time (Marks 2007, 494).

In the years immediately following its formation, LTTE leaders interacted with Palestinian groups like Al Fatah (the Palestinian Liberation Organization's military wing) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). They received training and advice, and contacts with the PLO appear to have played a role in establishing certain practices that would become ingrained in the Tamil movement (Hussain 2010, 397). These included the 'use of suicide terrorist tactics, networking with Tamil diaspora for funds, propaganda and other services, arms transfers, and methods of motivating its cadres' (Manoharan 2008, 83).

Funding initially came from involvement in drug trafficking and donations within Tamil Nadu, the Tamil region of India. The LTTE engaged in legal merchant shipping, which it used

as a front for smuggling fuel, weapons, ammunition, and drugs. Later, the LTTE's main source of funding evolved into an extensive and extremely functional network abroad. The Tamils received "donations," in part given voluntarily but often extracted through extortion, from members of the Tamil communities in the US, Canada and the United Kingdom. The diaspora is composed of approximately 650,000 members, spread throughout 60 nations (O'Duffy 2007, 272). Considering the amounts of weaponry and materials that the LTTE was able to purchase, estimates that funding exceeded U.S. \$20 million appear accurate (Marks 2007, 504). Other assessments place the estimated LTTE budget even higher, ranging annually between \$24 and \$36 million. Funds were collected through various LTTE branches in addition to front organizations. These were instrumental in separately collecting humanitarian aid, weapons and electronics (O'Duffy 2007, 272). Initially the monetary transfers were allowed to proceed unhindered by the governments from which they originated. It was only after the September 11, 2001 attacks that US, UK, and Canadian authorities cut off these financial channels, leaving the Tigers in a far more difficult position. Since 9/11, these governments froze many millions of dollars in LTTE-controlled bank accounts, severing some of the Tamils' most important financial bloodlines.

The main external power involved in the Sri Lankan secessionist conflict was India, and its role was highly disruptive in that India switched sides during the conflict. On one hand, India trained "an estimated 1,200 Tamils in the use of automatic and semiautomatic weapons, self-loading rifles, 84 mm rocket launchers and heavy weapons, and in laying mines, map reading, guerrilla war, mountaineering, demolitions and anti-tank warfare" (Hussain 2010,402). Additionally, both the central Indian government and the state government of Tamil Nadu offered aid in terms of sanctuary, armaments, financing, and areas in which to construct

communications facilities (Hussain 2010, 402-403). Tamil Nadu political leaders expressed support for Tamil self-determination; political figure M.G. Ramachandran admitted providing 3.2 million rupees of his state's finances to Tamil secessionists under the guise of humanitarian aid (O'Duffy 2007, 272).

Changes on the political scene, however, caused a shift in this relationship. The Indo-Sri Lankan accord of 1987 was meant to resolve the Tamil issue while ensuring Sri Lankan territorial integrity and Indian security, but failed to include Tamil secessionists in the talks and was thus unsuccessful. The 1991 assassination of Indian Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi by members of the LTTE further exacerbated the situation, re-aligning Indian support with the Sri Lankan central government (O'Duffy 2007, 272-273). The assassination was orchestrated when Gandhi decided to bring in the Indian Peace Keeping Force to forcefully disarm the LTTE.

India's provisions of aid to either side did not effectively reduce fighting, and LTTE suicide bombings escalated. Attempts were made to quell the violence through a series of talks, and for a period violence did cease. The Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) in 2002, brokered by Norway, established the foundation for a federal solution, and the LTTE dropped its demands for secession. When the agreement was reevaluated by the Sinhalese government of Rajapaksa in early 2008, however, the CPA was abrogated, and Sri Lanka erupted into total war (Hussain 2010, 406-408). Fighting continued until 5 April 2009, when the Sri Lankan forces took control of the last LTTE stronghold in the Puthukkudiyiruppu region, and on 17 May 2009 the LTTE officially admitted defeat and ceased its fighting (Hussain 2010, 411). The Tigers of Eelam thus dissolved, and with them the violent movement for an independent state.

Conclusions

The international community generally demonstrates more sympathy toward independence movements when the people attempting to secede have legitimate claims to oppression or human rights violations under the existing government. In the case of the Tamils, members of this ethnic group did indeed face a real threat, which is the reason for their continued declarations that they were freedom fighters, not terrorists. Despite their claims, a combination of other factors, both internal and external, resulted in an unfavorable image for the LTTE. In terms of internal factors, the violent tactics including suicide bombings and the extensive use of child soldiers, and the deaths of over 64,000 people, inevitably shed a harsh light on the movement. The legitimacy of Tamil claims of unjust treatment was not enough to counter this, even given the LTTE's extensive efforts at state building. Although the group set up a parallel civil administration in the areas it controlled, including law courts, mail service, banks, and a police force, actions which conveyed the secessionists' seriousness with regard to establishing a separate, functional state, the international community remained unimpressed (Hussain 2010, 384). India, for example, whose ethnic ties initially led it to support a separate Tamil Eelam, reversed its position at least in part due to the excessive use of violence on the part of the LTTE, epitomized by the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi by a female LTTE suicide bomber in 1991. The movement thus turned one of its few backers against itself. Unable to obtain a significant backing from state actors, the LTTE relied, at least to a small degree, on assistance from other terrorist groups like the PLO.

The LTTE clearly played a significant role in shaping its own international image, but factors outside its control also contributed to its isolation from supportive external actors. The attacks of 9/11 caused a serious shift in the attention granted to terrorism worldwide, and nations

like the United States and UK, from which the Tamil diaspora was shipping significant amounts of money to support the LTTE, clamped down on these transactions. This change was not dictated by any change in action by the secessionists, but was simply the result of international happenings. The horrors associated with the attacks on the US reverberated onto unrelated groups like the Tamil Tigers, which then suffered from additional constraints and political backlash. The group had been proscribed as a terrorist organization by the US in 1997, and in 2001 the UK followed suit, essentially compounding the global community's disinterest in helping the Tamil secessionists (O'Duffy 2007, 280). The excessive use of violence as a tactical weapon, compounded by external events, thus resulted in the alienation of the LTTE, which failed to collect enough support in the international arena to defeat the Sri Lankan army. As the situation stands currently, the resurgence of an independent Tamil Eelam appears unlikely.

Southern Sudan: *Out of Colonialism, into Civil War, and Toward*

Independence

Introduction

Southern Sudan has faced political unrest and civil conflict since 1961, with periods of peace interspersed between times of full scale war. Political repression of non-Arab southern Sudanese by an Arab-dominated north Sudanese government sparked the creation of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which fought for independence of the South. The rebels were enjoyed some assistance from neighboring countries including Ethiopia, Uganda and Zaire, while Israel also supported them against the northern Arab-Islamic majority. The United Nations sent a mission to Sudan, which assisted the secessionists in providing political infrastructure in the underdeveloped South. Both sources of aid, from various independent states and through the UN, played an important role in determining the political separation of southern Sudan. The government received backing mainly from Arab states and the Soviet Union, but it was not enough to crush the movement for southern independence. After several decades of bloody warfare, a peace treaty was signed in 2005. The referendum held in early February 2011 confirmed southern Sudan's decision to split off. Southern Sudan has thus effectively established independence, and is scheduled to officially declare formal independence on July 9 2011.

Background and Discussion

Sudan has historically seen a significant divide between its North and South regions. Various major civilizations influenced the North, introducing precedents for literacy, state-

building and centralized administration. The most important of these influences was Arab-Islamic, which became so dominant in the North that most of the Sudanese in this area profess Islam. “Arabism—more than religion or color—separated the Northern from the Southern Sudanese” (Akol 2007, 1). This Arabic identity provided cohesion to the peoples of the North, a unity which the South lacked. Those residing in the latter region “remained diverse in ethnic and linguistic terms and lacked the political unity that would have enabled them to take concerted action for mutual support against a common external enemy.” A semblance of unity would be created later through the Sudan People’s Liberation Army, but even that was marked by serious fractionalization and the SPLA fragmented in the 1990s. Eventually the group became a broader-based coalition, and succeeded in realigning diverging interests (Reno 2010, 321).

Following the Islamist Mahdist revolution of 1885, Sudan was ruled by the Madhists. Central authority broke down in southern Sudan, leading to revolts and chaos. In 1898, an Anglo-Egyptian regime was established, and Sudan was put under a “condominium.” The new political organization, however, presented numerous problems. “The administration of Southern Sudan in the early years of the condominium was dictated more by the exigencies of the European “scramble for Africa” in the late nineteenth century than by local considerations” (Akol 2007, 5). British administrators were unwilling to spend on education, so the quality of schools suffered. The compulsory chores like road building imposed on the local populace were not well received.

When Sudan obtained independence from Britain in 1956, power was concentrated in the North, and the South faced a period of “discrimination, marginalization and ‘internal colonialism’” (Travis 2010, 439). These grievances led to a desire for independence, and despite their cultural and ethnic fragmentation, the Southern Sudanese came together to form a

secessionist campaign. This led to the development of an initially low-impact civil war aimed at establishing an independent South. The first segment of the war was fought from 1955 to 1972, when the Addis Ababa accords ushered in 10 years of ceasefire. However, the start of a 1983 Islamicization campaign contributed to the rebirth of the conflict, and a series of failed negotiations in the following years (Global Security, Sudan). The same year marked the emergence of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), devoted to fight the Sudanese government's imposition of Islamic law on Christians and second-class citizenship on non-Arabs. The movement, led by a former Sudanese army colonel of Dinka ancestry, John Garang de Mabior, prompted the government to initiate a stunningly bloody campaign of starvation and slaughter against the Dinka people of the South. In 1987, the government declared that all male children in southern Sudan should be killed, leading to mass flight. Tens of thousands were killed, starved, or died of disease. It is important to note that Garang's original objective was to prevent the Arab-centric oppression of Sudanese people while maintaining a united Sudan, not breaking away from the North as others instead hoped to do. Eventually, however, the movement's aim shifted toward secession.

When the peace process began in 1993, it involved numerous international players including Eritrea, Uganda and Kenya. Observer countries were then sent in by the United Nations to help mediate between the groups. The result of over a decade of peace talks was the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), stipulated in 2005, which granted southern Sudan autonomy (Global Security, Sudan). Northern Sudanese troops left the South in early 2008, and a referendum held in February 2011 determined that Southern Sudan should form a new state. Voters were overwhelmingly in support of independence; 98.83 per cent opted for separation.

It is unlikely that the current political arrangement could have been reached without the intervention of numerous external actors. Both sides of the conflict received aid from different sources. The Sudanese government received assistance from Egypt primarily, and from other Arab states as well. The United States also provided assistance, in the belief that it could advance its political agenda in the region by keeping the Nimeiri regime (which fell in 1986) in power in Khartoum. The scope of US aid to the Sudanese government was significant; in 1985 alone, the US gave half a billion dollars to Nimeiri (Lesch 1987). The Soviet Union contributed in the final years of the conflict when US-Sudanese relations became strained, but never to the degree that the US had. The issue of “Arabism” and Islamic religion was crucial in determining which external actors supported each side of the conflict. For this reason, most of the states that backed the Sudanese government were Arab, while nations such as Ethiopia, Uganda, Zaire and Israel all supported Southern Sudan’s demands for independence. Early aid to the secessionists came in the form of funding from missionary groups that had been in the area before their 1964 expulsion, particularly the Verona Fathers. Israel provided weapons, especially in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Nearby African countries like Zaire (formerly Congo-Léopoldville), Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda offered indirect aid to the secessionists (Heraclides, 348-49). Ethiopia and Cuba offered “large amounts of arms (including SA-7missiles), equipment and training for the SPLA” (Collins 2008, 181). Ethiopian assistance also included logistical support, a powerful radio station on its soil and a political headquarters in the capital. Following Nimeiri’s fall in 1986, the SPLM became more dependent on Ethiopia, as previously it had had sanctuaries in Kenya and Uganda and obtained funds and arms from Libya (Lesch 1987). Ethiopian assistance, however, stopped abruptly with the collapse of the Mengistu regime in 1991.

The ties between southern Sudanese secessionists and neighboring countries like Ethiopia and Uganda were established for various reasons, including a desire to upset Sudan's government and thereby advance their own interests. Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, for instance, had openly favored the secessionists against Sudan's and the Arab countries' support of Eritrean independence. At other times, the need to prevent insurgents from their countries from using Sudan as a safe haven factored into their decision (Reno 2010, 322). In either case, the support generated from these countries was instrumental in helping southern Sudan to secede.

In addition to various national actors, the United Nations has also played a role in determining the political outcome in southern Sudan. In order to assure that the CPA was being adhered to, and to watch over the restructuring of the region's administration, the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) was granted the authority to send in a maximum of 715 police and 10,000 military personnel. UN involvement contributed to the affirmative results of the referendum for independence, as the assistance granted to the southern Sudanese in establishing effective and stable political structures lent credibility to the discussion for an independent state.

Conclusions

As the largest country in Africa, Sudan was a daunting neighbor for many smaller surrounding countries. Those which chose to support the SPLA did not necessarily have any particular sympathy for the southern Sudanese cause, but viewed their provision of aid as a strategic move to weaken Sudan, thus advancing their own position in the region. This is particularly true in the case of Ethiopia, which was dealing with its own secessionist movement in Eritrea, and wanted to ensure that Eritrean rebels could not use Sudan as a base for their operations, especially after they received the endorsement of the Sudanese central government.

Thus, the SPLA received aid which stemmed from ulterior motives of the nations offering it, but this did not detract from its effectiveness.

The military assistance that the southern Sudanese secessionists received from other states and the political stability and infrastructure that the United Nations created were both crucial for the SPLA. Other factors also came into play, such as the extremely poor economic and human rights conditions in Sudan, which made the maintenance of political order a daunting task for the central government. The SPLA was able to leverage these hardships as a force for change. The fact remains, however, that without material and financial assistance, the SPLA would not have been able to achieve the significant military victories which established it as a real threat to the central government and gave it bargaining power in the peace negotiations. It also would not have been able to take over and administer territories as it did. Similarly, the United Nations helped construct the foundations for a legitimate, functional state which could operate independently. The establishment of UN-sanctioned political and physical infrastructure lent credibility to the secessionists' claims that southern Sudan could operate independently. The referendum which determined that southern Sudan will become the 193rd country formalized the process, which will be complete in July 2011 with the official declaration of independence. The situation remains precarious, however, as the separation is still in its fledgling stages; only the advent of time will confirm or refute the success of Southern Sudan as an independent state.

The Case of Tibet: *The Dalai Lama and the Quest for Tibetan*

Independence

Introduction

The Tibetan independence movement is one of the most well-known secessionist efforts in the world, and support for it has grown steadily in the past fifteen years (Shakya 1999, xxi). The movement originated in the 1950s and has been active ever since, but has not always had the same stated objectives. As is the case with other secessionist movements such as that in Southern Sudan, the Tibetan population has not always identified itself as a nation. They were not a unified people prior to Chinese invasion, and thus did not immediately present an organized, cohesive front of opposition (LOA Iok-sin 2009). The lack of unity has also been reflected in the demands Tibetan leaders have made, which fluctuate between autonomy and independence. While these factors have posed a significant challenge for secession-seekers, the Dalai Lama's status as an internationally recognized figure has drawn attention to the cause, and heightened public sympathy for it. The non-violent approach advocated by the leader is especially appealing to a broad audience, especially on an individual level. In concrete terms, however, this support has translated into very little material aid from other nations or international organizations.

Background and Discussion

Located between India and China, Tibet has traditionally been highly susceptible to influences from both of these nations. The watershed moment in relations between Tibet and

China came in May 1950, when the first clashes occurred between the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Tibetan troops (Shakya 1999, 38). In the following months, China completed a full-scale invasion of the region. Tibet appealed to the United Nations, but was unable to achieve anything seeing as neither it nor the People's Republic of China were members of the organization and no other major powers were willing to support their cause in the General Assembly (Shakya 1999, 52). This unpromising prelude was to repeat itself continuously in the following decades, as Tibet fruitlessly searched for international backing.

China continued to consolidate its hold on the region, leading to the Dalai Lama's departure for India, where he has remained in exile since 1959. His departure came immediately after the Lhasa Uprising, a revolt by thousands of Tibetans who suspected the Chinese intended to kidnap the Dalai Lama. Protesters were then brutally repressed by Chinese forces in what was merely one incident of many in which the Chinese showed total disregard for human rights (Ardley 2000, 7).

Tibet's quest for independence can be divided into two stages. The first spanned from the mid-1950s until 1974 and involved guerrilla fighting (Ardley 2002, 21). The image of the Tibetan independence movement is one of peaceful protest, but in the past, guerrilla action was the primary form of resistance. There were a number of resistance groups active during this time, but the movement was led by the Khampa tribesmen in eastern Tibet (Shakya 1999, 33). Eventually armed resistance came to an end, as shortages of troops, weapons and difficulties in communicating between various resistance groups made it impossible to continue the struggle militarily (Ardley 2009, 32-33). External aid from the CIA, which will be discussed later in greater detail, was not sufficient to fuel the movement against the Red Army. In the late 1980s,

the second phase of protest began. Unlike the earlier movement, it was based on non-violent action in accordance with Buddhist ideology, and continues to this day.

The United Nations has taken a very cautious approach in dealing with the issue of Tibet. A primary reason for this is that a significant portion of China's territory is at stake, and the UN Charter dictates that the organization is committed to preserving the territorial integrity of member states. Furthermore, Tibet's situation is worsened by the fact that Tibet has never been completely independent. Britain in the early 20th Century caused confusion about its political status by stating that China's relationship with Tibet was one of "suzerainty", which Tibet interpreted as independence, while the Chinese announced that the area was "an integral part of the territory of China". Regardless of the political dispute, the 38 years in which the region was ruled by the Lhasa government were the closest Tibet has come to having full sovereignty over its territory. The years from 1913 to 1951, when Tibet was essentially a self-governing entity, are seen by some supporters of secession as grounds for declaring that Tibet was already an independent state before it was invaded by China. In the words of Henry Bradsher, an American who favored a separate Tibet, "...even today international legal experts sympathetic to the Dalai Lama's cause find it difficult to argue that Tibet ever technically established its independence of the Chinese Empire, imperial, or republican" (Sautman 2009, 58). Even in this time period, however, the government only signed two international treaties; the ability to interact with other players on the international scene is one of the key determinants of statehood. According to Sautman, this lack of treaty proliferation is attributable to the fact that "Tibet was not independent and the states of the time knew it" (2009, 49). Tibetan declarations of independence have also been deemed illegitimate political-legal declarations (Sautman 2009, 49). The United Nations has thus been understandably hesitant to intervene to change the region's political status,

an action which is outside the organization's usual scope. Additionally, China's veto power within the body is a powerful deterrent to nations considering advocating a free Tibet.

Tibet's movement for independence has attracted considerable international attention compared to other secession movements, but this has not translated into equivalent political or military support. International western leaders who have taken an interest in Tibet's situation have often acted under the false understanding that the issue was simple and could be solved through dialogue. Given the magnitude of the issue, meaning China's territorial integrity, it is unlikely that mediation alone could achieve an arrangement satisfactory to both parties (Smith 2010, 142).

Members of the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) attempted to address this concern by embarking on hunger strikes in 1977 and again in 1998. The second phase of the hunger strikes was stopped when several other nations (including Poland, Costa Rica, Norway and Hungary) declared that they would champion the cause of Tibetan independence. These pledges did not amount to any real changes in the political situation, and merely served to confirm the idea that "while Tibetans enjoy moral support around the world, as political agents they are simply not taken seriously" (Ardley 2002, 1). Painfully aware of this fact, the TYC released a statement in 1998 saying that "The United Nations has not yet fulfilled our demands. And this morning we realized that we Tibetans have no political allies" (WTNN 1998). This state of affairs is one of the factors which allowed China to invade Tibet in 1949: Tibet lacked international allies who were willing to offer overt support (Ardley 2002, 21). Britain and India, which had both been involved in the region, were unwilling to aid, as Britain lost interest when India became independent in 1947. The latter was concerned that backing Tibet would strain relations with China, and thus refrained (Ardley 2002, 21). This scenario has been repeated numerous times, as

China's importance as a key international political and economic player makes the prospect of directly challenging it unappealing to most, if not all, other nations.

The United States' position with regard to Tibet's political status has not been a strong show in favor of secession. The US (like India) has never held an official position stating that Tibet was independent in modern times, nor that it has a right to secede. Despite this fact, the United States has actually been one of the most supportive external actors. During the guerrilla movement, the US provided assistance to the Khampa fighters, although much of what was given was channeled through other organizations, primarily the CIA. The CIA trained some guerrilla fighters at Camp Hale, Colorado, although the extent of this training was limited and came late in the struggle (Ardley 2002, 30). The United States has supported Tibet, but has preferred to focus its attention on human rights more than sovereignty. Sautman summarizes US policy as follows: "Although the US has never recognized an independent Tibet or a "right to independence," US political elites have a history of supporting exiles who do support Tibet independence" (2009, 76). The Dalai Lama has attempted to garner support within the US State Department and Congress, especially in the late 1980s, but again deteriorating relations with China halted this effort. In 1998, President Clinton agreed to discuss Tibet with Jiang Zemin, General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, during his visit to China. As before, however, the discussion failed to mention independence and centered instead on human rights and the preservation of Tibetan culture, reconfirming the United States' unwillingness to put its relationship with China at risk over Tibet.

Conclusions

After the Tibetan guerrillas disbanded and the movement adopted a peaceful approach, Tibet has not been able to garner any significant international backing for its goals. It is not taken seriously as a political agent. Since the CIA's initial involvement in the guerrilla movement came to a close, there has been essentially no aid to the Tibetans, and as a result the region's political status has remained unchanged. Although the Dalai Lama's non-violent campaign is fully in line with Buddhist ideals, it has left the Tibetan independence movement largely unable to morally compel other nations to place forceful external pressure on China. Tibet's political status has thus remained unchanged. Aware of the importance of military action in achieving secession, as it calls attention to the issue on the international scene, some groups have attempted to use hunger strikes instead to achieve similar results, but these too have been called off by the Dalai Lama as a form of "self-violence".

Finally, China's formidable size and its position as a key trading partner have made the US and other nations hesitant to take a firm political stance on Tibet. Pressure has been applied to ensure that basic human rights are respected in the region, but no serious demands have been made about Tibet's political status. The United Nations is subject to some of the same constraints, particularly due to China's position as a permanent member of the Security Council. China views the issue as a threat to its territorial integrity, and is thus very reluctant to make any concessions. Unless the Tibetans return to a military campaign as they had in the 1950s, 60s and early 70s, it is unlikely that any significant changes will be made; the stakes associated with Chinese trade are simply too high for many external actors to want to become involved.

Analysis

The results of my case studies indicate that external aid is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a successful secessionist movement. There have been cases in which secessionist groups did receive aid yet did not gain independence, such as Tibet. It appears, however, that there is an extremely low likelihood that an organization geared toward secession will be able to break away without substantial external help. The primary outlier to this argument is Eritrea, but the combined result of materials captured from the Ethiopian army and collaboration with the Tigrean People's Liberation Front produced an effect comparable to that of military backing from an external ally. The Tamil Tigers also received aid from India and ultimately failed, but this was largely due to India's reversal of position, as it initially assisted the Tamils but later collaborated with the Sri Lankan government. During the time that it had India's support, the Tigers made substantial territorial gains and appeared to be winning. This reversal of India's position and the subsequent negative effect it had on the Tigers suggest just how critical external aid is to secessionists.

Another important conclusion that can be drawn from my study is that the tactics utilized by the secessionists have a strong correlation with the degree of support they receive. Excessive violence is difficult to justify politically. Terrorist tactics elicit a negative international response, as evidenced by the case of the Basques, who have obtained surprisingly little aid despite the significant time period that ETA has been operating. Similar results can be observed in the case of the Tamils, who initially garnered aid from India, losing it altogether after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

Just as excessive violence can be a deterrent for external actors considering whether to provide aid to secessionists, a total lack of military action can produce the same outcome. After

the Tibetan guerrillas disbanded and the movement adopted a peaceful approach, for example, Tibet has not been able to garner any significant backing toward its goals. It is not taken seriously as a political agent. Hence, both extremely violent and completely peaceful approaches may hinder a group's ability to gain international support and achieve independence.

The research thus supports my hypothesis and indicates that without significant external assistance, secession is extremely unlikely to succeed. Military aid in particular is far more influential than other types of support, while the effects of political backing are, regrettably, often negligible.

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