CHAPTER 1

An External Security Theory of Secessionist Conflict

When confronted by secessionists, a state can adopt a wide array of policies, from granting independence or major concessions, to resisting the nationalists' demands with varying levels of violence. For states, the decision of how to respond to separatists is based on external security considerations. At particular secessionist moments, central governments weigh the extent to which the group is an external threat, and that calculation of vulnerability determines the strategy the state adopts: the more threatened a state feels, the more violent it is.[1]

At bottom, what drives a state's decision-making is the large and immediate shift in the balance of power that would accompany a change in its borders. If a secessionist group were to succeed in creating a new state, it would significantly weaken the host state with respect to not one, but two potential external rivals. The first actor to greatly benefit vis-à-vis the former host state would be the secessionists. Formerly an ethnic group without a large polity, now one in control of a state, this actor would have greater capabilities to hurt the former host state, should it choose to do so. Second, successful secession would weaken the host state relative to its geopolitical rivals, since it would have lost significant territory and population, two crucial components of power.

When such large, rapid shifts in the balance of power are in the offing, states must be careful about accommodating secessionists. States should be especially wary of offering concessions to such groups if they foresee war with either the newly independent state or a geopolitical rival. Why allow the balance to shift unfavorably if one anticipates security threats in the future? The creation of a potentially hostile state, or war against an already-existing state rival emboldened by the host state's loss of territory and population, are eventualities the host state is unwilling to countenance. To prevent such challenges to its external security, the state will fight the secessionists.

The factors that influence whether a state decrees future war likely, either against the ethnic group seeking independence, or regional state rival(s),

are crucial. There are two particularly noteworthy issues that affect this judgment. First, is the ethnic group's identity opposed to the state's national core? Second, how war prone is the state's regional neighborhood? A state is sanguine about the security implications of secessionism only when it lives in a peaceful neighborhood and its national identity is not opposed to the separatists'. Such an optimistic, "postsecurity" environment is a necessary condition for a state to consider a "negotiations and concessions" strategy. This strategy is aimed at satisfying, or satisificing, the ethnonationalists' demands. If it succeeds, this strategy maintains the territorial integrity of the state at the cost of decentralization of certain powers and privileges to the regional nationalists. Even the worst-case scenario under this strategy—the separatists' using piecemeal concessions to pave the way to independence—does not spell doom for the state, for it has little reason to fear the security consequences of a new neighbor. Either way, recourse to violence is deemed not necessary.

However, states are rarely confident enough about their future security for such generosity. More likely, in situations in which the state is either located in a relatively militarized part of the world, or it suffers a significant identity division with the separatists, it would consider the possibility of border changes in more urgent, sometimes-apocalyptic, terms and attempt to forestall it with violence. In other words, the prospect of future war is a sufficient condition for the state to use coercion.

Once a state turns to coercion, it calibrates just how much violence to employ based on how much support the separatists enjoy from its geopolitical rivals. For both materialist and emotional reasons, more external support results in more repressive strategies. First, the higher the threat of military defeat, the more brutal states generally get.[2] Third-party support, by transferring "technologies of rebellion," makes the movement a stronger fighting force, increasing the level of violence required to defeat it.[3] Second, external backing of the separatists by rivals of the state fuels emotional, pathological actions by both leaders and security forces, directed by a collective sense of betrayal. Third-party support pushes the state to climb the escalatory ladder, from what I term "policing" to "militarization" to "collective repression."

The bottom line is that as perceived external threats to the state increase, so does the weight of the state's response: more serious threats are dealt with more violently. The extent of the external threat, in turn, depends on the state's evaluation of future war, either against the seceded state or an existing rival, and the degree of third-party support for the secessionists.

Setting up the Theory

My argument examines state strategy at secessionist moments. Though interesting, I do not consider the causes of, and route to, the secessionist

moment in the first place.[4] Rather, I focus on states' decision-making at the point at which an ethno-nationalist movement has made a demand or declaration of independence or significant autonomy. Such secessionist moments can take the form, among others, of an ethnic party winning an election; a massive rally, riot, or demonstration that compels fence-sitters to choose sides in favor of those demanding independence; or an assassination, murder, or kidnapping that unites the opposition. There may be some strategic bluffing at play regarding the movement's true aims[5]—groups that would be satisfied with mere autonomy sometimes demand secession to set a high initial price; groups that ultimately desire secession sometimes demand autonomy to hide their goals—but either way, the central state is forced to sit up and take notice of its dissatisfied ethnic minority. My theory is aimed at deconstructing the state's calculus at that precise moment.

To build the theory, I rely on three assumptions. First, I assume that actors are strategic and forward looking. This is a fairly common assumption made by social scientists, though it is not without its critics. At bottom, this assumption holds that all relevant actors possess a reservoir of information and beliefs from which they weigh costs and benefits in a crude but identifiable way to help decide on which course of action is most suitable. Actors are not necessarily reasonable, intelligent, or accurate in their understandings of the world, nor is it unlikely that "nonrationalist" feelings, such as racism and prejudice, interfere with their decision-making. Indeed, as we shall soon see, leaders often behave in response to visceral, emotional cues. I assert only that decision makers are strategic in their interactions with other individuals and groups, and seek to maximize net gains on behalf of whichever organization or state they represent.

Second, I assume that states are more powerful than substate actors. Because states can draw on the organizational, military, and economic capabilities that inhere in statehood, they can be characterized as being more powerful than minorities within their borders. "Small" can still beat "big"[6]—tactics, terrain, the balance of resolve, and the public support all matter a great deal in any armed conflict—but, prima facie, the state would have to be favored in such a fight. Indeed, it is precisely the greater capabilities that states possess that motivate minority groups to pay, at times, high costs to attain those capabilities.

Third, I treat states as "unitary" actors, a long-standing assumption in international relations (IR).[7] This assumption implies that when dealing with external threats, even when such threats happen to emanate from within their borders, states will act "as if" they are unified entities. This is not to suggest the level of internal discord on policies is precisely zero. At times, governments are intensely divided into camps advocating different proposals to the problem of a separatist movement. However, at highly politicized moments—the start of wars, after a major attack, a deadly riot, a landslide electoral victory by an ethnic party—most decision makers will

"fall in line" and afford considerable leeway to top leaders. Even in democracies such as India, Israel, the United States, and Czechoslovakia, domestic opponents fall lockstep behind executives at such times, to say nothing of authoritarian states like Pakistan or the Ottoman Empire, where crucial decisions are highly localized to one or a few actors. Because violence, or its threat, is inherently polarizing,[8] secessionist moments force domestic groups and factions to choose between the state and the secessionists, with the result that these groups invariably opt for the former. Notwithstanding tactical disagreements and opportunistic criticism, major and genuine disagreements among government leaders during secessionist crises are rare—at least if evidence from South Asia to the Middle East to Europe is anything to go by.

More important, the unitary-actor assumption affords us analytical traction on the external environment. Allowing for all relevant factors to vary, as they assuredly do in the real world, makes for unwieldy theories. If one wants to examine how the external implications of separatism affect state strategy, it is advisable to simplify the domestic politics angle. For useful theory building, abstraction has to occur somewhere in the process—either domestic politics are assumed away and external relations analyzed (as I do), or vice versa (as others do).[9]

Secessionism as an External Threat

War between a state and the one it was carved out of is a distinct possibility after secession. Consider the case of Ethiopia. In April 1993, Eritreans voted overwhelmingly for independence in a referendum. Rather than standing in their way, the Ethiopian government, tired from decades of conflict, "welcomed" the prospect.[10] This bonhomie led to optimistic prognostications about the two countries' ability and desire to live in peace in the future.[11] Such optimism was misplaced. In 1998, Eritrea attacked its former host state over a border dispute, a "stab in the back" to its erstwhile allies.[12] The war was immensely costly, leading to the deaths of between 70,000 and 200,000 people in two years, making it one of the deadliest interstate wars in recent history.[13] In Ethiopia, it exacerbated economic, power, and food crises.[14] Analysts have concerns about a similar trajectory with respect to the world's newest state. After South Sudan was created via a referendum in which 99 percent of its residents voted for independence, tensions concerning territory and oil wealth have led to fears of full-blown war between the two neighbors.[15] Other regions exhibit similar traits: Kosovo and Serbia have an icy relationship; Russia fought a war against Georgia less than two decades after the latter's independence,[16] and recently invaded Ukraine.

Aside from conflicts against new neighbors, states also face the prospect of war against its geopolitical rivals, especially those in the region. If it

experiences secession, the state would lose territory and population. Such losses may embolden existing rivals to take advantage of the weakened state. For instance, thanks to substantial losses of land and people after its defeat in the Balkan wars in 1912, the Ottoman Empire was less able to withstand the exigencies of international security competition, evinced by its capitulation to Russian demands for Armenian reform, summed up in its Mandelstam Plan (chapter 4).

The threat of such wars, either against the seceded state or existing rivals, casts a foreboding shadow under which states must respond to separatist movements. Against this backdrop, states have to make relatively quick decisions about strategy at secessionist moments. They know that in the rough-and-tumble system of international politics, where actors have offensive military capabilities and unknown intentions, and where states generally have nowhere to turn to when faced with crisis or peril, the price for not being adequately fearful of potential security threats can be prohibitive.[17]

Consequently, states tread very carefully when dealing with separatism, with their overarching goal to ensure that their future security is not compromised. Most of all, states wish to avoid policies that could sow their own demise. If a state considers secessionists' success problematic for its future security, it would do whatever necessary to forestall an adverse shift in the balance of power. Why grant concessions and allow potential threats, whether existing states or new neighbors, to become stronger? At bottom, this means that a state fearful of future security threats is better off using coercion, not accommodation, against secessionist movements. As a result, optimistic states will systematically treat secessionists better than fearful ones.

I elaborate on each leg of the theoretical argument below, beginning with the first step: why secession represents a significant shift in the balance of power.

SECESSION AND THE BALANCE OF POWER

In IR, power is generally understood as being based on material capabilities. These include a state's military forces, its wealth, the size and talent—measured by education standards, perhaps—of its population, and its position of technological advancement. One prominent study of IR theory states simply that power is "based on tangible assets."[18] Setting basic definitional issues aside, what is important for our purposes is that in the international system, states uniquely possess these material capabilities on an aggregate level.

Secession changes the balance of power between the ethno-nationalists and their former host state, making the latter more vulnerable to attack. The balance of power shifts because attaining a state magnifies the capabilities of any social group controlling it, mainly for three reasons.

First, control of a state generally leads to control of the organized means of violence within it. Charles Tilly has famously written on the relationship between state building and war making, a connection vital to understanding the processes at work here.[19] What he terms the "state's tendency to monopolize the concentrated means of coercion," is a key element of the shift in the balance of power.[20] After all, if winning a state translates into the presence of an organized military, and an organized military is an important marker of capabilities, then the creation of a new state has enormous implications for the power of a group controlling it. Often, one of the key proximate causes of an ethnic group seeking its own state is that it is systematically excluded from military recruitment more generally, and officer positions in particular, in the multinational state. This leaves the group vulnerable to intimidation and control by forces often hostile to it. Conversely, there are tremendous advantages, both with respect to internal and external rivals, to gaining greater representation in the armed forces of a state. If an ethnic group can essentially come to dominate a state's military, it can better direct coercion against opponents.

This switch—from being systematically excluded from a state's military to essentially running one's own—is crucial to understanding the shift in the balance of power between the host state and the ethno-nationalist group potentially forming its own state. Suddenly, the ethnic group can stand up to its former host state in ways that were simply impossible when it was marginalized as a stateless group. Even if the new state's military is weaker than that of the rump state, the difference in strength between the two actors is now one of degree, not one of kind.

The second component of the shift in the balance of power is economic. Within this category, there are two central elements: domestic economic policy and foreign economic policy. With respect to domestic policy, the ethno-nationalist group in control of a new state now faces incentives such that what's good for the group is good for the state, and vice versa. Previously, in the unified state, coalitional politics, racism, and intergroup rivalry could have resulted in the sidelining of a particular ethnic group from economic growth or, in a logically equivalent way, economic losses could have been more than proportionately suffered by the group in question. With their own state, such concerns are no longer valid. The ethnic group can freely use its state to extract resources from its population in the form of taxes as well as fashion certain economic policies such as industrialization, the construction of dams and irrigation canals, and targeted investment in certain sectors of the economy.[21]

This is not to suggest that intergroup rivalry vanishes with the creation of a new state—political scientists have shown that the salience of particular ethnic and political cleavages changes with the redrawing of institutional and geographical boundaries[22]—but the particular ethnic group as a whole is no longer in danger of being unfairly targeted with respect to economic

gains and losses. Economic nationalism can now take over, in every sense of the term, increasing the group's economic power as a whole. Indeed, it is widely acknowledged that one of the central motivations for organizing the modern nation state is to maintain economic competitiveness in an era of industrialization.[23]

Related to this issue is foreign economic policy, particularly trade and membership in certain intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). As a canonical study on trade and power noted, "Among the economic determinants of power, foreign trade plays an important part."[24] Foreign trade, by directing resources to more efficient avenues of production and consumption, increases the military and economic capacities of states.[25] It is taken as a truism that states' goals with respect to trade policy in particular, and foreign economic policy in general, include most prominently the aim of increasing their aggregate power.[26] Trade can also be used strategically to manage relations with other states, giving birth to and cementing alliances.[27] Finally, membership in international organizations aids states in managing external relations and achieving their policy goals.[28] Such institutional membership is a legalistic symptom of a more general point, which is that membership in the comity of states is a "social" enterprise—similar to college fraternities, one can join only when those already on the inside acquiesce.[29] Once a group is recognized as a state, and welcomed into "the society of states,"[30] its social and institutional power increases.

Once again, the contrast between being a subnational ethnic group and an ethnic group controlling the state is readily apparent. When a group is relatively powerless within a state, it cannot strategically manage foreign economic relations for its benefit; such a luxury is left to the group that controls the state. The distributional consequences of foreign trade are often quite severe for marginalized groups, as agents of the state ensure that rival groups bear the brunt of the costs of trade, while their supporters garner the benefits.[31] And minority groups certainly cannot win membership into international organizations, most of which are open only to states or their recognized representatives. When an ethno-nationalist group wins its own state, however, it can then partake in these benefits in ways that were unlikely or impossible in the status quo *ex-ante*.

The third power-magnifying benefit of state formation relates to demographics. All else being equal, the larger the population of a state, the greater its power.[32] The most widely cited source of material capabilities, the National Material Capabilities Dataset, part of the Correlates of War project, includes in its composite score six elements of state power; two of the six are demographic variables (total population and urban population). A larger population base means that states can build bigger militaries, that they can put more people to work in both peacetime and during war, that they can have a wider tax base, and that their consumer markets are more attractive for investment and capital building.

When it comes to ethnic minorities, winning a state can be a significant game-changer in this regard. Assuming the presence of a coethnic diaspora in other parts of the region and the world at large, a state exclusively devoted to a particular ethnic group means that, all of a sudden, there is a home to go to. In other words, the new state will not be populated just by the group that fought for it, but by their ethnic brethren from various far-flung corners of the globe. An illustration of this principle is Israel's Law of Return, passed in the immediate aftermath of independence, which allows Jews worldwide, along with their progeny and spouses, to become citizens of Israel, regardless of national origin. Decision makers, we can be assured, are aware of the possibility of an immigration explosion in the new state, as evinced by Ottoman leader Enver Pasha's thoughts on the creation of an Armenian state in the early twentieth century:

> In my opinion this is a very big mistake. *If today in the Caucasus a small Armenia possessing a population of five to six hundred thousand and sufficient territory is formed, in the future this government, together with the Armenians that will come mainly from America and from elsewhere, will have a population of millions.* And in the east we will have another Bulgaria and it will be a worse enemy than Russia because all the Armenians' interests and ambitions are in our country. Consequently, in order to remove this danger, the formation of even the smallest Armenian government must be prevented.[33]

By changing the balance of population, so to speak, between an ethnic group and its former host state, the creation of a new state irrevocably changes the balance of power between the parties too. Cold, hard numbers matter a great deal.[34]

Secession, then, would lead to the ethno-nationalist group posing more of a threat to the rump state than it would as a minority group within a unified one, mainly because statehood would endow the group with military, economic, institutional, and demographic benefits. Admittedly, self-government entails both benefits and costs: managing territory and population can present a unique and new set of challenges to the separatists. After all, mobilizing a population and governing it require different political skill sets. For instance, when the Asom Gana Parishad, a party of Assamese ethno-nationalists, gained power in state elections in December 1985 after months of agitation and negotiations with central state, its record was poor; it included corruption, nepotism, and a lack of development (chapter 3).[35] Similarly, rather than usher a promised era of liberty and progress, Bangladesh's hard-won freedom from Pakistan (chapter 2) resulted in significant political instability—including a coup and the assassination of Awami League leader Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman, his entire family with the exception of two daughters then in West Germany, and his personal staff—less than four years after it achieved statehood. Today, only half a decade

after they won independence, South Sudan's leaders find themselves in the midst of a brutal civil war that threatens mass famine.

Even accounting for such costs, however, the creation of a new state leaves the host state more vulnerable to the ethnic group, generally speaking. First, the costs of managing territory and population, important as they are, are circumscribed to group elites, unlike the benefits—such as the gains from trade, membership in international organizations and international society, and nondiscrimination in military and civil service—which are distributed to the population at large. Thus it is reasonable to suggest that groups overall benefit from secession. Certainly, ethnic groups around the world believe the benefits of statehood far outweigh the costs; if they did not, they would not demand independence at the rates they do (163 movements between 1945 and 2000).

Second, even if we concede the real-world existence of situations where independence can hurt the ethnic group's power, the host state cannot make decisions based on such best-case scenarios. States operate in the dog-eat-dog world of international politics, where the costs of being wrong about prospective security threats can be prohibitive.[36] It is thus reasonable for the state to be concerned with the ethnic group gaining the massive military, institutional, and demographic resources that accrue to all states in the system.

Third, and most important, border changes shift the balance of power not just between the host state and the seceding ethnic group, but also between the host state and its existing state rivals. That is, in addition to losing out relatively to the ethnic minority, the state will also find itself weaker vis-à-vis other states in the region and around the globe. After all, if power "represents nothing more than specific assets or material resources available to a state,"[37] it stands to reason that losing significant amounts of territory and population in one fell swoop disadvantages states with respect to their rivals (and even friends).

Widely used datasets and major scholarly works in IR highlight the role of population as an important component of power.[38] Because territory and population are important components of states' reservoir of material capabilities, losing them wholesale results in significant shifts in the balance of power between the state and its adversaries. Consider the extent to which India pressed its advantage after East and West Pakistan split in 1971. Between 1970 and 1972, the ratio of India's material capabilities to Pakistan's increased by almost 50 percent, from 4.6:1 to 6.7:1,[39] a major part of this shift resulting from Pakistan losing half its population. Losing territory is also a major setback. No state likes to relinquish its hold on land easily, and indeed, the bulk of conflicts in modern international history have been fought over territory.[40] States have attachment to territory for a variety of reasons,[41] most compellingly the strategic, economic, and resource value of that land.

The problem with losing significant territory and population is that such a process makes states much weaker, leaving them more vulnerable to opportunist regional rivals. Scholars of territorial disputes have found that states are more likely to challenge rivals—or "engage in higher levels of diplomatic and military pressure"—the more advantageous their relative power position.[42] Even if this empirical pattern was not a fact of international politics, decision makers tend to behave as if it is. Generally speaking, states are quite suspicious of others' intentions and are loathe to acquiesce to any decrease in their relative power, given the exigencies of interstate security competition.[43]

Even in the highly unlikely situation where independence hurts rather than helps the ethnic group's power, then, the host state will still find itself more vulnerable to existing states. The sum consequence of the prospective changes supported by the secessionists, therefore, is a large and rapid shift in the balance of power between the state and two sets of rivals: the ethnic nationalists and geopolitical adversaries. In turn, the potential of large and rapid shifts in the balance of power activate the commitment problem.

THE COMMITMENT PROBLEM AS A CAUSE FOR CONFLICT ESCALATION

IR scholars have long grappled with a seemingly simple yet intractable problem: why do states fight wars? After all, two actors with conflicting interests need not go to war over them.[44] Doing so might even be considered irrational on the surface, because the divisions of gains and losses that is reached after the war could, in theory, have been reached in peaceful bargaining before any fighting took place, thus saving both actors the high costs of conflict. To put it in concrete terms, instead of fighting a war over Alsace-Lorraine, Germany and France—as rational, forward-looking actors—could conceivably see how such a war would unfold and divide the territory based on their estimates, without doing any of the fighting. Under such a scenario, both would be better off than in the case where they fought a war to find the same division of spoils.

One of the problems with this view, however, is that there is no credibility of commitment. Even when both sides have gained in the sense of not fighting a war, one side will gain more than the other with respect to the actual division of what is being contested—some territory, policy, or whatever. In turn, this means that one side is more equipped to attack the other in the future based on those very gains, as well as other gains in capability that accrue over time, such as arms buildups or a rising population. The actor whose power trajectory shows a steeper upward slope has no credible way of committing to *not* attacking the other side in the future. More important, the more vulnerable actor knows all of this, and as a result, initiates

conflict. Why risk (the threat of) war against a strengthened rival, the logic goes, when we have a better chance of success today?

This framework helps explain why a state would adopt coercion to deal with separatism. At the heart of the commitment problem, an inability to trust that a bargain will be adhered to, are potential large and rapid power shifts, exactly the situation that characterizes secessionism. A state fearful of border changes cannot afford concessions, for such a policy makes its worst-case scenarios more likely. If the state offers negotiated deals that fall short of full statehood, the ethno-nationalists may use the greater organizational resources attendant on decentralization and regional autonomy to press their case further in the future. As Grigoryan writes, "Concessions will only embolden [the minority] to make more demands or to attempt secession from a position improved by those very concessions."[45] This is because autonomy only reinforces and reaffirms the distinctiveness of ethno-nationalist identity, in part by encouraging the growth of regionalist parties who play an important role in mobilizing the population for conflict and secessionism.[46] Large-n studies corroborate this argument and show that federalism facilitates the formation of substate identities.[47] Agent-based computer models based on constructivist identity theory also demonstrate that power-sharing encourages larger identitarian movements.[48] Accommodation allows groups to aggregate proto-statelike resources, administratively, politically, economically, and socially, spoils that make states leery of negotiated concessions.

Of course, coercion against separatists is not a riskless strategy either. Harsh repression can increase ethnic groups' later determination to secede. India, for instance, has found itself unable to stamp out Kashmiris' desire for self-determination, in part precisely because of the brutal methods it has employed over the last three decades in that state (chapter 3). However, as I detail below, states need not escalate to high levels of repression absent significant third-party support. Lower levels of coercion, such as policing, generally do not have high material or reputational costs associated with them.

More important, the risk of domestic, regional, or global reputational loss is less worrisome for states than the risk of creating bigger security problems for itself. Because accommodationist policies only kick the secessionist can down the road, setting the stage for more powerful and organized claims in the future, only states unafraid of border changes can afford to try them. That is, a benign security prognosis is a necessary condition for a state to consider concessions such as significant autonomy or full independence. If, on the other hand, the state foresees the creation of the new state as geopolitically problematic in its future, it would behoove it to use force in the present, and nip the threat in the bud.[49] The fear of future war, in this view, is a sufficient condition for state coercion against separatists. The question then becomes: how does a state determine whether future war is likely?

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE I: PROBABILITY OF FUTURE WAR

As the examples of Eritrea and Ethiopia, Georgia and Russia, Kosovo and Serbia, and Sudan and South Sudan show, there exists a possibility of conflict between a state and an ethnic group that achieved independence. Decision-makers must consider not just such possibilities, but also the likelihood of future war against existing states, who may be emboldened by the host state's loss of territory and population. For instance, the Ottoman Empire, having lost about half its land and people in the Balkan wars of 1912 (chapter 4), faced a resurgent Russia in World War I, and India and Pakistan fought in the snowy heights of Kargil in 1999, a quarter-century after the former helped dismember the latter (chapter 2).

In my theory, the fear of future war is a sufficient condition for the state to coerce separatists. Its fear of future war against the seceded state turns on whether the ethnic group's identity is opposed to the state's national identity. Its fear of future war against existing states depends on the relative war proneness of the region the state inhabits. The possibility of war against either foe functions as a proverbial trip wire for the state's adoption of coercion: if either or both are "set off," the state will attempt to forestall independence with violence.

Future War and Depth of Identity Divisions. Nation-states seek to build national myths that strengthen social ties among its citizens and between the citizens and the state.[50] This is especially true in the postcolonial regions of Asia and Africa, whose states became independent in an age in which ethnic and national identities were largely accepted as the dominant mode of state organization. Importantly, not all ethnic or national groups are equally likely to be in control of such myth-making ventures. To the contrary, certain groups are more likely to be in control of the state, and certain "national" ideologies are more likely to be adopted.[51] In turn, certain ethnic or national groups find themselves in more direct opposition to the state's chosen nationalistic narrative, even in states that practice so-called civic nationalism.[52]

Where does the secessionist ethnic group's identity fall on this spectrum with respect to the core? A national identity can be inclusive of, indifferent to, or opposed to an ethnic group. If, for instance, a state defines its identity as that of a white Christian nation, then for the purposes of both Northern European Protestants and Western European Catholics, its nationalism is inclusive. If a national identity is inclusive of an ethnic group, it is unlikely that the group would consider seceding, and thus while a possible value for this variable, it drops out of the analysis. The variable then becomes dichotomous: identity relations can be indifferent or opposed. For our purposes, secessionists with mobilizing identities opposed to the state's national narrative are deemed dangerous in the future.

An indifferent identity relation occurs when the key national character dimension—language, religion, race, ethnicity, creed, and sect—is orthogonal to the one on whose basis the ethnic group is mobilizing. For instance, if a state defines its nationality along linguistic lines and an ethnic group secedes on the basis of a difference in religion, then that ethnic difference will be categorized as indifferent. On the other hand, if a state's national identity is organized along racial lines, and an ethnic group attempts secession based on its racial character, then that constitutes opposed identity relations. Of course, in the real world, issues concerning identity are not as clear cut as dispassionate scholars and analysts often imply, and peoples and states often subscribe to, and mobilize around, multiple, overlapping identities. That said, the job of the theoretician is to simplify. In this case, it seems reasonable to assert that one identity marker, above others, exerts a greater political force on individuals and groups, particularly at highly politicized times such as secessionist moments.

This is not to suggest that the nation-state's or the ethnic group's identity are fixed and unchanging. To the contrary, scholars of ethnic politics find that the precise identity cleavage around which groups mobilize is context and institution specific.[53] Voters in Zambia, for instance, might organize along tribal lines under single-party rule, but along linguistic lines in multiparty rule. Fighters in civil wars may be motivated by regionalist identity in one year and an ethnic one the next.[54] Even the state's national identity is contested and ever in flux: the ruling Young Turk regime in the early 1900s changed the composition of its national identity from "Ottoman" to "Turk" in less than half a decade (chapter 4). This had profound consequences for how Armenians were seen in the empire. What this means in concrete terms is that the identity-distance variable can vary across both space and time, even if we are considering just one ethnic group and one state.

What I attempt to capture with this concept of identity division is the ethnic group's likelihood to have so-called greedy motives in the future. IR scholars generally distinguish between "security-seeking" and "greedy" states. Both types can be expansionist, but aggression by "security-seekers," as the term suggests, is geared toward increasing the state's security by, say, increasing resources or advancing borders to a more defensible frontier. On the other hand, "greedy" states are expansionist for nonsecurity reasons, such as wealth, prestige, or ideological fervor.[55] In essence, greedy states are more difficult to placate than security seekers; they do not take yes for an answer. As I conceive of it, the identity division between the center and the ethno-nationalists is a measure of the latter's future desire to strike back at the state for purely nationalistic or "greedy" reasons. Because one of the central political roles of ethnic identity is to reduce uncertainty,[56] the precise content of relational ethnic identities can influence actors' assessments of the likelihood of war or peace resulting from secessionism.[57]

If the identity division between the ethnic group mainly in charge of the state and the independence-seeking minority group is *especially* frayed, then the state is likely to be wary of the minority group. While it is true almost by definition that the relationship between an ethnic group seeking independence from a state and the state itself is not warm, some rivalries are especially intense. Some are decades and even centuries old, others more recent. Some have featured violence at high levels relatively regularly, others sporadically or not at all. For example, despite Bohemia and Moravia being occupied by a Nazi Germany that enjoyed an alliance with an "independent" Slovakia for most of World War II, Czechs and Slovaks did not subject each other to extreme levels of violence the way, say, Croats and Serbs did.[58] Fifty years later, the divorce between Czechs and Slovaks was many orders of magnitude more peaceful than the one that took place in Yugoslavia. The more damaged a relationship is perceived to be at the secessionist moment, the more likely the state is to ascribe malicious intentions to the group.

At times, the ethno-nationalists may use costly signals to reassure the state, attempting to lower the state's estimation of the likelihood of future war and increasing its inclination to offer concessions. After all, what truly drives the central government's perceptions of future conflict are the ethnic group's intentions, which can, technically, become more known.[59] However, given that talk is cheap and that secession necessarily implies such a large and rapid power shift, seceding groups have to take extraordinary measures to signal benign intentions. Such measures can include the destruction of military capabilities by the seceding minority, as Norway did in 1905, when it destroyed its border forts to make it easier for Sweden to acquiesce to its independence (chapter 5). Even better in this regard would be direct transfers of military or security-related assets from the ethnic group to the seceding state: what could be a more reliable signal of a group's benign intentions than it helping its former host state potentially destroy it? For instance, during the time of the Velvet Divorce, the vast majority of the formerly united Czechoslovakia's military capabilities were diverted to the Czech half, which made Slovak secessionism more acceptable (chapter 5). But even such assurances do not guarantee kind treatment from the state. The Palestinian national movement gave in to Israeli insistence, as far back as the Oslo agreements of the mid-1990s, that an independent Palestine should be demilitarized (chapter 5). Yet this concession has brought the Palestinians no closer to statehood; the reservoirs of distrust and suspicion between Israel and its neighbors run too deep for such a promise to assuage Israel of its future security. Generally, the prospect of a new state on one's borders spells trouble for one's security, and cases such as Czechoslovakia or Sweden-Norway tend to be exceptional. As Secretary of State William Seward asserted in the run-up to the American Civil War, "The new Confederacy . . . must, like any other new state, seek to expand itself northward,

westward, and southward. What part of this continent or of the adjacent islands would be expected to remain in peace?"[60]

Future War and Existing States: Regional War Proneness. In addition to concerns about future war against the seceded state, a state must also consider the potential for war against an existing state, emboldened by the host state's loss of territory and population. Will border changes imperil its prospects in war too gravely? The state's assessment of the probability of future war against rivals turns on its prior experience with interstate war in its neighborhood, since this has implications for the constraints against war in its region.

Although war is a systemic phenomenon, certain subsystems appear better at avoiding it than others. For instance, South Asian states are twice as likely to threaten or use violence against one another relative to South American states, and Western Europe is half as war prone as the Middle East.[61] Just as it is for human beings, so it is for states: certain neighborhoods are worse to live in than others. And the type of neighborhood a state lives in conditions its view of the world—particularly the threats it faces.

States that live in "bad" neighborhoods, in which rivals regularly target one another militarily, would deem future war with existing rivals likely. Such states live under more permissive norms insofar as the use of force is concerned, and as such, they are likely to be on guard about the prospect of border changes and the attendant loss in relative power. A comparable state in a peaceful neighborhood, conversely, is likely to be unruffled by such an eventuality. For instance, both Israel and Canada are wealthy, liberal democracies dealing with a sole nationalist challenge—Palestinians in the former, Quebecois in the latter—but they differ in one crucial respect: the peacefulness of their neighborhoods. As Israeli insiders put it, "Six wars, numerous major confrontations, and ongoing violence, from low-level terrorism to massive rocket attacks, have been basic features of Israel's external environment. A sense of nearly unremitting Arab enmity prevails, of a conflict of unlimited hostility and objectives . . . national security issues in Israel are commonly addressed in existential terms."[62] As such, all else equal, we would expect Israel to be more afraid of the security implications of a new Arab state in the Middle East, even if such a state would be drastically weaker than it, than Canada would be with the creation of a French-speaking one in North America. Consequently, we would expect Israel to put up a stiffer fight against Palestinian independence than Canada against Quebecois separatism.

The bottom line is that states consider future war to be unlikely only under a relatively narrow set of conditions, and the rarity of these conditions explains why most separatist movements result in coercive state responses. After all, a necessary condition for the state to consider a peaceful strategy is that it must not fear future war. For this condition to obtain, the

secessionists must mobilize around an identity that does not threaten the host state's dominant conception of itself, since this would assure it that the seceded state's independent guns will not be turned toward it, and the state must live in a peaceful neighborhood, since this would assure it that it will not be exploited by opportunist state rivals. These relatively rare conditions translate to an optimistic, postsecurity environment for the state, where border changes are not seen in urgent or apocalyptic terms, enabling the possibility of peaceful concessions in its dealings with separatists. Consistent with this expectation, it bears noting that during the latter half of the twentieth century, separatism failed to incite even low-level conflict mainly in those regions where interstate war is not a serious possibility—such as Western Europe and the Pacific.[63] Much more commonly, however, the power shift that inheres in secession leaves the state too afraid to try peaceful negotiations. The fear of future war, against either the separatists or an existing rival, is a sufficient condition for the state to decide on coercion. Such coercive strategies result in a stronger correlation between secessionism and the outbreak of war in regions such as the Middle East, South Asia,[64] Southeast Asia, the Balkans and Caucasus,[65] and sub-Saharan Africa.[66] As much as a state may balk at paying the material and reputational costs associated with such a strategy, such costs pale in comparison to those associated with facing interstate war against relatively strengthened rivals.

Table 2 Probability of future war

		Identity distance	
		Indifferent	***Opposed***
Regional dynamics	***Peaceful***	Future war unlikely	Future war likely
	War prone	Future war likely	Future war likely

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE II: THIRD-PARTY SUPPORT

Once a state has made an assessment that it must use coercion against secessionists because they represent an external threat, it faces the decision of how much force to employ. "Coercion," after all, can mean any number of things, from beatings to widespread torture, from localized violence to genocide. How far states will up the repressive ante depends on the precise level of external threat the separatists represent, which depends on whether, and the degree to which, they enjoy third-party support.

Third-party support shortens a state's time horizons. A geopolitical rival helping the ethnic group secede is not just an external security problem for

the future, but one very much for the present. States do not generally take kindly to their rivals' attempts to destroy their territorial integrity, from within or without. The level of third-party support influences the strength of the secessionists by transferring the "technologies of rebellion";[67] higher levels of support mean the threat is to be taken more seriously, which in turn translates to a heavier hand by the state.[68] Third-party support also adds an emotional dimension to separatist conflict and can fuel pathological levels of violence if delivered at significant levels.

Secessionists as a Fifth Column. Classical statements on external support for separatist minorities focused on irredentism,[69] or the desire to incorporate a neighbor's secessionist region into one's own state. Such goals, however, constitute the extreme end of the spectrum when it comes to the strategic aims of third parties.[70] More commonly, they are motivated by less grandiose aims, such as the destabilization or "mere" dismemberment of the host state to favorably shift the balance of power. Support to the secessionist minority can also be spurred by an ethnic affinity with the movement or domestic calculations,[71] or a combination of these. Supporting a secessionist group from afar is often the best of both worlds for geopolitical rivals: their costs of engagement are significantly lower, they can retain plausible deniability, they are not seen as the aggressor by the court of global public opinion—which could invite verbal rebukes, or worse—and they trap the host state in a difficult conflict being conducted on its own soil. This was precisely the situation India found itself in during Pakistan's civil war in 1971, when its Border Security Forces trained and equipped the Mukti Bahini across the border, bleeding Pakistan at reasonably low cost before its eventual dismemberment (chapter 2).

States worry a great deal about so-called fifth-columns,[72] especially during times of war. There are two main factors about third-party support to separatists that makes states escalate: it enables stronger movements, and it encourages emotional decisions and behavior by leaders and security forces.

The first effect of third-party support is that outside help represents material support, which means a change in capabilities by the secessionists: the more help the nationalists have, the stronger they are, and the more violence is needed to defeat them. Civil war researchers have demonstrated how external backing results in the transfer of the "technologies of rebellion" that allow challengers to fight the state.[73] Within IR, it is a truism that states get increasingly violent the more desperate they get.[74] Outside support increases the capabilities of the challenging group and narrows the possibility of the state winning. A state is thus likely to respond to external sponsorship with high levels of violence to curtail the threat. Additionally, the more material support an outside power provides, the higher is its resolve, at least as perceived by the central government. Given increasing

levels of outside support, the central government is forced to conclude that the outside power is in for the long haul, and that high levels of violence will be required to deal with the threat. Lower levels of support, by contrast, smack of context-specific opportunism, and while no state is likely be pleased that one of its ethnic groups is receiving support, it is less likely to deem low levels of third-party cooperation threatening to the state's survival.

The second factor about outside support that affects the state's strategy is decidedly nonmaterialist. Researchers exhort us against sidelining emotions when studying conflict, noting that "although the bloodless conventions of social science make it simpler for academics to sweep such messy emotions aside when building their theories, those who visit the [affected] region find it impossible to explain what they find without reference to emotions."[75] Ethnic separatists soliciting and receiving external support, especially from the host state's rivals, represents an emotional betrayal to the central state. It is one thing to divorce, another thing entirely to divorce as a result of an affair with a spouse's sworn enemy. Though states are not people, they often behave as such.[76] Indeed, emotions produced and consumed by groups, such as governments, are often more powerful than those of the individual level.[77] Emotions trigger action, because "emotional judgments are quicker and stronger than cognitive judgments" and because they "heighten the saliency of a particular concern."[78] During times of ethnic tensions, three emotions in particular—resentment, fear, and hatred—are said to catalyze violence.[79]

There is no doubting the importance of these emotions, but the process of secessionism leads to a distinct emotion, as-yet unconsidered by ethnic violence research: betrayal. According to scholars, the notion of betrayal connotes "a voluntary violation of mutually known pivotal expectations of the trustor by the trusted party, which has the potential to threaten the well-being of the trustor."[80] In essence, Ego is badly let down by Alter, contravening its expectations about the latter. Politically, the structural conditions that give rise to this emotion involve an antecedent institutional arrangement being threatened by either an active or passive contributor of that arrangement. For instance, many nation-states in Asia and Africa gained independence from their erstwhile colonial rulers through nationalist movements, which saw alliances between varied ethnic, linguistic, or religious groups. The nation-state, in this case, is the institutional arrangement. When this state's borders and existence are threatened by one of the very groups that fought for it, the core governing group feels betrayed. For example, when the Bengali Muslim population of undivided India went from fighting for an independent Pakistan in the 1940s to campaigning for an independent Bangladesh a quarter century later, it greatly angered Pakistani nationalists (chapter 2). Crucially, this baseline level of betrayal is significantly exacerbated by an alliance between the ethnic group and an

external patron. From the perspective of the core group, it is bad enough that an in-group wishes to become an out-group, it is another thing entirely for this group to elicit the support of a rival. Irrespective of whether such an alliance is prompted solely by realpolitik, identity-based concerns, or some mix of the two, if an ethnic group partners with outside rivals, it fuels a betrayal that can result in almost pathological or genocidal violence (chapters 2 and 4). When groups become perceived as collectively traitorous, both leaders and security forces become thirstier for gruesome punishment. Put simply, hell hath no fury like a state betrayed by its own.

The relevance of these two aspects of third-party support—the separatists' material capabilities increasing and the state feeling betrayed—depends on the state's perceptions of how much help the ethnic group enjoys. At most times, these perceptions will be fairly consonant with the objective level of support provided. After all, states generally devote an enormous amount of resources to matters of security and intelligence, and should be able to accurately gauge both the source and extent of support reasonably clearly. More important, while third-party support operations are meant to be covert, designed to conceal the identity of the sponsor, they are rarely clandestine—those operations whose execution itself is meant to be secret. By its very nature, external sponsorship of rebels is hard to keep under wraps, and as such, states on the receiving end of it tend to well-informed of its nature and intensity. Nevertheless, in some cases, states do get it wrong. Such miscalculations of third-party support can be the joint product of bureaucratic friction and racism or essentialism.[81] A state may believe that at ethnic group is "in bed with the enemy" based on nothing more than ascriptive characteristics of that group and the enemy in question, with its internal politics precluding self-correction. For example, the Pakistani military leadership wrongly believed the Bengali movement for independence was operating hand-in-glove with the Indian state in March 1971, despite a number of local officials, even those hailing from West Pakistan, informing them otherwise (chapter 2). In such situations of misperception, the state will behave "as if" third-party support existed even when it did not.

Aside from these genuine misperceptions, states may make accusations of external sponsorship against rebellious groups that they know to be false, either to discredit the group or build support for the government. Indira Gandhi's government, to cite one of many examples, claimed that Khalistani separatists were backed by Pakistan years before they actually were (chapter 3). Sometimes governments go further still and seek to "frame" groups for receiving external backing, as when Zulfiqar Bhutto concocted an "interception" of arms ostensibly traveling from Iraq to Baloch rebels (chapter 2). Such episodes, however, do not present insurmountable problems for the researcher interested in uncovering the "true" perceptions of governments at secessionist moments. This is because "fake"

accusations of third-party support are quite transparently contrived, especially in hindsight. The insights and opinions of neutral observers, especially, contained in diplomatic archives or contemporary news reports, can help disentangle those situations in which the state genuinely perceives third-party support from those in which it is engaged in propaganda. As we shall see in the empirical chapters, when a state *actually* believes a group is enjoying third-party support it behaves very differently to when it merely alleges such support for domestic gain.

Levels of Third-Party Support. A state's level of coercion is calibrated to its perception of third-party support, which can be broken down into three types, each representing an escalation in the level of threat, and betrayal, that the state faces. The most elementary level of support is "limited": this includes situations in which third parties provide verbal, financial, or sanctuary support to the secessionists. A state can provide verbal or diplomatic support to secessionists and be considered offering limited support for the purposes of my theory mainly because in international politics, as in many other walks of life, talk is cheap. Mere verbal support does not aid secessionists. Though there are rare occasions on which governments take even verbal support from outsiders to secessionists quite seriously because of what it supposedly portends—Abraham Lincoln and other American leaders, for example, were extremely sensitive to British rhetoric that signaled their backing of the Confederacy (chapter 5)—generally speaking, diplomatic and political support does not weigh heavily on states' calculations to use force.

Financial aid, meanwhile, assuredly makes it more difficult to defeat the rebels, and signals the third party's preferences about the outcome of bargaining between the ethnic group and its government. It must be noted, however, that delivering financial aid to rebels can be a challenging task, for reasons ranging from a lack of social and institutional connections to rebels and field commanders, to legalistic countermeasures taken by the host state, such as freezing accounts and wire transfers. Consequently, financial aid is often delivered only in limited doses. More generally, principal-agent problems abound—those on the ground have different incentives and preferences than foreign financiers, and often the latter group will not enjoy reasonable levels of oversight over the usage of the aid once it is delivered. Additionally, financial aid does not change the composition of the resource-palette that rebels enjoy, it only enlarges it. Thus it is not a "game-changer" in terms of the types of support a third party can give, unlike, say, direct military aid of equipment that rebels currently do not possess.

The strongest form of "limited" support is a physical sanctuary across an international border. Sanctuaries are more important than financial aid because states are much more qualified and capable of regulating activity

and governing people within their borders than without. Scholars have noted that "state boundaries are perhaps the most fundamental international institutions in the modern state system" and "*the primary function of international boundaries is to demarcate legal or de facto lines of military control and political jurisdiction*. The military and police forces of one state have no authority in another state, and crossing borders with such forces is seen as an act of aggression."[82] States are less able to target and monitor the activities of rebels if they take place across sovereign boundaries owing to the difficulties of pursuit and international norms for territorial integrity.[83] However, sanctuaries are purely a defensive "weapon." A group's hold on a sanctuary would enable it to escape state action under most circumstances, but it would almost never, by itself, lead to more destructive capabilities against the state or its coercive apparatus. Rather, it is only when cross-border bases are combined with recruiting, training, or the provision of supplies that they assume real potency.[84] For these reasons, I consider a sanctuary an important type of third-party support, to be sure, but not capable of tipping the balance in any meaningful way—unless complemented with more serious forms of third-party support.

I call the second level "moderate" third-party support, which includes military aid, in the form in the form of equipment, supplies, and/or training. Military aid accomplishes significantly more than financial aid when it comes to aiding the political prospects of the secessionists' demands. It can considerably improve the battlefield capabilities of rebels, since states have access to arms in much greater numbers, and in much greater variety, than substate groups. Often foreign benefactors will supply rebels with crucial technology aimed at upturning the balance of power.[85] The famous—and perhaps overstated—case of the Afghan mujahideen employing U.S.-supplied Stinger missiles to defeat the Soviets serves as an exemplar of this phenomenon. Additionally, rebel or militant organizations fighting on behalf of secessionists are often poorly trained or organized hastily as situations on the ground can change rapidly, causing them to be ill-prepared for armed conflict with a state's regimented forces. Military aid and training from outsiders can close that gap appreciably and fairly quickly. It took approximately ten weeks, for instance, for Indian Border Security Forces to train and equip Mukti Bahini fighters in their quest to win independence from the Pakistani state in 1971 (chapter 2).

Finally, the highest form of support a third-party state can give is to fight alongside secessionists in a conflict with the host state. Once this level of support is reached, then the two parties' behavior, as opposed to simply their interests, becomes consonant. States fighting secessionists joined by third-party states are often unable to distinguish between the two as a practical matter. If states offer "high" levels of support to secessionists, then for all intents and purposes the state is fighting an interstate war on

its soil against an alliance composed of both internal and external rivals. This type of support was seen in Russia's support of Armenian nationalists in World War I. In such situations, we can expect the state to escalate viciously, using pathological levels of violence to reflect both the hard task of winning an interstate war as well as the perceived betrayal of the state by the ethnic group.

External Security and State Strategy against Separatists

To sum up the basic framework, states have two related concerns about the external security implications of any secessionist movement. First, is future war likely, either against the newly independent state or an existing regional rival? This assessment depends on whether the ethnic group's identity is directly opposed to the state's core, as well as the war proneness of the regional neighborhood. If the state foresees a geopolitical problem with the creation of a new state, it behooves it to use coercion in the present, so that the threat may be nipped in the bud. The fear of future war, in other words, is a sufficient condition for the state's adoption of coercion against separatists. Under these circumstances, the state must make a second calculation: how much third-party support do the secessionists currently enjoy? The existence and level of outside support will shorten the state's time horizons, bring external security concerns forward from the future to the present, and compel it to use escalating violence to deal with the threat.

A state can face, broadly speaking, four possibilities when confronted with a secessionist movement. The movement can be externally unthreatening, or if it is an external threat, it can be tied to either limited, moderate, or high third-party support. These possibilities correspond to four basic strategies a state can employ regarding separatists: negotiations and concessions, policing, militarization, and collective repression.

If the movement does not represent an external security threat because its identity division with the core is relatively muted and the state is sanguine about its regional environment, then the state is open to being peaceful in its response. Not being threatened with future war is a necessary condition for the state to use a "negotiations and concessions" strategy. This strategy entails the state meeting representatives from the ethno-nationalists, whether they are drawn from political parties or rebel organizations. The state may not necessarily offer concessions immediately, but the use of violence on any meaningful scale is ruled out. The state could offer a bargain short of complete independence to satisfy, or satisfice, the minority—primarily because no state likes losing territory—but if such a bargain is not acceptable to the minority, the state will not attempt to use force or violence to convince the ethnic group otherwise. The state essentially adopts an

attitude that connotes: we would like you to stay, but if you still choose to leave, we will not stop you.

To that end, the state may offer concessions to convince the minority it is better off staying in the unified state than going its own way. Such concessions can include greater political autonomy; more economic aid from the center (if the ethnic group is disadvantaged) or allowing a higher proportion of tax revenue to stay in the region (if the ethnic group is advantaged); more control over its culture; and so on. Some concessions concern just one issue, such as policy concerning the language of instruction in schools; others are more multifaceted, such as decentralist changes in the state's administrative structure; some concessions transfer real governing power to the group or region, others not.[86] The bottom line is that bargaining takes place in smoke-filled rooms, not on the smoky ruins of the battlefield. These situations, seen only in states in comfortable, optimistic, postsecurity environments, result in either autonomy where the minority finds the concessions at least momentarily acceptable (as in Quebec and Scotland), or full-blown independence where it does not (as in Slovakia).

When the state perceives a likelihood of future war, by contrast, it is impelled to use coercion. If there is limited third-party support for the secessionists, then it will adopt the moderately violent strategy of policing. This strategy includes the use of the state's armed apparatus, but not to any great extent. The state may imprison or even physically beat separatist leaders, harass political parties at their headquarters, forbid large meetings and protest rallies, or shut down radio, television, or other media access the secessionists may enjoy. It is a coercive strategy but one with a relatively light footprint; one should not expect substantial casualties under policing. The state may also use concessions to isolate the moderate elements of the movement from the more radical[87]—the absence of significant third-party support renders the threat muted enough for the state to offer concessions as a tactical, if not strategic, measure. However, outright secession or anything even close, such as significant transfers of power, will be completely off the table. As a strategy, policing ensures that the movement does not gather momentum toward independence, already ruled out by the state fearful of the future, while keeping levels of violence at relatively acceptable levels. The major difference between policing and negotiations is that the state is not prepared to give up on territory without a semblance of a fight. However, unlike in situations where there is major outside support, the threat is relatively manageable. Because states prefer to keep violence at relatively moderate levels to avoid the potential of sowing deep resentment, they do not escalate to high levels of repression. Examples of policing include India's strategy in Assam between 1987 and 1990 (chapter 3) or the Israeli response to the first intifada (chapter 5).

Once a group starts receiving moderate support from outside powers, especially if it is in the form of military aid, the equation changes. Now the

level of threat the state faces increases appreciably, mainly because the palette of resources the nationalists enjoy becomes more dangerous. This causes the state to up the repressive ante, both to deal with the threat as an aggregation of material capabilities but also to send a message that fifth columns are not tolerated. In such a situation, the state would practice militarization, using state forces and violence against training camps and population centers. The escalation to militarization is a safe indicator that the state is fighting a civil war. Militarization entails the use of the state's military and paramilitary forces, but largely against violent or militant organizations or those suspected of directly aiding rebels. This is not to suggest that states practicing militarization always use perfectly legal or ethical policy instruments; torture and enforced disappearances would be consistent with militarization. For this to be the case, however, such policies must be practiced on a relatively limited scale, and not be pursued as a matter of official or quasi-official state policy. Militarization is often seen in so-called simmering conflicts,[88] where the state strikes sporadically against purely military targets and then retreats, at least in a military sense. Typical cases of militarization include Pakistani policy in Balochistan in the mid-1970s (chapter 2) and India in Punjab after 1987 (chapter 3).

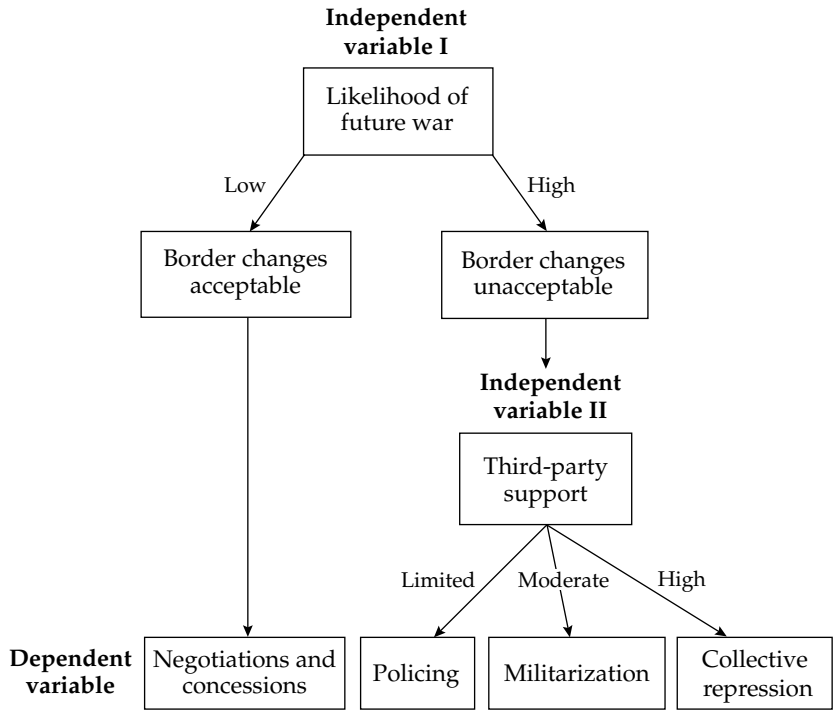

Figure 1. State decision-making when confronted by separatists

Finally, if the ethnic group enjoys high levels of external support, then the state would respond with collective repression. This is the harshest strategy a state can adopt. This policy includes the use of indiscriminate violence, including massacres against civilians; heavy-handed punishment, such as the burning of entire villages, forced migrations, and ethnic cleansing, as seen in the Bengali (chapter 2) or Armenian (chapter 4) genocides; and draconian legal instruments, such as emergency laws that grant the state the authority to imprison enemies of the state for long periods of time with no due process, as witnessed in India's conduct in Kashmir (chapter 3). Though genocide is not a necessary outcome of such a policy, huge numbers of deaths—in the tens or hundreds of thousands—can be common if the state chooses collective repression. This strategy demonstrates the state's lethality and sheer capability for inflicting widespread violence and pain. When states adopt collective repression, they are usually cited for vast human rights abuses and leave devastation and destruction in their wake. The severity of the external threat is what compels states to escalate to this strategy. First, for materialist reasons, the ethnic group becomes essentially as powerful as the external patron, given it is literally fighting alongside it. In such a situation, a state cannot hold anything back. Second, this situation sees the starkest consequences of a logic of betrayal, with the central government intent on revenge and sending a message. Angry leaders usually pave the way for angry militaries and paramilitaries, with the result that the violence on the ground is often pathological and indiscriminate. Figure 1 graphically represents the theoretical argument I proffer here.