Determining the Causes of Irredentism: Logit Analyses of Minorities at Risk Data from the 1980s and 1990s

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Irredentism and secessionism have been important causes of international conflict in the 1990s, yet few have considered why ethnic groups desire union with kin elsewhere or want to become independent. Why do groups desire independence rather than union with kin, or vice versa? We consider five distinct explanations: the nature of the group itself; characteristics of the group's kin; contagion processes; ethnic security dilemmas; and the end of the cold war. Using logit, we analyze data from the Minorities at Risk data set. Our findings support elements of the conventional wisdom: Ethnic kin influence irredentism, and violence between a group and its host state increases secessionism. Contrary to current debates, groups that are more concentrated are more likely to be secessionist. Further, some factors are less important than usually argued: relative size, a group's ethnic distinctiveness, economic and political differences, regime type, and economic growth.

Political movements to unite the territory of an ethnic group with the territories of other segments, known as irredentism, have caused some of the most significant conflicts of the 1990s. The effort to reunite "lost territories" and bring together ethnic kin has caused conflict in the Balkans: the wars for Greater Serbia and a Greater Croatia; the Kosovo conflict's potential to spawn a Greater Albania, as well as Greek fears of Macedonian irredentism. A potential Kurdistan threatens Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. Irredentist conflict in the Kashmir threatens a nuclear confrontation.

Why do some groups seek to reunite with their homelands and others do not? It is most striking that Serbia strongly supported Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia, but not those in Slovenia or Macedonia. While the existence of irredentist movements in the former was largely a consequence of Serbia's policies, it still raises the interesting question: Why do some groups seek to be united with ethnic groups elsewhere while others do not? If Kashmir wins its independence from India, is it likely to unite with Pakistan? Are the Albanians of Kosovo likely to unite with

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Albania or become an independent country? Are the Tamils of Sri Lanka likely to desire union with the Tamils of India in a new country? In the future, are the Kurds going to be irredentists, secessionists, or both?

Much work has focused on whether a state will assist or annex its kin, but scholars have ignored why groups desire to be joined with their ethnic kin elsewhere or become independent—this study's focus.[1] Specifically, our analyses compare the sources of group desires to become independent (secession) with the determinants of desires either to join a nearby state dominated by ethnic kin (which we call "mother country" irredentism) or to join kin to create a new state (which we call "Kurdish-style" irredentism).[2] Further, existing quantitative work has focused on ethnic conflict in general (Gurr 1993a/1993b, 2000) rather than separatism.

Horowitz (1991) argues that we should consider secession and irredentism together since they are sometimes alternatives to each other.[3] Therefore, we consider whether the forces that cause ethnic groups to seek independence are similar to the factors causing such groups to seek annexation. By using different dependent variables, one for secessionist desires and another for irredentist designs, we may determine whether the two phenomena really are alternatives and, if so, what causes a group to pursue one or the other form of separatism.

To approach these questions, we develop hypotheses about why groups choose irredentism or secessionism, based on the Yugoslav experience and literature in the field and some of our own previous work (Ayres and Saideman 2000; Saideman 1998b). The existing literature and recent history suggest five explanations: group demographics; the existence, behavior, and power of the group's kin; contagion processes; ethnic security dilemmas; and the end of empires. The next section outlines these logics and specifies testable hypotheses. We then test various hypotheses using the Minorities at Risk [MAR] data set. Finally, we suggest the implications of our results.

Explaining Irredentism

Group Characteristics

One contrast between Slovenia and Macedonia, on one hand, and Bosnia and Croatia, on the other, relates to size.[4] The number of Serbs in the former repub-

[1] To be clear, our focus is on ethnic secessionist movements and ethnic irredentist movements, so our analysis would, if focusing on the 1860s, omit the American Civil War. We believe that the focus on ethnic separatism is warranted, given the consequences, both local and international, that these movements have had.

[2] We do not address the desire for autonomy in this article. Our focus is on the forms of separatism most likely to cause both domestic and international conflict. While the search for autonomy can cause domestic conflict, it is ultimately less of a problem for outside actors.

[3] Horowitz's (1985) own definitions of secession and irredentism focus on completely different kinds of actors: in his framework, ethnic groups secede, whereas irredentism is when a state tries to retrieve its ethnic kin.

[4] Another difference is that Slovenia and Macedonia play a much lesser role in Serbian history and mythology, but these dynamics are difficult to test quantitatively.

lics, both in absolute terms and relative to the total population, was much smaller than in the latter. Smaller groups may be less likely to be irredentist or secessionist because the likelihood for success and the consequences of failure are in part related to size. Small groups are less likely to win on the battlefield and are more easily repressed by a resentful government.[5]

Hypothesis 1a: Relatively larger groups are more likely to be irredentist or secessionist.

Hypothesis 1b: Larger groups (in absolute terms) are more likely to be irredentist or secessionist.

The placement of populations may also matter (Byman 1997). A separatist group lays claim to a particular territory and usually resides in that territory. Secession is about claiming independence for a territory, so it is hard for widely dispersed groups to pursue this option. Likewise, if a group is dispersed, it is quite difficult to unite with its kin elsewhere. Thus:

Hypothesis 2: A more widely dispersed group is less likely to be irredentist or secessionist.

A classic argument is that the more distinct a group is compared to others in the same host state, the greater the likelihood ethnic conflict will develop (Lipset 1960, 211–25). The general notion is that cross-cutting cleavages engender fluid coalitions, whereas coinciding cleavages result in deep divisions between groups. A different way to phrase this is that ethnicity drives ethnic conflict, so the more distinct groups are, the more likely they are to engage in conflict.[6] Therefore:

Hypothesis 3: Groups that are more ethnically distinct are more likely to be irredentist or secessionist.

Ethnic Kin's Influence

Another traditional approach has been to emphasize a group's nearby kin. Scholars have examined some aspects of this question; Saideman (1998a) focuses on how ethnic ties and political competition interact to cause leaders of states to support irredentist movements or even to invade other states. McMahon (1998) takes a similar line of argument but stresses the constraints imposed by the international system to consider under what conditions states will initiate irreden-

[5] Of course, the logic of collective action suggests that smaller groups may be easier to mobilize. For the classic text, see Olson 1965. For a discussion of collective action in mobilizing opposition to the government, see Lichbach 1995.

[6] Primordial arguments, which dominate media accounts of ethnic conflict and are still present in academic discussions (Stack 1997), suggest that the ethnic differences are more important than other variables.

tist crises.[7] Weiner (1971) uses as his inspiration the Balkans as well to develop a better understanding of irredentism. He asserts that an ethnic minority is most likely to become irredentist if its ethnic kin are in the majority in a neighboring state (1971, 674). If the ethnic kin are not in the majority, then the group will be secessionist.

Hypothesis 4a: Groups whose kin dominate a nearby state are more likely to be irredentist.

Hypothesis 4b: Groups whose kin do not dominate a nearby state are more likely to be secessionist.

Chazan (1991a) notes that a second kind of irredentism can occur: An ethnic group that resides in multiple states but does not rule anywhere may want to join the segments to form a new state. The obvious example would be the Kurds—hence, our label Kurdish-style irredentism. Therefore, the behavior of ethnic kin elsewhere is crucial. Thus,

Hypothesis 5: Groups having kin elsewhere that are separatist will be more likely to be irredentist or secessionist.[8]

Further, the greater the number of segments of an ethnic group existing in other states, the more likely that group is to get help from at least some of their kin and the more likely it is to desire a tighter relationship with at least one segment. The logic here is simply that the more states in which an ethnic group's kin resides, the more opportunities exist for at least one supporter to develop and one potential homeland with which to reunite:[9]

Hypothesis 6: Groups with more segments in other states are more likely to be secessionist or irredentist.

Contagion

Analysts have argued that ethnic conflict spreads across state boundaries (Lake and Rothchild 1998).[10] The mechanisms can vary: ethnic conflict directly causes other conflicts nearby (spillover), or it may cause more conflict as actors elsewhere learn from the example set by the original combatants (demonstration effects) (Vasquez 1992, 162). An example of the former would be refugee flows that destabilize neighboring states. For instance, the Kosovar refugees threat-

[7] Like McMahon, Carment and James consider various features of irredentist crises (Carment 1993; Carment and James 1995, 1997). However, they focus on whether irredentist conflicts are more likely to be violent, what kinds of political systems are more likely to engage in irredentist foreign policies, and what kinds of crisis management techniques are used.

[8] This hypothesis is also a logical implication of the contagion argument presented later. If one's kin is actively separatist, this will have an impact upon the group. Thus, one would expect ethnic groups near separatist kin to be more likely to be separatists themselves.

[9] There may be countervailing pressures—groups that have segments in more states may have more enemies: the governments of the states where they reside. We are grateful to a reviewer for noting this.

[10] Clearly, fears of contagion motivated NATO policy towards Kosovo in 1999.

ened Macedonia by altering the demographic balance of Albanians and Macedonians. Demonstration effects refer to a particular conflict causing activists elsewhere to develop new strategies (Hill, Rothchild, and Cameron 1998). They can also prompt new calculations regarding the chances of success and the likely costs, or simply increase the salience of ethnic identity (Kuran 1998).

The empirical literature focuses on how rebellion encourages rebellion, and protest encourages protest (Gurr 1993a). Still, it is logical that conflict in neighboring states may increase a group's desire to secede or join with another state: by raising the salience of ethnic identity, by increasing the fears of the host regime (and perhaps causing an over-reaction), and through refugee flows and the like.[11] This suggests the following:

Hypothesis 7: Anti-regime activity by kindred groups in neighboring states increases the likelihood that a group is irredentist or secessionist.

Hypothesis 8: If a group that resides in a highly conflictual region, then it is likely to be irredentist or secessionist.

Ethnic Security Dilemmas

A very different argument focuses on internal dynamics. The ethnic security dilemma, imported from international relations,[12] stresses the competition between ethnic groups for control of the government if its impartiality is in doubt (Saideman 1998b).[13] If ethnic groups are relatively secure—because the state is viewed as impartial—then groups will not compete for control of the state. If they are insecure, they will seek either to control the state, create a new state they can control (secession), or join a state where their ethnic group is more secure (irredentism).

What makes an ethnic group insecure? If other groups within the state or the state itself threaten a group's political, economic, or physical security, then the group will be insecure. Groups having less control over or access to the government will be more insecure and seek other means to ensure their security, including secession or irredentism.

Hypothesis 9: Politically disadvantaged groups are more likely to be irredentist or secessionist.

It might be argued that democracies are better equipped to handle ethnic conflict. Established democracies pride themselves on their ability to manage plu-

[11] Elsewhere, we have found that contagion has decidedly mixed effects on separatism (Ayres and Saideman 2000).

[12] See Jervis 1976, and Waltz 1979. For the first application to ethnic conflict, see Posen 1993.

[13] Posen's conceptualization (1993) focuses on the translation of traditional military-security variables to domestic politics in the absence of a state, which is different from the security dilemma presented here.

ralism peacefully.[14] On the other hand, ethnic groups in democracies may be disenfranchised (African-Americans in the U.S. before 1965, to name one), and political competition within democracies may be at the expense of minorities. Indeed, an essential element of ethnic security dilemma arguments is that competition between politicians within a particular ethnic group exacerbates the ethnic security dilemma (Saideman 1998b). This suggests that contrary to democratic rhetoric, residing in a democracy may actually make separatism more likely by giving potential separatists tools with which to mobilize and potential incentives for doing so.

Hypothesis 10: Groups in democracies are more likely to be irredentist or secessionist.

When group identities coincide with economic differences, groups will feel more insecure. To gain control over their economic destinies, they will seek to become more autonomous, increasing the likelihood of secession or irredentism. Thus, the economic component of the security dilemma produces a prediction in common with Hypothesis 9:

Hypothesis 11: Economically disadvantaged groups are more likely to be irredentist or secessionist.

In addition to economic disparities, negative economic trends may cause ethnic groups to conflict with each other over increasingly scarce resources. Positive economic trends, in theory, permit governments to satisfy the concerns of all groups.

Hypothesis 12: Groups in states with higher levels of economic growth are less likely to be irredentist or secessionist.[15]

One aspect of security is a factor discussed earlier: size. Smaller groups are more likely to be insecure, as they are outmanned and probably outgunned. Numbers matter in any violent conflict, so smaller groups should want to be in a different state. This hypothesis predicts behavior that is contrary to the Yugoslav experience and, therefore, to Hypothesis 1a.

There is another aspect to physical security: the existence of ongoing violence as a threat to group members. Groups facing violence will seek independence or union so that they are no longer in the same state as their attackers.

[14] Scholars have argued that democratization increases ethnic conflict (Snyder 1999), but recent research actually suggests that democratization decreases ethnic conflict and that established regimes, including established democracies, are more likely to have severe ethnic conflict (Saideman et al. 1999).

[15] Perhaps the relationship between economic growth and ethnic conflict is not linear but curvilinear—that is, rapid growth and deep declines both foster more conflict than stable economic situations. We assumed a linear relationship since that is the simplest starting point, but we also tried other nonlinear alternatives. The results are reported below.

Hypothesis 13: A group facing more conflict is more likely to be irredentist or secessionist.

A final prediction of the ethnic security dilemma is that internal contagious processes are likely: Once a group in a state tries to secede, others are likely to do so as well. The possible or actual exit of one group changes the balance of political power so that some groups become less secure (Croatia in a Yugoslavia without Slovenia, Bosnia in a Yugoslavia without either Slovenia or Croatia). They may then be left with a choice of being more dominated by the government or separating. Further, each group in a state faces the same actor—the government—so government weakness or tolerance can then be perceived by other groups as applying more broadly. Thus, the secession of East Timor has encouraged the Acehnese. Hence,

Hypothesis 14: If other groups in the state are seceding, then the group is more likely to desire secession or independence.

The End of Empire

Chazan, among others, argues that irredentism has been correlated with "major political reordering . . . [and] usually tied to the breakdown of empires" (Chazan 1991b, 143).[16] This suggests an obvious explanation—that recent irredentism and secessionism are largely a function of the collapse of the Soviet Empire, both within the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. Thus:

Hypothesis 15: Groups in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are more likely to be irredentist or secessionist.[17]

Data and Methods

We use Phases 1 and 3 of the Minorities At Risk [MAR] data set to test the hypotheses derived above.[18] MAR, unlike other existing data sets, uses as its unit of analysis the ethnopolitical group, permitting us to analyze relationships between group attributes and demands. To determine what may cause the desire

[16] For several reasons why the collapse of empire should lead to more ethnic conflict, see Byman and Van Evera (1998).

[17] This is also a logical implication of the security dilemma since the decline of an empire increases the competition between groups for the remnants of the empire's resources, as well as stimulating competition within ethnic groups for leadership.

[18] Using both data sets is advantageous for several reasons. First, Phase 1 focuses on the 1980s (Gurr 1993b), while Phase 3 focuses on the 1990s (Gurr 2000). This allows us to consider whether the dynamics of irredentism and secession have changed due to the end of the cold war and disintegrations of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. Second, the breakups of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia caused certain groups to become ruling majorities and other groups to face greater risks, so the two data sets do not contain identical observations. For instance, only 11 of the 24 groups considered irredentist in the 1980s are coded as such in the 1990s. By using both data sets, we are dealing essentially with a larger number of observations than if we only used one. We chose not to pool the two sets of data since several of the variables are coded and indexed differently in the two data sets.

to be independent and the desire to be reunited with one's ethnic kin, we use two dependent variables. For each data set, we recoded the variable indicating whether a group seeks union elsewhere into a dichotomous variable, *Irredentism*, so that a value of one indicates that group desire for union with kin elsewhere is at least somewhat salient.[19] This indicator does not distinguish between groups seeking union with another country and those seeking to form a new state along with ethnic kin residing in other states (the Kurdish form of irredentism). We performed additional analyses with separate indicators for mother country irredentism and Kurdish-style irredentism. However, we do not report them here for the sake of brevity, although we refer to these analyses when relevant below.

We recoded the salience of group desire for independence into a dichotomous indicator of secessionist inclinations, *Secessionism*, as we did for irredentism.[20] For the operationalization of our independent variables, see the appendix. To explore the possible causes of irredentism and secessionism, we used logit since our dependent variables are dichotomous. Table 1 depicts the logit analyses of irredentist and secessionist desires in the 1980s and 1994–1995.[21]

We use CLARIFY, a program written for STATA by Tomz, Wittenberg, and King (1998), to determine how changes in the significant independent variables increase or decrease the probability of irredentist and secessionist desires, as Table 2 illustrates.[22]

Interpreting Our Findings

The logit models for the two periods and two dependent variables produced some consistent results; however, there were some interesting differences among

[19] We chose to re-code the variable with "less salient" as the threshold for irredentism—rather than highly salient—to provide greater variance in the dependent variable since the variable is already skewed toward zero. We did the same for the secessionism variable.

[20] More than a few groups are coded as having irredentist and secessionist desires, including the Basques of France and Spain, Macedonia's Albanians, Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia, the Kurds, and the Kashmiris during 1994–1995. We included these groups in our analyses because dropping them from either would be problematic. Groups that are either ambivalent or ambiguous about their desires (or are hard to code) would be interesting to study more intensively in the future.

[21] Our dependent variables are coded for the entire 1980s in Phase 1 and for biennial periods in Phase 3: 1990–1991, 1992–1993, 1994–1995. We use only the last time period for the second set of analyses as it is the most current. Analyses of the earlier 1990s periods produce similar results, with the notable exceptions that the groups in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are more likely to be secessionist or irredentist and that rebellion is significant for irredentist desires.

We should also note here that not all of the observations are technically independent since many countries have more than one minority at risk. The Soviet Union contained 20 different ethnic groups at risk in the 1980s, and 11 such groups inhabit Russia in the 1990s. We address this by using STATA's cluster command, which adjusts the standard errors for clustering on each country.

[22] This program uses Monte Carlo simulations to produce probabilities and allows us to understand what happens to the dependent variable when we alter the value of particular independent variables. See King, Tomz, and Wittenberg (1998).

TABLE 1

Logit Analyses of Irredentist and Secessionist Desires, 1980s and 1994–1995

Concept Group	Variables (Values are logit coefficients)	Irredentism 1980s	Irredentism 1994–1995	Secessionism 1980s	Secessionism 1994–1995
Group Demographics	Relative Group Size	−.24	2.36	1.70	.37
	Absolute Size of Group (in millions)	−.05	−.13	.09**	−.01
	Concentration of the Group	.20	.54	.67**	.73**
	How Ethnically Distinct Is Group?	−.14	−.24*	.10	.10
Ethnic Kin	Is Kin Separatist?	3.09**	2.20**	2.11*	1.50**
	Number of Segments Elsewhere	.27	.39	−.32	−.66**
	Does Group's Ethnic Kin Dominate Neighboring State?	2.39*	.65[a]	.60	.91
Contagion	Protest by Kin	−.31	.32*	−.43	−.14
	Protest in Region	.40	4.78**	.65**	2.97*
Ethnic Security Dilemmas	Economic Differentials	.12	−.08	−.44	.01
	Political Differentials	−.31	−.12	.76	.12
	Regime Type of Host State	−.12	.07	.004	.15
	Host's Economic Growth	−.27	.05	.22	.04
	Level of Rebellion	.14	.16	.23*	.49**
	Other Separatists in Host	−.41*	.06	−.38	−.01
End of Empire	Eastern Europe and (Former) USSR	−1.08	1.38	−3.53**	1.10
	Constant	−3.70	−13.47**	−9.22**	−10.32*
	Correctly Predicted	92.63%	91.79%	91.05%	86.47%
	Reduction of Error	36.35%	29.19%	31.98%	33.32%
	Log likelihood	−43.23	−44.40	−42.58	−70.22
	Pseudo-r squared	.3652	.4021	.4245	.3274
	Number of Cases	190	207	190	207
	Significance	.0185	0.0000	.0000	0.0000

* = $p <$. 05, ** = $p < .01$

[a]The less significant finding here is produced by the combination of strongly positive relationship with irredentism directed towards a mother country and the strongly negative relationship with irredentism directed towards creating a new state consisting of kin from other states.

the four analyses.[23] We focus first on the consistent findings. Then we discuss those findings, suggesting real differences between the two phenomena and between the 1980s and 1990s. Finally, we address the dogs that did not bark and other interesting findings.

[23] We tested for multicollinearity through bivariate correlations between the various independent variables and found no highly correlated variables once we dropped ISEGREB and ICONREB from the analysis. Focusing on the diffusion or contagion of rebellion, rather than of protest, produces insignificant correlations for these variables and stronger significance for some of the other findings. We present the protest variables because they provide a stronger test of the argument—if protest influences ethnic conflict nearby, then ethnic conflict is quite contagious.

TABLE 2

Influence of Significant Variables Upon Irredentist and Secessionist Desires

If all variables are at their mean value, but we change:	Change in Probability of Irredentist Desires, 1980s	Change in Probability of Irredentist Desires, 1990s	Change in Probability of Secessionist Desires, 1980s	Change in Probability of Secessionist Desires, 1990s
Absolute size of group from min to max			67.0%	
Concentration of Group from min to max			5.4%	16.3%
No ethnic differences to max		−8.4%		
No separatist kin to the existence of such kin	32.5%	13.4%	12.4%	20.7%
Having no kin elsewhere to having kin in the max number of states				−20.5%
Having no kin dominating nearby to having such nearby	23.7%	2.6%		
No segments protesting to max protesting elsewhere		6.2%		
Min regional protest to max		18.8%	26.1%	26.0%
Level of rebellion from min to max			15.2%	61.7%
Other separatists in Host	−6.5%			
Group "moves" to a state in Eastern Europe or Former Soviet Union			−4.7%	

Explaining Separatism: Consistent Findings

Overall, the combined models performed fairly well in predicting secessionism and irredentism in the 1980s and 1990s. These models account for a significant portion of the variance, a difficult task given the skewed nature of our dependent variables (see tables in the appendix). Given this overall performance, what can we say about the particular hypotheses?

First, ethnic kin seem to play a powerful role in influencing the desires of ethnic groups. The existence of separatist kin provided strong, positive, and significant results. Specifically, in the 1980s, if there was active separatism among a group's kin elsewhere, the likelihood of the group desiring union increased by nearly one-third, although this variable's impact is smaller in the 1990s. To be irredentist, a group must join with another state or with ethnic kin who are seeking independence or union themselves. Thus, the fact that this variable provides strong, positive correlations with irredentism is not surprising since separatist kin is necessary for Kurdish-style irredentism. Separatist kin also increases

the likelihood that a group is secessionist, suggesting that secessionism may be contagious at least among ethnic kin.

Second, neither political nor economic discrimination seems to be as important as expected. These findings suggest that differences in political and economic power and security do not directly drive the desires of groups to secede, contradicting the security dilemma argument and the lessons we gleaned from the Yugoslav experience.

Similarly, groups in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were not significantly more likely to desire independence or secession in the 1980s or in the 1990s. Indeed, in the 1980s, the relationship is significant but in the "wrong" direction, as groups in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were about 5% less likely to desire secession. This suggests two possible explanations. First, smaller groups were more secure in the old system when larger minorities did not have the opportunity to prey upon them. Georgia posed less of a threat to the Abkhaz and the Ossetians when the Soviet Union limited what regional governments could do. Second, the old authoritarian order was better at repressing groups so that they could not organize or express their demands. Given the upheaval and uncertainty in this region in the 1990s, we should see groups there having a much greater likelihood of seeking independence or trying to redraw boundaries created by the Soviet Union. Instead, other factors seem to be capturing the existing variation.

Third, some external events seem to matter while others are less important. Protests by one's ethnic kin slightly increases the likelihood that a group will desire union with kin in the years 1994–1995. Otherwise, groups are not strongly encouraged by the protest of their kin elsewhere. One feature of our analysis suggests that the contagion argument might still apply. Groups in regions characterized by the highest levels of protest are more than 18% more likely to desire secession in either period and irredentism during 1994–1995. The protest of other groups in the region may raise the salience of one's identity. However, since this variable is coded by region, it may bring into the analysis other factors besides the level of protest. Other differences among regions may be driving the correlation rather than protests.

Secessionism versus Irredentism

A few variables distinguish irredentism from secessionism: dominant kin nearby, group concentration, and rebellion. First, a group whose kin dominate a neighboring state has a significantly higher probability of irredentism.[24] This finding is as expected since the existence of a mother country is a necessary condition for irredentism directed at another state, rather than at other groups. For secession, the coefficients are positive but do not reach statistical significance. Having kin dominate nearby does not discourage groups from seeking independence.

[24] In the 1990s, this finding is not significant because Kurdish-style irredentism (toward other segments, not other countries) is negatively correlated with the existence of dominant kin nearby.

Second, group concentration matters for secessionist desires but not for irredentism. We expected the former result but not the latter. Relatively concentrated groups are significantly more likely to desire independence. This makes sense as secessionists lay claims to a particular slice of territory. This finding runs counter to assertions that intermixing of groups causes greater insecurity and more conflict (Posen 1993). However, the failure of group concentration to be significant in our analyses of irredentism is quite strange. Most irredentist groups in the 1980s analysis are highly concentrated, including the Armenians of Azerbaijan, the Albanians of Yugoslavia, the Kurds, the Kashmiris, and the Somalis of Ethiopia and Kenya. The least concentrated irredentist groups in both periods are Catholics of Northern Ireland, which suggests that the presence of dominant kin matter more than the distribution of the kin in the territory that is to be redeemed. Group concentration falls short of our standard of significance for irredentism as $p < .085$ in the years 1994–1995, but again many of the groups considered to be irredentist are concentrated. Perhaps group concentration is more important as part of the mobilization process for secessionists since they cannot depend as much on outsiders to help them, whereas the impetus of many irredentist desires may come from the mother country.

Third, rebellion consistently matters for secessionism, increasing the likelihood that a group will desire independence, and as Table 2 indicates, rebellion's influence can be considerable. The problem with rebellion as a cause of these desires is that it can also be a consequence.[25] Groups wanting independence are probably more likely to be repressed, increasing the level of conflict between the group and the state. Here we have a severe chicken and egg problem—what comes first: the desire to secede or the existence of violence between the state and the group? Only time series analyses or case studies can get at this.

1980s versus 1994–1995

Because the end of the cold war—specifically the Soviet Union and Yugoslav disintegrations—may have altered the dynamics of separatism, if contagion arguments are correct, we need to consider how the 1980s analyses differed from the 1990s analyses. Surprisingly, there were relatively few differences between the two decades.

Absolute size is correlated with secessionism in the 1980s but not in the 1990s. Because the end of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia created smaller states and caused much migration away from conflict, groups left behind were smaller but desired independence, including the Abkhaz and Adzhars of Georgia, the Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia, Bosnian Croats, and the Chechens. Thus, the change in results here is likely to be a product of the end of the cold war.

Similarly, protest by kin is positively and significantly correlated with irredentism in the 1990s but is negatively though less than significantly correlated with

[25] Another possibility is that whatever causes rebellion may also cause secessionism.

irredentism in the 1980s. This might be a product of democratization and political transitions as groups in Ethiopia, Taiwan, and Yugoslavia are scored as having kin who did not protest much in the 1980s, whereas groups in the former Soviet Union tend to both be irredentist and have kin engaged in protest in the 1990s.

Likewise, groups in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were less likely to desire secession in 1980s but not in the 1990s as the governments of this region lost their ability and desire to repress their ethnic groups.

The consistency of many of the results from the 1980s to the 1990s suggests that the events in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union did not radically alter the politics of ethnic conflict as some feared.[26] This provides a challenge to contagion arguments—secessionists' success in the former Communist bloc should have encouraged more secessionism.

Silent Dogs and Surprising Findings

Some important dogs did not bark—relative group size, regime type, economic growth, political and economic disparities, number of segments elsewhere, and ethnic distinctiveness. The apparent importance of group size in the Yugoslav case seems to be an artifact of other dynamics. Regime type did not play a significant role in any of the analyses, a finding that actually challenges those who might argue that democracy is not more likely to increase these kinds of demands. The security dilemma suggests that it is important to consider economic growth because countries growing economically would be better able to satisfy their ethnic groups than countries facing economic declines. This study fails to bear out that intuition.[27] Likewise, differences in economic and political opportunities did not play a strong role, counter to our expectations.

The number of segments of an ethnic group in adjoining countries is only significantly correlated with secessionism in the 1990s. The notion here was that the more countries in which a group's segments resided, the more chances for support and the greater the potential targets for "re-union." If secessionism and irredentism are truly alternatives to one another, then perhaps one of the variables pushing a group to desire one or the other is whether irredentism is at all feasible. The absence of segments means that a group, by definition, cannot be irredentist.[28] Further, as we noted above, the more fragmented a group is, the more likely it is that many states will oppose it. The lack of findings for irredentism suggests that having kin elsewhere is not sufficient; they must be sep-

[26] Analyses frequently used Balkanization and Pandora's Box to suggest that the events in the early 1990s would lead to an explosion of ethnic conflict, which did not occur (Gurr 2000).

[27] We specified economic growth's influence in a variety of ways (squared, cubed, and logged), which produced coefficients that were occasionally more significant but not in any systematic pattern.

[28] In the 1980s, the Germans of the Soviet Union and the Tripuras of India are the only two groups coded as both irredentist and lacking segments in adjoining countries. We recoded the Tripuras as not being irredentist since we have reason to believe that they were miscoded. In the 1990s, one group fits this strange category: the Ingush of Russia.

aratist or dominate their state of residence—for which we control. This analysis can not distinguish between these possible explanations.

Finally, ethnic differences may actually have the opposite relationship from that expected, though it falls short of significance except in the years 1994–1995 for irredentism. In the 1990s, groups with fewer ethnic differences with their host state are more likely to desire union with kin elsewhere. Examples of such groups are the Basques of France and Spain, the Palestinians of Jordan and Lebanon, Russians in Latvia, Estonia, and the Ukraine. This finding contradicts primordial arguments that focus on the power of ethnic differences.

Overall, our findings suggest that irredentism and secessionism are in some ways alternative choices, and that the situation—political and demographic—in which groups find themselves has a lot to do with which one they will choose.[29] A question for future study is whether groups choose one option or another before assessing the current environment or whether groups decide first that separatism is necessary, and then determine which form is more appropriate.

Conclusions

While the complexity of our results and of separatism defies simplification, we can illustrate our findings with Figure 1, depicting some of the commonalities and differences between the sources of irredentist and secessionists desires.

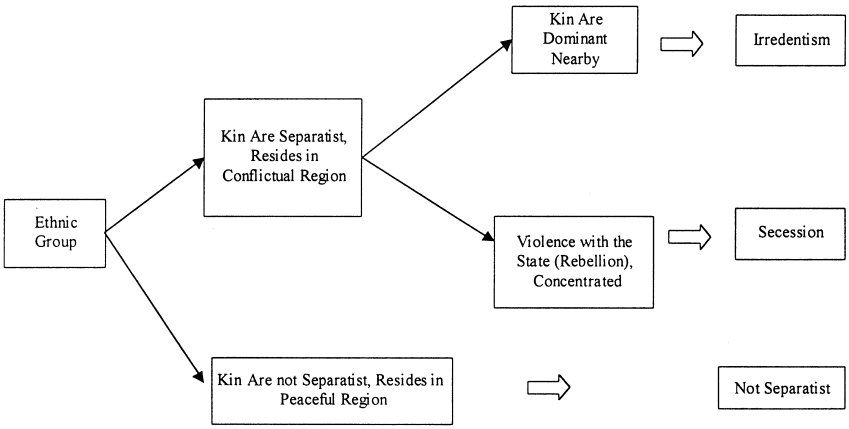
This is perhaps the first cross-national quantitative analysis to consider what causes a group to desire union with its mother country and one of the very few analyses to treat secessionism and irredentism as alternatives. Consequently, we have more questions than answers. We have determined some of the important conditions for irredentist desires to develop—dominance or separatist behavior of a group's kin. Similarly, we have found that group concentration, separatist kin, regional conflict, and degree of conflict with the state all make secessionist desires more likely. However, political causes or motives seem to be lacking. Political and economic differentials and other factors do not seem to matter. Although irredentism and secessionism have some commonalities—separatism of kin and perhaps regional protest—we probably should not think of them purely as alternatives to each other.

Returning to Yugoslavia, it seems that the relative size of groups mattered less than their concentration or mother countries nearby. The Krajina Serbs, Bosnian Croats, and Bosnian Serbs were relatively concentrated and could depend upon mother countries nearby to give them vital support. Likewise, the upheavals in Albania and its availability as a base of operations clearly facilitated the Kosovo Liberation Army's efforts.

[29] Suggesting that there are choices to make implies that agenda setting by elites and others may matter. We could not address framing and agenda setting on these issues in this article, but they would be an interesting topic for future qualitative work.

FIGURE 1

Determining Irredentism and Secessionism



Which groups are likely to be irredentist in the future? Given our results, if a group's kin either becomes actively separatist or gains control of a nearby state, then that group is more likely to become irredentist. For instance, if Hungarians in Serbia became irredentist, this might influence Hungarians in Slovenia or Romania. The Uzbeks of Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan are likely to influence each other. Clearly, the most significant irredentist threat currently would be the Russians of the former Soviet Union. They exist in many states, and they are frequently concentrated. This region is characterized by relatively low or moderate levels of protest. If ethnic groups in other parts of the region begin to protest, these groups are more likely to become irredentist. Of course, in all cases, the policies of the nearby mother country are also critical.

Our intention was to analyze cross-national data to test competing beliefs about separatism. Now that we have determined some of the necessary conditions, we need to go back to case studies to determine the causal connections and the causal directions, given the endogeneity problems we have: Does separatism of kin cause a group to be separatist or vice versa; and does rebellion cause separatism or the reverse? Case studies should focus on secessionist movements where irredentism was a possibility and see if any movements have switched between irredentist and secessionist desires over time, and if so, what caused the group to change its goals.

Appendix:

Data Sources:

(Data obtained from Phase 1 and Phase 3 (version 899) of the Minorities at Risk data set, unless otherwise noted.)

Relative group size: Found in both Phase 1 and Phase 3 of Minorities at Risk data sets.

Absolute group size: Phase 1 contains various estimates for group populations, so we used the one entitled best population estimate for the 1980s for Phase 1. For the 1994–1995 analysis, we used MAR's 1995 population.

Group concentration: Ranges from widely dispersed to concentrated in one region.

Ethnic distinctiveness: Indexes linguistic, cultural, religious, and racial differentials between the group in question and other groups.

Separatism of kin: Coded one if the group has any actively separatist kin elsewhere.

Number of segments: The number of adjoining countries inhabited by segments of the group.

Existence of dominant kin nearby: Coded as one if a segment of the group is the dominant or majority group in an adjoining state. Phase 3 does not contain this variable, so we coded it ourselves with raw MAR data and 1980s data.

Protest by kin elsewhere: Measures the level of protest by segments of group in other countries. Protest is based on the size of the demonstrations. Therefore, this variable is coded as the largest protest by international segment of an ethnic group.

Regional protests: The mean protest score for all groups (not just kin) within one region. MAR codes the following as distinct regions: advanced industrial democracies (including Japan, Australia, and New Zealand), Eastern Europe and USSR, Asia, Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America. We could have used rebellion by kin and rebellion in the region. Because of potential collinearity problems of each with protest scores, we chose to use the contagion variables focusing on protest. The results are relatively similar if we use the rebellion contagion indicators.

Political differentials: Indexes a variety of differences that could exist between the group in question and the state within which it resides. Different groups within the same state may receive different values for this variable as some groups may be advantaged while others are disadvantaged. Ranges from -2 for advantaged groups to 4 for extremely disadvantaged, focusing on differential access to power and to civil service; differential recruitment to the coercive arms of government; different rights to voting and organizing; and different legal protections.

Economic differentials: Coded similarly to political differentials but focuses on inequalities in income, land and property; differential access to higher or technical education; and differential presence in commercial activities, professions, and official positions.

Regime type of host: The MAR project uses Polity data for coding its regime type variables. Specifically, the democracy score of a country ranges from zero (least) to ten (most). Each group receives the score that its host state gets for how politically competitive it is.

Host's economic growth: Group receives its host state's economic growth rate—data were not available to code each individual group's rate of growth. For the 1980s data, the MAR data set uses Polity data taken from World Bank information. For the 1990s data, we used the World Bank's (1999) data for each host's average growth rate from 1990 through 1997.

Rebellion: Codes the level of conflict between a group and its host state, ranging from none to banditry to terrorism to increasing levels of insurgency to protracted civil war.

Other separatists in host state: Using MAR's data on active separatists, we counted the number of other groups in the state that are separatist.

Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union: Re-coded MAR's region with one signifying the group resides in Eastern Europe or the former Soviet Union.

Dependent Variables: Irredentist and Secessionist Desires

1980s		Irredentist Desires No	Yes	Total	1994–1995		Irredentist Desires No	Yes	Total
Secessionist Desires	No	187	13	200	Secessionist Desires	No	191	18	209
	Yes	22	11	33		Yes	41	18	59
	Total	209	24	233		Total	232	36	268

Descriptive Statistics of Variables

	1980s				1994–1995			
	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Desires for Secessionism (dummy)	0	1	.14	.35	0	1	.22	.42
Desires for Irredentism (dummy)	0	1	.10	.30	0	1	.13	.34
Proportional Group Size	.04%	85%	.11	.14	.05%	90%	.12	.14
Group Population (in thousands)	36	98,600	3,928.5	8,971.5	35	106,395	3,825.5	10,709.4
Group Concentration (index)	1	6	4.69	1.83	0	3	2.08	1.10
Ethnic Difference Index	0	11	5.90	2.60	0	11	5.89	1.10
Active Separatism among Kin Groups (dummy)	0	1	.16	.37	0	1	.22	.41
Number of Segments in Adjoining Countries (count)	0	4	1.30	1.20	0	4	1.43	1.25
Kin is Dominant in Adjoining Country (dummy)	0	1	.21	.41	0	1	.26	.44
Highest Protest by Other Segments of Group (index)	0	5	.83	1.49	0	5	1.82	1.85
Mean Protest in Region	0	6.5	2.80	2.26	1.3	2.1	1.67	.24
Political Differentials Index	−2	4	1.58	1.50	−2	4	1.54	1.61
Economic Differentials Index	−2	4	1.85	1.85	−2	4	1.65	1.98
Democracy Score	0	10	3.14	3.60	0	10	5.02	3.86
Host's Economic Growth (average annual rate)	−7.2%	8.3%	1.53	2.40	−16.4%	11.6%	1.40	5.76
Rebellion (index)	0	10	1.79	3.02	0	7	1.06	1.97
Eastern Europe and Soviet Union (dummy)	0	1	.14	.34	0	1	.22	.42
Other Separatists in Host State (count)	0	6	1.34	1.87	0	7	1.18	1.83

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