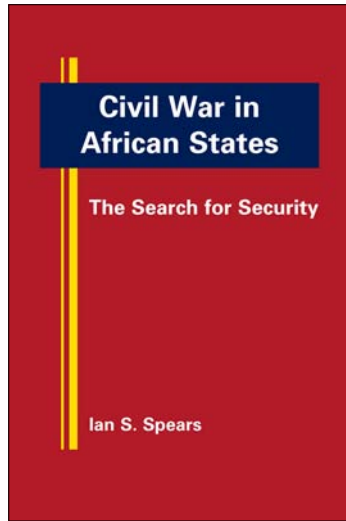


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Civil War in
African States:
The Search for Security

Ian S. Spears

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1

The Search for Security in Africa

When the risks of competition exceed the risks of cooperation, [disputants] should direct their self-help efforts towards achieving cooperation.

Charles L. Glaser

The hunger for a final crushing victory overshadows any spirit of sectarian compromise.

David Brooks

The desire for separation always springs from the recognition that a certain socio-economic and cultural community is badly governed by the state to which it belongs.

Joseph Tubiana

How do disputants in civil wars—rebel movements, ethnic groups, state leaders—find security in Africa’s anarchic situations? Why do some rebel movements pursue a secessionist agenda while others seek to overthrow the existing government? Under what circumstances will insurgents agree to share power? Why do some insurgent movements change their strategies midcourse? The answers to these questions can provide insight into which approaches can best address the continent’s most violent conflicts and create sustainable peace.

This volume evolved as a consequence of several articles I wrote that questioned power-sharing as a viable form of conflict resolution in African states. Two issues emerged from those articles. The first is the question of alternatives to power-sharing: if power-sharing cannot be achieved, what other options exist? Second, since there are occasions when disputants do opt for power-sharing agreements—even if those agreements are less common or durable—what explains this willingness to share power? For that matter, what explains why disputants choose to accept or reject any given approach to peace and security? By learning

how the disputants themselves see conflicts—identifying the alternative strategies that they (as opposed to foreign peacemakers) consider in pursuit of their security and explaining the circumstances in which they will opt for these strategies—I seek to offer an important perspective that has, to my mind, received insufficient attention thus far.

Beyond this objective, I hope that the discussion in this book accomplishes three tasks. First, my intent is to challenge prevailing assumptions about the possibilities for conflict resolution in African states. Here I draw heavily from the international relations paradigm known as “realism.”¹ From my perspective, it is not useful to think about what could or should be. Political behaviors must be seen as givens, as lamentable as they may be. People tend to conduct their affairs on the basis of interests—and virtually all political behavior in conflict situations is directed towards ensuring the primary interests of security and survival. Consequently, conflict resolution requires no expectation that people’s behavior can be changed in meaningful ways. Rather, it involves recognizing existing forces for what they are and managing them by channeling them in constructive directions. I am, admittedly, challenging the view that conflicts can be easily remedied. My preference in this work, however, is to help readers become aware of the ways in which effective political action in civil wars will always be encumbered or advanced by conflicting political interests.

To be sure, this approach is pessimistic. Scholars who adopt a perspective of *realpolitik* do not like the world that they describe. Nevertheless, if this approach is too bleak for the taste of some people, or if it fails to consider adequately the possibilities for peace and reconciliation, it does provide a framework for understanding the persistence of many African conflicts and the apparent intransigence of Africa’s disputants.

More importantly, however, this approach is not so pessimistic if one sees political action as being driven less by a political actor’s inherently and unchangingly evil nature and more by that actor’s concern for his or her own security. A second task, then, is to promote a better understanding of violent conflict by challenging the view prevalent in foreign-policy circles that conflicts are essentially contests between good and evil. In a 1995 *Foreign Affairs* article reflecting on the crisis in Yugoslavia, Charles Boyd emphasized the need to understand what interests and what insecurities drive conflicts.² Boyd’s argument was that all groups have legitimate interests and fears—one being the fear of becoming a minority in another state. It is the act of demonizing disputants, he claimed, that creates demons.

Given the brutalities of recent civil wars in Congo, Rwanda, Sudan, and Sierra Leone, this perspective may be difficult for some readers to accept. In the discussion that follows, I do not mean to overlook moral failure. Indeed, it is hard not to see evil in such behavior. From my perspective, however, it is not useful to see conflict in only Manichean terms. The tendency towards violence has more to do with the nature of the African state and the insecurities it creates than the good or evil nature of a given actor or the pathological predispositions of a given society or culture. Moreover, as I endeavor to show, in these circumstances, even saints feel compelled to do evil things if such action enhances their chances for survival. Alternatively, villains can behave in ways similar to saints and embrace peace if aggression does not advance their interests but peace does. Again, the primary concern of the principal actors is their security and well-being. That is why the focus of any approach to conflict resolution must begin with the recognition of security as the driving motivation.

Indeed, a third task of this study is to demonstrate that only when these concerns about security are met is it realistic to think in terms of meaningful conflict resolution. This requires outsiders to develop an appreciation of the perspectives of the actors on the ground and acknowledge that what appears to be a rational solution from a collective perspective does not necessarily meet, and often conflicts with, the individual security needs of the disputants themselves. In short, in order to understand how intervention can be most effective, it is necessary, in Barry Posen's words, "to think about the strategy of the other side."³ To this end and to the extent that it was possible, I have tried to account for and incorporate the interests and perspectives of the disputants as they defined them. The research presented here is based on statements from the main players as represented in interviews, in published media sources, in documents, and in narratives provided by journalists who are sympathetic to a particular disputant's cause.

I am aware, of course, of the manner in which tactics can be a factor in any given statement of strategic objectives; that is, the actors may have an interest in skewing the truth. To the extent that it was possible, however, like the historian Barbara Tuchman, I sought to avoid making my own judgments on the reasons for people's actions.⁴ For every assertion I have made, I have endeavored to provide documentary support. Since some of the events in question took place before I was involved in this study, I have looked to sources produced at the time for this supporting evidence.

There is, as I discovered, no single narrative for any of these conflicts, and the narratives themselves can be overwhelming in their

complexity. Interpretations are frequently aligned with ethnic or clan interests and, accordingly, renditions of history are often politically charged. They are also subject to self-censorship or otherwise engineered for political purposes. Given the sanctions against violence, political groups emphasize the cooperative and inclusive aspects of their struggles in their accounts of events so that they will be looked upon more favorably by the international community. Finding documents or other supporting evidence that account for all aspects of a group's search for security—from ugly episodes of violence to more agreeable instances of nonviolence—was not an easy task. In Ethiopia, for example, the democratic character of the new EPRDF regime was (and remains) particularly controversial. There, opposition parties pulled out of early elections, claiming fraud and intimidation on the part of a governing party that was bound to have won in any case. In Somalia, events were complicated by the fact that leaders sometimes fought on behalf of several groups or militias or because several opposing leaders fought under the same banner (often against each other).⁵ Similar processes were at work in Angola—much to the frustration of students of the conflict there. Even at the time of Angola's independence, John Marcum observed that “the foreign intervention and factional fighting that ensued in 1975 proved so chaotic and opportunistic that its exact sequence may remain forever arguable.”⁶ Later, Jonas Savimbi's biographer, Fred Bridgland, wrote: “I have striven to ensure that [my] book is factually accurate. But the trouble with Angola is that every fact is in dispute . . . the facts are so contentious.”⁷ Needless to say, the narratives provided here are open-ended; they are not the last word on such complex conflicts.

While I have made every effort to provide reasonably comprehensive narratives of these conflicts, I do not seek to introduce extensive new facts about any particular case (more detailed descriptions of these conflicts are cited in the endnotes). Instead, my purpose here is to introduce a form of analysis that links theory and description in more useful ways than are allowed for by facts alone, and to provide insights about realistic opportunities to prevent, limit, and end violence.

In the remainder of this chapter, I introduce key elements of the African security predicament, and provide a discussion of the strategies of integration/power-sharing, domination/conquest, and separation/secession and the factors which give rise to them. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 examine the protracted wars in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Angola—situations that demonstrate various combinations of these strategies. In the concluding chapter I consider the prospects for lasting conflict resolution in African states.

My selection of African case studies, and, indeed, my selection of these case studies in particular, speaks in part to my interest in and familiarity with African politics and my longer-term familiarity with these countries. I believe, as William Zartman has observed, that our purpose should not merely be “to learn about Africa—an exercise of current interest to a small audience—but to learn from Africa—a project of much wider importance.”⁸ Indeed, during the research and writing of this book, it became increasingly clear to me that the challenges facing these countries, and the conclusions I reached regarding conflict, are also relevant in other conflict zones, both within and without Africa—including Iraq, Sri Lanka, the former Yugoslavia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique and South Africa. I will leave it to others who have more expertise in these areas to determine if any insights provided here have application elsewhere.

Africa and the Politics of Survival

In his observations of the continent’s political elite, the former American Secretary of State Henry Kissinger observed that African leaders have “survived and prevailed by learning to be finely attuned to the nuances of the power relationships on at least three levels: vis-à-vis the erstwhile colonial power, the American-Soviet competition, and the struggles for pre-eminence within their own movements. They had to be, and were, realists.” Kissinger also suggested that the demands facing Africa’s political leaders were more intense than in other continents. African leaders, he concluded, “had no illusions about the grammar of staying in power; politics, in their view, was not a profession for weaklings.”⁹

More recent analysis suggests that, while much has changed in global and African political life, Kissinger’s assessment of the domestic power struggle endures. Such a conclusion helps explain why African states have so often been arenas for major armed conflict.¹⁰ For some, the so-called “third wave” of post-Cold War democratic reforms have “produced few tangible changes in the rules of the political game.” Frustrated with the weakness of African political institutions, with their own continuing inability to unseat incumbent governments, and with the ongoing unwillingness on the part of the international community to risk destabilizing fragile polities by criticizing electoral processes, opposition groups continue to contemplate violence as their most viable option.¹¹

In Africa, in spite of the fact that anti-colonial movements were often united in their political objectives, the states that independence created were rarely coherent expressions of these same movements. Nor

did African states emanate as expressions of single existing ethnic groups. Instead, owing to the arbitrary nature of colonial partition, most were much more complex, multicultural, multilingual, and often religiously diverse entities. Efforts were made to construct political institutions which could manage this diversity, but these often broke down. To correct this failure, political authority was established and maintained through clientelist ties, the domination of a single ethnic group, or both. As states rarely have a monopoly on force, inevitably, opposition groups emerged to challenge their authority.¹² In some cases (particularly since the end of the Cold War), political institutions and authority have been so compromised that political life has degenerated into chaos and violence.

The challenges presented by this kind of semi-anarchic or anarchic situation are relevant anywhere they exist, but particularly in Africa given the frequency of state collapse since 1990. "The phenomenon of [state collapse] is historic and worldwide," according to William Zartman, "but nowhere are there more examples than in contemporary Africa."¹³ Not surprisingly, the occurrence of state collapse is intimately connected to civil war. In the post-Cold War era, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) repeatedly observed that "Africa is the most conflict ridden region of the world." A "root cause" of these wars, SIPRI argued, could "be found in the weakness of many of its states."¹⁴ Similarly, observers with the World Bank have asked "Why are there so many civil wars in Africa?" They conclude that "the relatively high incidence of civil war in Africa is due ... to the high levels of poverty, heavy dependence on resource-based primary exports and, *especially, to failed political institutions.*"¹⁵

In other cases, political authority has remained essentially intact but is violently contested by groups who are as powerful, or nearly as powerful, as those who formally control state power. We shall see this in my discussion of Angola where independence arrived with no fewer than three viable anticolonial movements, each of which had a realistic chance of acquiring power in the capital Luanda. While the ruling MPLA has since been recognized as the country's legitimate government, UNITA rebels maintained control of large portions of southern and central Angola until its military defeat in 2002.¹⁶

The problem of weak or contested states is compounded by the fact that even the continent's most tragic events are not seen as warranting the kind of global attention that is necessary to offset the lack of authority in its vast territories. Many African states became, in Margaret Anstee's term, "orphans of the Cold War."¹⁷ In cases where the international community has been willing to commit substantial

resources and troops in an effort to limit these wars, interventions have been geographically limited in scope or have set a higher priority on impartiality than on the restoration of order.¹⁸ Moreover, they tended to come after the processes of state collapse or contestation were well under way, or to have been hampered by limited, uncertain, or ambiguous mandates regarding the use of force. Belligerents are also well aware of the international community's unwillingness to tolerate casualties among foreign peacekeepers in regions of marginal importance and know that a few gruesome acts against peacekeepers will lead the international community to withdraw or stay away.¹⁹ The manner in which ethnic groups and rebel movements cope in these uncertain conditions is the central focus of this book.

Most immediately, insecurity leads individuals to find strength in numbers and to retreat into a clan or ethnic group which then becomes the bases on which the conflict may be fought. To be sure, most insurgencies and governments comprise individuals from a variety of different backgrounds and perspectives. Furthermore, a member of an elite inner circle may not care about ethnicity or clan until he or she is expelled from or targeted by the regime. Identity groups can then become a means to advance or defend an individual's cause. An impending conflict may also force individuals of mixed heritage to make choices regarding their identity and, more specifically, which identity will best ensure their survival.²⁰ In this sense, Jack Snyder and Robert Jervis argue, ethnic diversity may not so much cause conflict as conflict causes or leads to a more acute awareness of ethnic identity.²¹

When individuals do not make their ethnic identity explicit, their adversaries may act on the assumption that they have. During conflicts, people of an ethnic group are often "essentialized" or "corporatized" by their adversaries. Of the principal actors in the conflict in Sri Lanka, for example, Suthaharan Nadarajah and Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah write that "while Tamils and Sinhalese were politically complex communities, they came to be referred to as monolithic wholes." Individuals of a given ethnic group may be associated with the violent activities of the insurgency irrespective of whether or not they initially participated in or even supported those activities.²² The Marxist government in Ethiopia, and more recently the Islamic government in Sudan, did not distinguish ordinary citizens from rebels who ostensibly fought on their behalf, but rather—with terribly violent results—assumed the former supported the latter. The indiscriminate nature of "draining the pond"—killing or forcibly removing civilians who are assumed to provide support for rebels—has the effect of treating both civilians and rebels as one and thereby turning innocent bystanders into rebel supporters.²³ The

assumption is, of course, self-fulfilling, since such atrocities convince civilians that the government is the enemy and that only the rebels are willing to fight on their behalf.

Scholars and journalists have long questioned whether the behavior that has been seen as characteristic of civil wars in Africa and elsewhere is in any way rational. John Garnett writes, for example, that “It may be going too far to describe run-of-the-mill interstate wars as rational and civilized, but there is a grain of sense in the thought. Ethnic wars are quite different. They are not about the pursuit of interests as normally understood. They are about malevolence and they are unrestrained by any legal or moral rules.”²⁴ Stephen Lewis, the former UN envoy on AIDS in Africa, has also referred to rebel movements such as the Lord’s Resistance Army in Uganda as a “lunatic rebel group,” its leader, Joseph Kony, a “madman,” and the Sudan’s leader, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, as “evil incarnate.”²⁵ Certainly much of the journalistic analysis of African leaders questions the rationality of political decisions or actions when, as in the most notorious examples of Sierra Leone and Liberia, rebels were intoxicated or engaged in cruel or seemingly nihilistic behaviors such as chopping off their victims’ hands or dressing in wigs and women’s clothing.

Others, however, see logic to the behavior of rulers and insurgents alike. As Danny Hoffman has demonstrated, rebels will undertake the most heinous crimes if they believe that it will result in a pay-off from the international community which helps secure their future.²⁶ As for Africa’s leaders, they too must pay careful attention to cues in their environment and the actions they undertake; those who are merely reckless do not survive. “My experience with Mobutu,” Henry Kissinger writes of the long-reigning president of Zaire, “had been that, however grotesque his public conduct, he was a sharp analyst of the requirements of his own survival.”²⁷

This is why attention to the individual strategies of actors within a state is critical. In his essay on Third World security, Brian L. Job urges scholars and practitioners to consider the perspectives of those on the ground in a way that allows them to understand their actions:²⁸

States (more appropriately, regimes) are preoccupied with the short term; their security and their physical survival are dependent on the strategies they pursue for the moment. Consequently, it is rational for regimes to adopt policies that utilize scarce resources for military equipment and manpower, to perceive as threatening opposition movements demanding greater public debate, and to regard as dangerous communal movements and promote alternative identifications and loyalties. . . . Gaining enhanced security for

themselves, albeit at the expense . . . of engaging in repression of their own peoples, is an acceptable bargain for many Third World state elites.²⁹

Job concludes that an appreciation of the motivations of disputants does not require condoning these practices. "It is likely, however, to reveal that officeholders in Third World states are not irrational, insofar as their short-term, even long-term, interests are structured by the environment in which they find themselves."³⁰

For our purposes, and as discussions of the strategies below will reveal, the value of rationality and various theoretical devices which depend on rational decision-making can also be found in the way that they highlight differences in individual and collective gains. The outside observer pursues a misplaced logic that sees a collective gain to a peace settlement and an end to war. Outsiders assume that belligerents will accept and follow the same collective logic that they do. In the prisoner's dilemma, for example, players would be collectively better off if they cooperated with each other and stonewalled their interrogator.³¹ But this is not the individual logic of the disputants themselves. From their perspective, the possibilities for cooperation are present but heavily circumscribed because the incentive to satisfy their personal and immediate need for security outweighs this collective gain. Thus, what is collectively rational to foreign mediators and interventionists is different from the perspective of each disputant's self-interest.

Ethnic groups, insurgencies, and ruling elites think in terms of survival plans or strategies, choosing those which, in the view of the leadership or its people, are the best means to assure survival in hostile or insecure environments.³² This book considers three general types of strategies. These include (1) *integration* strategies or approaches that involve cooperation, accommodation, or the sharing of power among disputants within a single state; (2) *domination* strategies or approaches in which one group assumes a dominant or hegemonic position relative to others or which involve the conquest, neutralization or elimination of adversaries; and, finally, (3) *separation* strategies or approaches that involve secession and the erection of formal state barriers between disputants. These can be discussed each in turn.

Survival Strategies in African States

Strategies of Integration, Cooperation, and Power-Sharing

Post-conflict environments can allow varying arrangements and degrees of cooperation and integration. These can range from highly integrative approaches such as power-sharing, which require significant amounts of cooperation, to competitive multiparty elections and federalism, which require considerably less.³³ In each case, however, former belligerents are opting for non-violent ways to manage their differences.

Power-sharing is one answer to Africa's security predicament, and it is one that has been frequently advocated by scholars and practitioners alike. By giving all—or the most significant—parties a slice of power, inclusive agreements lower the political stakes in conflicts and provide an equitable solution to the question of “who rules?”³⁴ For the disputants themselves, power-sharing is also an attractive option, because it solves the enduring problem that minorities face in divided societies where voting patterns reflect ethnic lines; that is, where they are doomed to exclusion by the fact that they can never acquire sufficient votes to win office.³⁵ From the perspective of the international community, power-sharing is also appealing because it does not require that decisions be made on the legitimacy of each disputant's motives.³⁶ Instead, it merely assumes that conflicts arise from parties being denied their legitimate rights to representation and autonomy.³⁷ Indeed, exclusion from power is frequently cited as the principal reason for taking up arms in Africa and elsewhere. If it is true that political actors are compelled to act aggressively only because their exclusion from power leaves them with no other option, then it is difficult to imagine solutions to violent conflict other than power-sharing. In fact, inclusive coalitions have long been a fundamental feature of the African political landscape. Regimes are often dependent on the careful construction of clientelist networks that incorporate a sufficient number of representatives from different ethnic groups and regions in their respective governments.³⁸

Requisite for power-sharing to function is that adversaries actually want such a system, have an interest in its success, and be willing to cooperate with other ethnic elites. As Arend Lijphart has observed in his discussion of so-called “consociational” power-sharing, such arrangements require political elites to “*make deliberate efforts to counteract the immobilizing and unstabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation.*”³⁹ In this sense, it could be said that power-sharing is something which must be believed if it is to be seen.

But getting combatants to sign on to peace agreements can be difficult in the aftermath of war. Having just engaged in violent acts against each other or fought a civil war, disputants almost never want to be together, let alone cooperate or share power on equal terms. The misery of war does not lead disputants to think that violence was the wrong decision; it crystalizes ethnic sentiments and ethnic hatred. If groups cannot arrive at an inclusive peace agreement before conflict erupts, they are often in no better position to do so after conflict has begun.⁴⁰ As one observer has remarked in the case of Rwanda in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide, having Tutsis share power with Hutu extremists was akin to the Jews agreeing to share power with the Nazis or the Armenians cooperating with the Turks.⁴¹ As desirable as it might be for outsiders, such arrangements may be too unpalatable for belligerent parties to accept. Consequently, given the psychological barriers that must be overcome, if power-sharing requires an intrinsic desire to come together, it appears to be a scenario that for most disputants is heavily circumscribed.

Beyond the psychological problems, there are other barriers to power-sharing or other negotiated forms of settlement. Most African states are structured with weak or fledgling institutions—a problem that, again, is even more acute in the aftermath of a civil war. Political settlements may be forged but, in the absence of a powerful guarantor or substantial authority being allocated to the opposition, the newly created institutions are rarely capable of managing internal disputes and political competition over the long run. In these contexts, disputants would rather have security than representation. That is why, during Zimbabwe's transition to majority rule in 1980, Robert Mugabe stated that he would rather have control over the army than representation in parliament.⁴² Similarly, twenty-eight years later, Zimbabwean opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai argued that he would not enter a power-sharing agreement with the regime which did not give him the authority to rule effectively, stating, "It's better not to have a deal than to have a bad deal."⁴³

To be sure, African leaders are adept at forging inclusive coalitions amongst key ethnic groups. After all, most African regimes are built on complex patronage networks which include representation from different clans and ethnic groups. But owing to the difficulties in forging such agreements across the divisions caused by conflict, such alliances and coalitions are often built as a means of defending or projecting power rather than as a means of conflict resolution or altruism.⁴⁴ In other words, and as my discussion of post-1991 Ethiopia will demonstrate, such coalitions may be regarded unfavorably and rejected by at least

some local disputants because they are seen more for serving the purpose of domination rather than integration and reconciliation.

Nonetheless, while the possibilities for consensus are limited, there are opportunities for more limited forms of cooperation and/or inclusion. In fact, the idea that one would accommodate another or give way on a particular issue often suits one's survival needs. Reflecting on Chamberlain's deal-making with Hitler, for example, Isaac Chotiner writes, "appeasement was not about weakness or pacifism or an unwillingness to confront danger; rather it was a cold-hearted realist strategy that saw negotiations with Hitler as the best way to ensure the survival of the British Empire."⁴⁵ The key motivation remains self-interest: disputants will agree to cooperative arrangements when it is expedient to do so and when the perceived risks associated with a peaceful outcome are less than those associated with new or renewed conflict.⁴⁶

In this way, genuine moments for cooperation or integration, limited or infrequent as they may be, are not based on trust so much as they are on the coincidence of common interest and self-preservation. When Siad Barre in Somalia and Mengistu Haile Mariam in Ethiopia came to terms with each other in 1988 after years of acrimony and war, their efforts were motivated less by an affection for each other than by a shared need to rid themselves of the insurgencies that each was supporting in the other's state. Domestically, a regime's final days are also often notable for the near-unconditional offers of peace and inclusion to the most prominent and threatening insurgent movements. More cynically, even when they are not in their final death throes, governments have an interest in encouraging defection from the opposing ranks and will offer willing adversaries protection. Inclusion can then be a means of dividing an adversary or isolating a particularly hardline faction from its moderate base. In Somalia, for example, President Siad Barre bought off and effectively neutralized the rebels associated with the Somali Salvation Democratic Front so that he could continue his oppression of other, more dangerous, opponents to his regime.⁴⁷ In short, even if cooperative sentiments are not shared by all of one's adversaries, an inclusive approach can be motivated by the same self-interested logic as the strategies of domination and separation that are discussed below.

For rebel movements, a public demonstration of willingness to accept a power-sharing agreement (or even to participate in a process which might lead to one) offers other valuable advantages, most notably international recognition for rogue or otherwise weak insurgent movements or ethnic minorities.⁴⁸ For the weakest parties or those facing military defeat, power-sharing can be a means to buy time or

stave off elimination. Moreover, since power-sharing is an approach which, by definition, involves the acceptance of all or most warring parties, it can entail “a major adjustment in the domestic balance of power . . . in favour of insurgents at the expense of state leaders.”⁴⁹ Unfortunately, while the international community may condemn violence, the effect can be to reward its use by insurgent groups when power-sharing is advocated as a form of conflict resolution. These efforts may be counter-productive because the result is often a proliferation of smaller rebellions and factions who utilize ever greater levels of violence as a means to gain recognition and access to state resources. For smaller movements in particular, any slice of power is sufficient reward after violent conflict; indeed, rebellions are often undertaken with no greater goal in mind.⁵⁰

Strategies of Domination and Conquest

The state is the institution that communal groups look to and seek to control in order to dominate others. In Africa, ethnic groups and insurgencies have acted on the assumption that capturing the capital city entitled them to rule over the entire country. In most cases, upon independence from colonial rule, political authority was given to the movement that controlled the capital, regardless of whether it had sufficient means to exercise state power over all corners of the territory. Nonetheless, the new leaders deemed it a central function of their regime to extend state authority by eliminating or neutralizing rivals who lived within their territorial boundaries or who threatened to dismember the country territorially. Consequently, to shore up their questionable power, state leaders bought into the idea of “unambiguous sovereignty” from the colonial rulers and held that, in juridical terms, a given territory could be ruled by one, and only one, power. Others who challenged this authority were illegitimate.⁵¹

Indeed, groups who threaten a regime’s exclusivist view of the state are perceived as jeopardizing its very existence and risk subjecting themselves to whatever coercive measures the regime believes are required to maintain order. Moreover, regimes may use threats by others to destroy the integrity of a state in order to position themselves as the defender of the nation and justify a strategy of domination and conquest. As Siad Barre’s notorious military commander argued in justification of his government’s unrestrained use of force in the northwest region of Somalia during the late 1980s, “I was defending a country from a guerrilla movement that was backed by the Ethiopian government. I had

obligations to protect the territorial integrity of Somalia and I was defending my borders.”⁵²

Unambiguous sovereignty is less of a problem in Western societies because power and authority are distributed and deeply entrenched among an array of complex and diverse institutions. In the developing world, however, power at the center is not complemented by the same diffuse array of institutions, a fact which leads states to zero-sum politics and intensifies the stakes over which politics is fought. When the state vests power in a single authority, that power typically becomes the instrument of one societal group—often at the expense of all others. As a result, the state becomes a battleground for a territory’s communal groups. Violent struggles for power among different ethnic groups can be particularly intense because any subsequent compromise requires at least one of the parties to forego its version of the national narrative, one that may have been built on histories of exploitation and domination by another group. Rarely can a single state sustain two such national narratives. The stronger a group’s belief that violence can be justified for the purpose of state-building, the greater their drive for political domination.

In this sense, the civil wars which are endemic in much of Africa and elsewhere in the developing world represent ongoing processes of state-building that are not unlike those which took place in the developed world in centuries past. State-building requires leaders to rationalize power and manage dissent. To be sure, and as my discussion has already described, many dissenters can be co-opted with various incentives. But others will remain outside the political process, holding out for benefits that no realistic offer can satisfy. At this point, Edward Luttwak argues, political leaders face a new choice: use whatever force is necessary to crush the extremists and consolidate power, even if it leads to civil war, or risk having to live indefinitely in a divided state. The choice is a false one according to Luttwak: “Better a brief civil war leading to peace and an independent state than an impossible co-existence with armed extremists that would endlessly prolong the suffering.”⁵³

It is not that communal groups cannot tolerate or accommodate opposition; rather, the state cannot tolerate groups or entities whose existence undermines the state’s ability to claim itself as sovereign. It is one thing to share power with groups or individuals who have arrived at the conclusion that killing for political purposes is no longer acceptable, or who live in institutionalized states where there are established mechanisms for managing conflict. It is another thing to share power with an adversary whose very presence threatens one’s existence. For

the state, like its challengers, the issue is very much an existential one. Dominating one's adversary is more often regarded as the safer option.

Barbara F. Walter concurs that, in the absence of an external guarantor, belligerents would prefer no agreement to an agreement that increases their vulnerability. Civil wars, she observes, rarely end in negotiated settlements of any kind. Instead, most internal wars end "with the extermination, expulsion, or capitulation of the losing side." Her data shows that "groups fighting civil wars almost always chose to fight to the finish unless an outside power stepped in to guarantee a peace agreement."⁵⁴ Such a finding is no surprise to those who argue that international anarchy compels state actors to fight wars in the hope that they can win rather than to seek negotiated settlements that place them in intolerably vulnerable situations. As John Mearsheimer argues, "Given this fear—which can never be wholly eliminated—states recognize that the more powerful they are relative to their rivals, the better their chances for survival. Indeed, the best guarantee of survival is to be a hegemon, because no other [belligerent] can seriously threaten such a mighty power."⁵⁵ More succinctly, Henry Kissinger writes, "in a war, it is not enough to endure—it is essential to prevail."⁵⁶ For disputants who hold the balance of power, there may be little reason to share power except in the form of mere token gestures intended to satisfy the demands of the international community.

Inducing disputants to forego strategies of domination has proven to be difficult both inside and outside Africa. In Sri Lanka, until it launched a final military assault on the Tamil Tigers in 2009, the government in Colombo concluded that its efforts to reach a negotiated settlement were being exploited by the rebels, thus prolonging the war. Crushing the rebels, it said, was not only justified; it was humane.⁵⁷ In Iraq, American policymakers urged a devolution of power from the center to the country's regions, a shift envisioned by the new Iraqi constitution. As one *New York Times* columnist pointed out, however, "Everybody out of power sympathized with their [the American policymakers'] diagnosis but everybody in power rejected it." He added, "There is a winner-take-all mentality which is not conducive to compromise."⁵⁸ The preference for domination can be rooted in a sense of victimhood or historical injustice perpetrated by others. "Through force of arms," writes another observer, Iraq's Shiites "intend to dominate the country entirely, taking what they believe was stripped of them when their revered leader Hussein was murdered in the desert of seventh-century Mesopotamia."⁵⁹

In Africa, this same logic has repeatedly played itself out. Robert Jervis and Jack Snyder note that "the Tutsi minority in Burundi . . .

counted for its survival on maintaining a dictatorship and a monopoly over military power. To them, democratization and proportional representation in the military ranks and officer corps, measures pressed on them by the international donors, were indistinguishable from a death sentence, since they felt that maintaining their control was the only way to guarantee against victimization by the Hutu majority they had brutalized.⁶⁰ Regarding neighboring Rwanda, Bruce Jones observes that “the victims [of the 1994 genocide] owe their deaths to those members of the akazu who chose to massacre them rather than relinquish their grip on power.”⁶¹ In these ruthlessly competitive systems, the most successful actors adopted the worst, and least accommodating, practices in order to survive.⁶²

Aside from assuring one’s physical survival, power opens the door for other opportunities. Not only is one more secure in an existential sense but domination allows one to control other benefits that come from holding high public office in centralized states. In a land of poverty, it is these perquisites which can make political office worth fighting for. As one journalist wrote regarding Angola, “The misuse of oil revenues robs Angolans of more than health care and education. The opportunity to steal millions gives the country’s leaders a reason never to risk this privilege by democratizing.”⁶³ In other words, the opportunities offered by corruption are themselves incentives against power-sharing, democratization, or even decentralization.

In sum, there is a perceived finality to conquest which is attractive to communal groups. As the absolute sovereign, it can subdue a rebellion, preserve order, ensure a group’s survival, and acquire control over scarce resources. Even some Western analysts agree that, despite the obvious contradiction, warfare that results in a decisive conclusion can be an effective form of conflict resolution. As Edward Luttwak states, “although war is a great evil, it does have a great virtue: it can resolve political conflicts and lead to peace.”⁶⁴ Indeed, frustrated with the unwillingness of the Revolutionary United Front rebels in Sierra Leone to honor their commitments to peace, one prominent international advocacy group advocated that “those in the RUF who refuse to demobilise should be defeated militarily.”⁶⁵

In most cases however—particularly where rebels represent a genuine and significant political constituency—a strategy of domination does not come without costs or risks. Achieving a satisfying “final, crushing victory” may be an example of human desires producing an outcome that is ultimately contrary to one’s own interests.⁶⁶ In pursuing its own interests, a communal group’s authority is not accepted by those whom it seeks to dominate; ethnic minorities do not want to live in

states they perceive as hostile, and ethnic majorities resent being ruled by powerful minorities. In both cases, a strategy of domination without any form of political inclusion is, in the longer term, self-defeating insofar as it provokes an endless cycle of revolt and repression. This is a principal limitation of a coercive strategy, and it provides insight into how violence can beget further violence.

Strategies of Separation and Secession

The third and final strategy used by disputants in a conflict is separation; that is, they pursue formal independence as a sovereign state. Statehood, the highest level of contemporary political organization, has long been regarded by nationalist groups as a desirable means to satisfying nationalist sentiments. As the black activist Martin R. Delany remarked, "The claims of no people . . . are respected by any nation until they are presented in a national capacity."

But independence is not merely a romantic ideal. In conflict situations, it also serves as a survival strategy insofar as it reduces or eliminates inter-ethnic competition. For some groups, legal recognition is essential because independent states are entitled to acquire the means to defend themselves from their adversaries.⁶⁷ Equally important, independence shifts the burden of a disputant's security from one's partner in a peace agreement to the legal conventions of the larger international system. Given that the international community values respect for state borders and for the stability thereof, and given the rarity of interstate wars compared to civil wars, the formal achievement of statehood represents a viable means to ensuring one's survival. Indeed, the international conventions of contemporary world politics have proven to be an essential means of survival for even the weakest states in Africa and elsewhere. "Legal recognition," write Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg, "has been far more important than material aid in their emergence and survival to date."⁶⁸

Inherent in a secessionist strategy is the assumption that one group will ultimately control the political entity that is to be established. While a group may accept that they are not in a position to control the political center, they remain fearful that they will not be secure unless they are sovereign. Sovereignty is the most desirable part of any secessionist strategy. War-weary groups who believe that they have been victimized by others say they will accept nothing less than a state of their own. This they can in turn control, despite the obvious hypocrisy inherent in the fact that such unilateral action may come at the expense of someone else's security. It is in this sense that secession is not an end in itself but

a means for a group to gain or regain control of its destiny. It is a strategy which results in domination.

One may debate, of course, whether partition is in fact a viable means of conflict resolution.⁶⁹ If it is not, why, and to what extent, do insurgencies pursue this strategy? Some scholars, such as Donald Horowitz, have argued that secession does not reduce violence or minority oppression once successor states are established because, with the birth of each new secessionist state, comes a new, possibly fearful, minority within it.⁷⁰ Others who dismiss partition as a form of conflict resolution claim that, in the short term, secession does not in fact lead to peace or to more security for the insurgents. Barbara Walter, for example, argues that regimes are reluctant to allow secessionist movements to achieve their goals and that they resist such efforts because failing to do so sends a message to other would-be secessionists that the regime is incapable of maintaining its territorial integrity. "Once it becomes clear that governments can no longer defend their own sovereign territory," she argues, "they become targets for any domestic or international foe."⁷¹ Consequently, governments will strenuously resist secessionist movements—an ominous tendency that features strongly in the calculations of would-be secessionist movements. Because of this threat, even if in the end sovereignty leads to a peaceful and more secure outcome, the risks and pain involved may preclude it as a viable strategy.

The same processes which give African states their security—that is, international conventions on the sanctity of state borders—also help to make the prospects of secession in Africa extremely unlikely. In theory, as Pierre Englebert and Rebecca Hummel have pointed out, African states should be prone to secessionism. The states which constitute the continent are relatively new and they are usually governed by weak and exclusionary regimes that seek, however ineffectively, to extend their authority over large territories. Moreover, their populations are diverse, a fact which might incline them to seek separate paths of autonomy. Insurgents also often sit astride resources that could sustain them both in their military campaigns and as independent states. When considered in proportion to the continent's high incidence of violent conflict, however, the number of secessionist conflicts is in fact quite low.⁷² The claim of Englebert and Hummel is not that the strategy is itself unappealing; rather, they argue that even if insurgencies have secessionist ambitions, most of them (and especially the smaller ones) can be tamed with promises of access to state resources from the central government. Secessionist movements, in short, can be bought off. Undoubtedly, an inhibiting factor to successful secessionism is also the

widely held convention—represented most clearly in Articles 3 and 4 of the African Union’s Constitutive Act—concerning respect for the sovereignty and integrity of African states.⁷³

While secession is comparatively rare, the motivations behind it merit examination. First among these is that even when secession is not desired, the mere threat to disrupt a country’s territorial integrity can be used tactically to bring about either material rewards or the inclusion of previously marginalized groups in a political process.⁷⁴ There are, nonetheless, more security-specific reasons for secession. In his insightful essay on the consequences of state formation in the developing world, for example, Mohammed Ayoob notes two key questions that capture the dilemmas facing local actors and explain why secession, as opposed to autonomy, remains an attractive option for some.⁷⁵ First, even if a peace agreement is achieved, what guarantees are there to ensure that rebellious groups will put down their weapons and reconcile themselves to an autonomous or semi-autonomous existence which is dependent on the good faith of the central government? Second, what guarantees exist to ensure that the central government will in fact abide by its commitment to respect minority rights and regional autonomy over the longer term? From the perspective of local actors, mechanisms such as federalism and power-sharing—both integrative solutions—present considerable risk insofar as, ultimately, there is little to stop a regime from reneging on its pledge to respect another group’s autonomy.

Consider, for example, the annulment of the 1972 Addis Ababa peace agreement between Khartoum and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA). Discussing that case, Taisier Ali and Robert O. Matthews write, “The future of the region of the Southern Sudan relied entirely on the whim of one man, who could, as he had fashioned the agreement, just as easily break it. And that is precisely what President Nimeiri began to do as early as 1977, five years after the accord was signed.”⁷⁶ As I shall demonstrate in chapter 2, this sequence of events also took place with respect to the 1952 Federal Act between Eritrea and Ethiopia. In both cases, the international community failed to punish governments who disregarded minority rights even though provisions for autonomy were guaranteed in formal agreements. Secession prevents the security of a group being so easily compromised. If there is no external guarantor, separation is a convincing strategy because the remedy that emerges from insecure environments allows—even requires—that each party take measures to defend itself. Sovereignty and the consequent entitlement to arm oneself may offer the

only form of protection, even if it means violence will occur in the short term.

Factors That Can Influence Strategy

In this book I do not suggest that one of these strategies is or should be preferable. Political actors will, according to their needs, choose the option (or in some cases options) that best serves their search for security. How can we account for or explain these different choices? One can identify four sets of factors, operating in complex ways, which can incline or disincline disputants to one or more of the above strategies: (1) the balance of power among the disputants; (2) history, memory, and precedent; (3) internal attributes; and (4) global and regional factors.

Balance of Power

Amidst the precariousness of a civil war, the disputants are ultimately concerned with their own survival. They must therefore pay close attention to the distribution of power or the balance of coercion among them. The most obvious demonstration of the influence power has on the selection of strategy in civil conflicts is the receptiveness a weak party shows towards integrative strategies. Weak parties are at risk of being eliminated or dominated by their stronger adversaries and, in order to save themselves, will seek to have their goals accommodated by making offers to cooperate with the dominant power. In Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, dozens of insurgencies have operated without any realistic chance of gaining power in the capital city. In these cases, the smallest insurgent groups may seek little more than to gain materially from the havoc they cause. Other groups, such as the Tigray People's Liberation Front in Ethiopia, found that, as their power increased, other opportunities emerged and they saw the possibility of themselves becoming dominant.

Attention to power balances means not simply assessing who has more guns today (the static situation), but also calculating how those power balances are likely to change in the foreseeable future. The end of the Cold War and the decline of superpower patronage, for example, allowed rebel movements to be much bolder in their demands and goals since, in many cases, they knew that further military aid would not be forthcoming to those in power. Additionally, those whose power is declining may see power-sharing as a strategy that allows them to buy time to regroup and rebuild supplies before making a bid to dominate

their adversaries. In short, rarely is there a losing or weakened disputant who would reject a power-sharing agreement, particularly if it means they would otherwise be shut out of the political process; equally rare is the rising disputant who will consider a power-sharing agreement for anything more than the short term.

Power is also likely to bear on secessionist conflicts. Stronger parties have more options available to them and can, for example, consider either secession or domination as options. Conversely, as Englebort and Hummel write, leaders of weaker “culturally distinct, oppressed, or otherwise polarized groups or regions may well initially prefer to go their own way but find it hard to pursue sustainable separatist strategies in Africa’s commodity dependent and sovereignty-constrained environment.” They add that, since international recognition is so hard to come by, marginalized and excluded groups derive “greater benefits from joining ‘national unity’ governments than from continuing their original struggle.”⁷⁷

How then does power manifest itself in Africa’s civil wars? Obviously the number and capability of a group’s weapons is fundamental to this calculation. During the Cold War, determined efforts by the superpowers—and the vast military patronage they provided—gave recipient regimes such power advantages over rebels that their defeat at the hands of insurgent movements only rarely happened.⁷⁸ The end of the Cold War reduced the number of state-to-state arms transfers, but this has been compensated for by the proliferation of the gray (commercial) and black (illegal) market small-arms transfers that have flowed to both regimes and insurgents.⁷⁹

Civil wars in Africa are, to be sure, often fought with relatively unsophisticated weapons but resource-weak rebel movements can look to other assets to develop their power. The cohesiveness of a disputant is a key variable—although this is a more difficult concept for political scientists to quantify. Barry Posen argues that, since the French Revolution, national identity has been an important determining factor in the relative strength of armies. Because individuals with a strong sense of national identity are more willing to cooperate with each other, they have the advantage over those with a weaker sense of identity. Posen concludes that the collectivity’s sense of “groupness” in ethnic, religious, cultural, or linguistic terms provides them with an important dimension in offensive military power.⁸⁰ Other scholars concur that, when other forms of hard power are not available or are in decline, state and insurgent leaders invoke ethnic identity to increase their support.⁸¹ While one might question the extent to which solidarity can be manipulated by elites, it is compelling to think that power can manifest

itself not only in terms of weaponry but also in terms of the solidarity of a group and its ability to mobilize itself to advance a collective interest.

History, Memory and Precedent

Decisions on strategy are not always made on the basis of objective assessments of the local balance of power. They are also a product of social situations.⁸² Indeed, a number of scholars have noted the role of history in shaping insurgents' strategic objectives and their evaluations of potential rivals.⁸³ Insurgent groups may use history as raw material to define and shape both their identity and the type of strategies they adopt. A separate colonial existence, for example, may lead to the establishment of dedicated governing structures that distinguish land from other regions or jurisdictions and form the basis of a future independent state—as has been the case in East Timor in Indonesia, and in Eritrea and Somaliland in the Horn of Africa. The international community tends not to encourage secession, although, as Englebert and Hummel observe, it does consider decolonization as an acceptable form of self-determination.⁸⁴ Secession may also be a consequence of the historical oppression of a communal group; oppression may not only create a sense of solidarity among people but may induce them to seek an exit as a means of preventing similar treatment in future. Or, insurgents may use a long history as a unified state to justify resorting to a strategy of coercive domination in order to maintain territorial integrity. Communal groups that regard themselves as the historic rulers of the country—such as the Shoa Amhara in Ethiopia—may never consider secession, as to do so would contradict their view of themselves as the rightful guardians of the state's legacy.

Communal groups or states are also inclined to manufacture, embellish, or manipulate historical events for security purposes. As we will see in our discussion of Ethiopia, for example, their rulers have often claimed that Ethiopia has encompassed the entire Horn of Africa and territory stretching into Arabia.⁸⁵ We can consider the role of *memory* in light of the fact that all renditions of history are selective and partial. Memory works in at least two ways when it comes to civil conflict. First, memories serve as a mobilizing force for action. What may appear objectively to be unprovoked acts of aggression or domination may be rooted in memories of previous acts of aggression or victimization.⁸⁶ Elites can manipulate historical events to shape identity and bring coherence to otherwise disparate groups. Political leaders can also hark back to past oppressions to galvanize otherwise unmotivated people and distinguish themselves from others. In Ethiopia in the 1970s

and 1980s, for example, Tigrayan rebels referred to themselves as *Woyane* in reference to a rebellion that was crushed by the British in 1943. Second, history and memory—particularly of recent events—teaches lessons, highlights previous security breaches, and serves as a guide for future action. In Angola, as we shall see, the ruling MPLA learned not to repeat the mistake of allowing itself to be disarmed and made vulnerable after its adversary reneged on a pledge to abide by results of elections held in 1992. In Ethiopia, Emperor Haile Selassie insisted on maintaining control of Eritrea because experience had shown it to be a gateway for invaders. In some cases, history and memory can provide decision-makers with the only means to assess the intentions of other communal groups. This becomes particularly important in circumstances when the state is weak and the government is unable to protect all groups. Each one is then left to make its own determinations of how the others can be expected to behave. Frequently, these decisions are made on the basis of a “worst-case analysis” whereby every other group is regarded as the enemy.⁸⁷

Although memory does not point clearly to a particular strategy choice, one can make predictions. A minority group’s memory of oppression by another group, or its recollection of broken agreements with an adversary, for example, could be expected to lead to a strategy of either secession or domination, as the trust needed for a cooperative arrangement has been broken. Conversely, if memories are more pleasant or if there is no previous experience of close cooperation with a rival (and thus no memory to draw upon), there may be greater opportunities for inclusion and cooperation.

Internal Attributes

Strategic models of action are traditionally outward-looking insofar as strategy is determined by external factors. The environment or “structure” (the distribution of power, for example) is assumed to impose itself on the actors. But other scholars have argued that such an approach is unsatisfactory as it does not explain why, for example, apparently similar situations can degenerate into violent conflict in some regions but not in others, or why some political actors are more consistently peaceful than others.⁸⁸ These scholars supplement purely strategic situations with factors which are internal to the group. Memory, just discussed, is one such internal factor. Others could include, but are not restricted to: (i) the presence of scarce or valuable resources; (ii) geography; and (iii) demography. While these latter three factors are not internal to the actors themselves in the same literal sense

that memory and history are, each of them can, nonetheless, discretely shape the interests and objectives of a disputant. In some cases, they are critical in influencing the power relations among the disputants.

Paul Collier's thesis on the significance of greed as a mobilizing factor in violent conflict tells us something about the choice of strategy that a given communal group will most likely pursue. Secessionist strategies, he says, might best be seen as the "rage of the rich."⁸⁹ Rebel groups will be able to exploit critical *resources* and the export revenues those resources produce if they know that they can take those resources with them when they secede from the rest of the state. Regions that are currently wealthier than the rest of the territory may also choose to secede to release themselves from the obligation of having to support poorer regions or to pay for post-war reconstruction.⁹⁰ Secessionist strategies, then, are most likely to be found among wealthier and more prosperous regions or among those people who can readily get access to valuable natural resources. It is therefore no surprise that rebels in the mineral-rich Katanga region of Congo/Zaire, the oil-producing regions of Biafra in Nigeria and Cabinda in Angola, and the relatively prosperous province of Eritrea have all pursued secessionist strategies.⁹¹

Even if their political support is concentrated in a given area, rebel movements whose base is not so favored with abundant resources are less likely to pursue a secessionist strategy. They might, however, seek integration or domination often as a means of gaining access to these same resources. While the UNITA rebels did establish a state-like entity referred to as "Savimbiland" in the southeastern corner of Angola, it did so mainly for the purpose of fighting the war and to demonstrate to outsiders its capacity to govern in the capital should that opportunity arise. The principal explanation for the rebel's desire to take power in Angola's capital, Luanda, writes Tony Hodges, is that Angola's substantial oil wealth, and the conflict's central prize, is not located in the Ovimbundu areas which constituted Savimbi's power base, but is concentrated mainly in reserves off the northwest coast of Angola between Luanda and Cabinda.⁹²

Groups that want to secede, however, are not always richer than their adversaries and, according to Donald Horowitz, it is backward groups in backward regions who are more inclined to have secessionist ambitions.⁹³ Regions may choose to secede precisely because of their own weakness or poverty. Secession allows them to acquire means to defend themselves that may previously have been denied to them as long as they were part of a larger entity. Secession may also, in effect, be a means to surrender themselves to a larger and more powerful authority that can protect small and otherwise unviable nations. Secessionists in

Kosovo, for example, have looked to the continent-wide European Union to shield its fledgling independence. In this sense, Kosovo, an economically dubious entity, sought separation (and integration into an international organization) as the best means for defending its interests.⁹⁴

Geography can also be expected to play a role in the choice of strategy. Landlocked regions or provinces may have a more difficult time pursuing a secessionist strategy and might instead seek domination or integration. On the other hand, geographically distinct regions, such as the exclave of Cabinda, East Pakistan, or the Aceh region of Indonesia, are separated from the rest of the country by a portion of land belonging to another country and/or by a body of water. With geographically distinct regions, then, not only is the territorial basis of a new state easily and clearly identifiable, but central governments have more difficulty exerting their authority over such regions. Central governments wanting to avoid the dismemberment of their state may closely observe any secessionist tendencies in these regions and seek to suppress them forcefully before a dangerous precedent is set. Kongo Central, the western-most province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, provides that country's only (albeit limited) access to the coast—making the government in Kinshasa particularly intolerant of potentially precedent-setting secessionist tendencies anywhere in the country.⁹⁵

Finally, scholars of nationalist and ethnic conflicts have observed the way in which *demographic* factors—including the proportion and distribution of identity groups within a territory—affect the types of survival strategies that communal groups pursue and the likelihood that central governments will resist. Ted Gurr writes that “the claims and political strategies of ethnopolitical groups vary according to their type and circumstances. National peoples usually seek *exit*, a goal that often leads to separatist wars and state repression.” Minority groups, by contrast, “want *access* [to existing state resources], a goal usually pursued by conventional political action and protest campaigns.”⁹⁶ Stephen Van Evera argues that central governments are more likely to tolerate a secessionist movement if it leaves behind a more homogenous rump state. Permitting secession in that case would set a less-damaging precedent than in a more complex multiethnic state where the departure of one group or region could lead to a dangerous succession of secessionist movements which might ultimately dismantle that state.⁹⁷ Demography and secession can also overlap in significant ways to further complicate decisions regarding strategy. In the Sudan, the Islamic government in Khartoum indicated its willingness to tolerate a

referendum on the secession of southern Christian African ethnic groups. It has shown less willingness to tolerate any sort of insurgent movement in western Darfur, a region of Islamic African ethnic groups whose secession, were it to be pursued, could have more damaging consequences for the rest of the country. As Posen has argued, demography can also influence the power that a communal group can wield and the likelihood that it will be able to successfully execute a given strategy.⁹⁸ Cross-cutting ethnic, clan or regional differences can have a profound impact on the ability of an insurgency to reach consensus on a given strategy and can provide opportunities for central governments to undermine their cause by exploiting differences. Alternatively, the heterogeneity of the rump state's army can also impede a government's ability to suppress a more unified secessionist effort.⁹⁹

Global and Regional Factors

Finally, exogenous conditions can influence the occurrence of both violence and strategy selection among communal groups and governments.¹⁰⁰ Since governments tend to respond to rewards and sanctions, external actors can exert leverage more successfully on them than on insurgents who may see themselves as accountable only to the people they claim to represent.¹⁰¹

The most obvious indication of the way in which external factors influence local actors was the post-Cold War transition and the manner in which global factors affected the calculations of clients in dispute-prone states. During the Cold War, client regimes or insurgent groups in each of the case studies here could rely on external support which afforded them the independence to avoid cooperative or accommodative arrangements with their adversaries. Also, regional spoilers such as apartheid-era South Africa proved to be effective in challenging regimes it did not like by supporting incipient rebel movements who were willing to engage in violence.¹⁰² In the post-Cold War era, by contrast, a consensus has emerged on the need to find integrative and democratic solutions to conflicts. Moreover, there has been a tendency to frown upon solutions which involve either separation or domination. Knowing the international community's preference for inclusive approaches to conflict resolution, smaller insurgent movements have proliferated and carried out violent acts in order to draw attention to themselves and gain entry into the political system, a place that neither their population size nor the sophistication of their political agendas would normally warrant.¹⁰³ In this sense, insurgent factions arguably wag the dog and

exploit the international community's proclivity towards inclusiveness as a form of conflict resolution.

External forces can also alleviate insecurities that accompany civil wars and make cooperative agreements possible—provided such interveners are willing to stay long enough for incipient institutions to take root. South Africa proved to be critical in helping to forge a peace agreement in Burundi in June 2003, under the most trying circumstances.¹⁰⁴ External pressures or threats can also provide incentives for elites to cooperate—although an examination of post-colonial African history demonstrates that there are few external threats on states that are sufficiently strong to overcome the deepest internal cleavages.¹⁰⁵

It is not difficult to see how global factors can have an impact on other strategies as well. Jack Snyder, for example, has observed that globalization “can make separatism look attractive,” as small regions can claim and profit from lucrative natural resources.¹⁰⁶ In the end, however, secessionist strategies are still largely—if not entirely—dependent on the willingness of states in the international community to recognize them. As Donald Horowitz observed, and as our discussion of “Somaliland” will show, while the emergence of a secessionist movement is conditioned by domestic politics, a secessionist movement's ultimate success is conditioned by international politics.¹⁰⁷

Particularly since the breakup of Yugoslavia, scholars and practitioners have discouraged the disintegration of other ethnically complex states. “I hope we do not see the creation of any more nation-states,” observed Britain's Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd.¹⁰⁸ In a similarly discouraging statement, Chester Crocker, the American Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, wrote that the international community “should think twice about calling for the breakup of more states.”¹⁰⁹ In their founding documents, Africa's continental institutions, the Organization of African Unity and the African Union, have also been explicit about the need to avoid alterations of colonial borders.¹¹⁰ In its communiqués, the African Union continues to iterate its “attachment to the unity, territorial integrity, and sovereignty” of African states.¹¹¹ While some scholars have wondered what the impact of these prohibitions has been in terms of the choices local actors make, the fact that virtually all African states are, in theory, vulnerable to disintegration among their diverse populations means that the provision is effectively self-reinforcing.¹¹² Mark Zacher has provided compelling evidence that the international norm against border change is very strong and continues to get stronger, particularly in Africa.¹¹³

Despite the fact that both the United States and the Soviet Union facilitated or subsequently endorsed the takeover of state power by clients who espoused their preferred ideologies—Mobutu in Zaire (USA), Mengistu in Ethiopia (USSR), and the MPLA in Angola (USSR) being notable examples—the international community now warns against the violent take-over and domination of state power unless the incumbent regime is particularly odious. The African Union also continues to “reaffirm its total rejection of any attempt to seize power by unconstitutional means,” as stipulated in its Constitutive Act and other relevant documents.¹¹⁴ Notably, the international community tends not to object as strongly or to punish the use of violence as a means of gaining a portion of power when the result is an inclusive or cooperative arrangement.

Qualifications on the Use of Strategy

In light of the three strategies outlined above and the four contributing factors, this chapter’s final section will offer four more general qualifications to this discussion. First, the strategies should be regarded as *ideal* types which do not necessarily manifest themselves in mutually exclusive terms. Instead, as our three case studies will demonstrate, disputants may pursue various combinations of these strategies in order to meet their security needs. For example, disputants may work cooperatively with one adversary as a means of dominating another more dangerous one. Or they may support cooperation in the short term in order to better position themselves for a strategy of domination. These strategies are also highly situational, and their use may change over time in the same way that a quarterback alters his/her plan of action depending on the conditions on the field. While there is a certain consistency to the strategies chosen, some factors (the balance of power) may be more transient than others (history, demography). The fluidity of African politics means that flexibility in strategic planning is also unavoidable if security is to be sustained over the long term. Failure to read the political situation correctly will almost certainly spell doom for a disputant. Inevitably, strategies must reflect the unique conditions facing each of the principal actors in a conflict. This is not, of course, unique to African politics.

Second, to say that a given disputant seeks its security by pursuing a given strategy does not mean that it *succeeds* in securing its survival. Rationality does not presume foresight. Successive Ethiopian governments pursued a strategy of domination even though they could not prevail over their adversaries. Somaliland has pursued a strategy of

secession since 1991 even though it remains unrecognized by the international community. And the MPLA in Angola agreed to a power-sharing formula in the mid-1990s even though the agreement was never consummated and was eventually abandoned. Again, the pursuit of a given strategy reflects that disputant's perspective on how its security is most likely to be achieved.

Third, the argument here suggests that there is consensus in the adoption of a particular strategy. In reality, strategy is the product of numerous factors which interact in complex and sometimes countervailing ways. The embrace of a given approach to security may also obscure an underlying lack of consensus within the insurgent movement itself. Some individuals, for example, may agree to a strategy of domination in order to win a war or overthrow their principal adversaries, but anticipate a more inclusive or cooperative approach once that task has been completed. Once victory has in fact been achieved, these individuals are often disillusioned by the strategy that secured them in power and their own regime's inability to become more open—an aspiration that they may have believed was at the heart of their struggle. In the case of Rwanda, for example, Filip Reyntjens writes that “When a new government took office on 19 July 1994, the RPF reaffirmed its commitment to the terms and the spirit of the Arusha Accord and the logic of power-sharing it contained. . . . However, a number of amendments made unilaterally by the RPF . . . profoundly modified the political regime agreed in Arusha. They . . . imposed the dominance of the RPF in government.”¹¹⁵ The resulting split in the RPF has since led to the departure of a number of prominent individuals within the movement.

On the other hand, the adoption of particular strategies can also have the effect of making corporate an otherwise fractious population. A conviction that a given strategy is essential to the group's survival generates solidarity among citizens and leaders alike. There can be pressure to conform and, by contrast, risk in dissent if such dissent suggests sympathy with the enemy. With respect to both the Eritrean and Somaliland referenda, for example, a not entirely-secret voting procedure meant that there was social pressure to vote *en masse* for independence—and in both cases support for secession was close to 100 percent. In this way, certain strategies make the assumption of a corporate identity self-fulfilling.

Finally, the idea that disputants pursue various strategies in order to achieve security must also be considered in light of another body of scholarship that purports to show that rebellions are started and wars sustained exclusively through economic incentives.¹¹⁶ Much effort has

been expended portraying these as rival approaches to understanding and explaining conflict. A more fruitful way forward is to see these approaches as compatible and even interrelated. As Jeffrey Herbst has argued, all conflicts involve varying degrees of both economic and political incentive or “greed and grievance.”¹¹⁷ In the African context, security is not just about survival but about having access to the resources that ensure survival. Groups seek access to the state, either as part of a power-sharing arrangement or as a monopoly, in order to acquire a slice of this resource pie. Groups will also seek to split off from other areas in order to acquire exclusive control of these resources. In other words, the so-called greed approach is not incompatible with the framework proposed above and in fact infuses each of the three strategies.

Moreover, while the prospect of untold riches may motivate some leaders and affect how they respond to other incentives, it is less clear that enriching themselves is their exclusive preoccupation. Jonas Savimbi in Angola, for example, appears to have been more interested in power than its trappings. He had a political constituency of his own, and his lifestyle was hardly one of opulence. It appears that resources he gained were a means to sustain his war effort by making it possible to acquire weaponry and soldiers rather than a means to enrich the leadership.¹¹⁸ Indeed, conflicts that have been portrayed solely in terms of the accumulation of wealth often, in the end, can be seen to have had political objectives. While the Angolan government undoubtedly benefitted from the state of emergency coincident with Savimbi’s insurrection, it ultimately sought and achieved a military victory. Continued insurrection was not necessary for the government to profit materially. Even in Sierra Leone, a conflict that has been described as being concerned with nothing more than “diamonds, diamonds, diamonds,” there were political objectives.¹¹⁹ There, the rebel’s rejection of a lucrative peace deal when they launched a high-risk military offensive to capture Freetown suggested that the RUF’s political ambitions were at least as important as its economic ones.¹²⁰

Conclusion

Disputants in conflicts have long argued that those outsiders who seek to end violent conflicts fail to appreciate the security predicaments and the security threats associated with a peace agreement. South Vietnamese leader Nguyen Van Thieu highlighted the differences in these perspectives to Henry Kissinger, his American ally in the negotiations in 1972, stating, “You are a giant, Dr. Kissinger. So you can probably

afford the luxury of being easy in this agreement. I cannot. A bad agreement means nothing to you. . . . For us, . . . it is a question of life and death.”¹²¹ Indeed, Thieu claimed that he would rather “fight alone” than sign an unacceptable agreement. More recently, Georgia’s president urged European leaders to pay closer attention to his state’s security predicament vis-à-vis Russia. “You should understand,” Mikheil Saakashvili said in mocking reply to European leaders who urged him to make concessions, “that the crocodile is hungry. Well, from the point of view of someone who wants to keep his own leg, that’s hard to accept.”¹²²

If outsiders want peace, peacemakers must first see things from the viewpoint of the adversaries themselves so that they can appreciate the specific security constraints that inform the perspectives of each actor. Moreover, they must make agreements compatible with local security concerns. In the post-Cold War era, conflict management has unfortunately entailed a near-universal resort to power-sharing. Power-sharing is a viable option for conflict resolution but, from the perspective of belligerents, it is only one among three—and is a highly limited one at that. Success in conflict management, as the following case studies will show, is contingent on understanding the link between security strategies of the disputants, the factors which give rise to a particular strategy, and the mediator’s solution. In short, peacemakers must understand and appreciate when a given solution is consonant with the disputants’ assessments of their security needs and when it is not.

1. Key international relations texts in the realist canon include Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979); Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973); and John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001). For a domestic politics version of realism, see Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival*, vol. 35, no. 1, (Spring 1993), pp. 27-47.

2. See Charles G. Boyd, “Making Peace with the Guilty: The Truth About Bosnia,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 74, no. 5 (September-October 1995), pp. 22-38.

3. Barry Posen, “The War for Kosovo: Serbia’s Political-Military Strategy,” *International Security*, vol. 24 no. 4 (Spring 2000), p. 40.

4. Barbara Tuchman wrote that she wanted to avoid speculative statements along the lines of “As he watched the coastline of France disappear, Napoleon must have thought back” See “Author’s Note,” *The Guns of August* (New York: Dell, 1962), p. 8.

5. Both General Mohamed Farah Aidid and Ali Mahdi, for example, the two most central actors in the battle for Mogadishu following the fall of Siad Barre, claimed to represent the United Somali Congress (USC). Ali Mahdi himself belonged to several organizations and militias. Mohamed Farah Aidid and Ali Mahdi were also, however, both members of the Hawiye clan family.

6. John Marcum, cited in Fred Bridgland, *Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1986), p. 451.

7. Bridgland, Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa, p. 10.

8. I. William Zartman, "Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse," in I. William Zartman ed. *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), p. 2.

9. Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999), pp. 904 and 907.

10. From 1999 to 2008, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 13 major armed conflicts were recorded for Africa, the highest regional total. See Lotta Harbom and Peter Wallensteen, "Patterns of Major Armed Conflicts, 1999-2008" *SIPRI Yearbook 2009* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 71. In fact, since the end of the Cold War Africa has had more conflicts than any other region. See Lotta Harbom and Peter Wallensteen, "Patterns of Major Armed Conflicts, 1990-2001" *SIPRI Yearbook 2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) p.65,

11. Dennis M. Tull and Andreas Mehler, "The Hidden Cost of Power-Sharing: Reproducing Insurgent Violence in Africa," *African Affairs*, vol. 104, issue 416 (2005), pp. 383, 384.

12. African political systems have long been characterized in terms of their weakness. For appropriate descriptions, see Michael Bratton, "Beyond the State: Civil Society and Associational Life in Africa," *World Politics*, vol. 41, no. 3 (1989), p 410. Patrick Chabal describes the African state as "politically feeble" and a "vacuous shell." Patrick Chabal, "Violence, Power and Rationality: A Political Analysis of Conflict in Contemporary Africa," in Patrick Chabal, Ulf Engel, and Anna-Maria Gentili eds., *Is Violence Inevitable in Africa?* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 6.

13. I. William Zartman, "Introduction: Posing the Problem of State Collapse," *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, ed. I. William Zartman (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), p. 1.

14. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *Yearbook 1999: Armaments, Disarmaments and International Security*, 20, 24-25. *Yearbook 2000*, p. 17.

15. Ibrahim Elbadawi and Nicholas Sambanis, "Why Are There So Many Civil Wars in Africa? Understanding and Preventing Violent Conflict," *Journal of African Economies*, vol. 9, no. 3 (2000), p. 245. Italics added.

16. In 1989, Herman Cohen, the Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, stated that "Sure, the MPLA is the government, it's in the UN, it's been recognized by the OAU (by one vote by the way). But we really see Angola as two governments at the present time. We look at it in terms of what exists on the ground. There are two governments there and the big question for making peace is how to merge those two." Herman J. Cohen, "Forging a Bipartisan Policy," Interview by Margaret A. Novicki, *Africa Report*, September-October 1989, pp. 10-13.

17. Margaret Joan Anstee, *Orphan of the Cold War: The Inside Story of the Collapse of the Angolan Peace Process, 1992-3* (New York: St. Martins' Press, 1996).

18. Peacekeeping countries are rarely able to provide the numbers of troops necessary to maintain order in a large area. New York City has approximately

37,000 police officers; the UN mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was the most expensive in the world, consisted of fewer than 19,000 peacekeepers. See Somini Sengupta, "Warring Militias in Congo Test U.N. Enforcement Role," *New York Times*, April 11, 2004, p. 8.

19. In an indictment of the international community, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni observed that Western nations do not have the stomach for bloody African wars, wondering aloud "Which U.N. troops will stay in these mountains for six months? They will just run away like they did in Rwanda. European soldiers go only to areas where there is no death." Cited in Donald G. McNeil, "Bombing Won in Kosovo, Africa Is a Tougher Case," *New York Times*, July 25, 1999, sec. 4, p. 16.

20. An example of this phenomenon is the case of Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, a Tutsi official responsible for women's affairs in Rwanda, who adopted a Hutu identity at the time of the Rwandan genocide and participated in the killing spree against Tutsi. See Peter Landesman, "A Woman's Work," *New York Times Magazine*, September 15, 2002.

21. Snyder and Jervis, "Civil War and the Security Dilemma," in *Civil Wars, Insecurity and Intervention*, Barbara F. Walter and Jack Snyder eds. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), p. 22.

22. See Suthaharan Nadarajah and Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah, "Liberation Struggle or Terrorism? The Politics of Naming the LTTE," *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 1, (2005), pp 90-92. Newbury also notes the "development and propagation of a corporate view of ethnicity" whereby individuals are seen in terms of their group membership rather than in terms of the characteristics as individuals. See Newbury, "Ethnicity and the Politics of History in Rwanda" *Africa Today*, vol. 45, no. 1 (1998), pp. 7-27.

23. See Gérard Prunier, *Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 103.

24. See John Garnett, "The Causes of War and the Conditions for Peace" in John Baylis, James Wirtz, Eliot Cohen, Colin S. Gray, eds., *Strategy in the Contemporary World: An Introduction to Strategic Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 82.

25. Stephen Lewis, "I Too Accuse Him of Crimes Against Humanity," *Globe and Mail*, July 28, 2008, p. A13. For a contrasting view of the LRA, see James Bevan, "The Myth of Madness: Cold Rationality and 'Resource' Plunder by the Lord's Resistance Army," *Civil Wars*, vol. 9, no. 4, (2007), pp. 343-358.

26. Danny Hoffman, "The Civilian Target in Sierra Leone and Liberia: Political Power, Military Strategy, and Humanitarian Intervention," *African Affairs*, vol. 103, issue 411 (2004), pp. 211-226.

27. Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, p. 805.

28. Brian Job, "The Insecurity Dilemma: National, Regime and State Securities in the Third World," *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States*, ed. Brian Job (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), p. 29.

29. Job, "Insecurity Dilemma," pp. 27-28.

30. Another body of literature which relies heavily on the assumption of rationality is the so-called *greed*-based approach which looks to economic explanations of material gain as a motivation for violence. See, for example, David Keen, *The Economic Functions of Violence* Adelphi Paper 320 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

31. In the game-theory scenario of the prisoner's dilemma, two suspects in a crime are being held in separate locations by a police officer. The officer presents a choice to the captives: confess or do not confess. The officer states that he has insufficient evidence to convict either suspect of the major crime and can only charge them with minor crimes if they both refuse to confess. But the officer also points out that if one of the prisoners confesses, the confessor will go free and get a large reward, while the other prisoner will be hanged. If both suspects confess on the same day, they will each receive long prison sentences. The scenario demonstrates how the incentives to betray one's partner-in-crime are greater than those that flow from cooperation.

32. A few scholars consider the strategies of different parties to a conflict. In some cases, the disputants themselves spell out their strategies. See, for example, Yoweri Museveni, "The Progress of the People's War," in *Yoweri Museveni: Selected Articles of the Uganda Resistance War* (Kampala: NRM Publications 1985). See also Alemseged Abbay, *Identity Jilted or Reimagining Identity* (Red Sea Press, 1998); Assis Malaquias, "Diamonds are a Guerrilla's Best Friend: the Impact of Illicit Wealth on Insurgency Strategy," *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 22, no. 3 (2001), pp. 311-325; Osita Afoaku, "Congo's Rebels: Their Origins, Motivations, and Strategies," and Kevin C. Dunn, "A Survival Guide to Kinshasa: Lessons of the Father Passed Down to the Son," both in John F. Clark, *The African Stakes of the Congo War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 109-128; Barry R. Posen, "The War for Kosovo: Serbia's Political-Military Strategy," *International Security*, vol. 24, no. 4 (Spring 2000), pp. 39-84.

33. Donald Rothchild and Philip G. Roeder, "Dilemmas of State-Building in Divided Societies," in Philip G. Roeder and Donald Rothchild (eds.) *Sustainable Peace: Power and Democracy After Civil Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 8. See also, Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), chapter 2.

34. Richard K. Betts, "The Delusion of Impartial Intervention," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 73, no. 6 (November-December 1994), p. 21.

35. Arthur Lewis, *Politics in West Africa* (London: Oxford University Press 1965), p. 72.

36. Indeed, there can be ambivalence associated with including certain individuals in a power-sharing government. Observers questioned the inclusion of Sierra Leonean rebel Foday Sankoh in a July 1999 power-sharing agreement signed in Lomé Togo. The United States, writes Allister Sparks, "supported a deal that brought Sierra Leone's psychopathic Foday Sankoh, leader of the [Revolutionary United] Front, into a 'government of national unity' and gave him control of the country's mineral resources, even as Sankoh's men were drugging child soldiers and chopping off the hands and feet of ordinary citizens." From Sparks's perspective, it was self-evident that this was an objectionable approach to conflict resolution though, for many at the time, it was greeted as a success. See "A View of Rome from the Provinces," *The Wilson Quarterly*, vol. xxv, no. 2 (Spring 2001), p. 49.

37. Power-sharing arrangements can have varying degrees of cooperation and autonomy. Matthew Hoddie and Caroline Hartzell, for example, refer to federalism as "territorial power sharing." See their chapter in *Sustainable*

Peace: Power and Democracy After Civil Wars, Ed. Philip G. Roeder and Donald Rothchild (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

38. See Donald Rothchild and Michael W. Foley, "African States and the Politics of Inclusive Coalitions," *The Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa*, eds. Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazen (Boulder: Westview 1988); Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa: Prince, Autocrat, Prophet, Tyrant* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

39. Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," *World Politics*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1969), p. 212; italics in original.

40. Betts, "The Delusion of Impartial Intervention," p. 23.

41. Chaim Kaufmann, "'See No Evil: Why America Doesn't Stop Genocide,' Review of: Samantha Powers, *'A Problem from Hell': America and the Age of Genocide*" (New York: Basic Books 2002), in *Foreign Affairs*, 81, no. 4 (2002), p. 145.

42. Cited in Barbara F. Walter, 'The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement,' *International Organization*, vol. 51, no. 3, (1997), p. 351.

43. See Celia W. Dugger, "Zimbabwe Opposition Leader Insists Any Deal Give Him Real Power," *New York Times*, August 17, 2008, Sec. 1, p. 6.

44. Lustick, "Stability in Deeply Divided Societies," pp. 335-336.

45. Isaac Chotiner, "Appeasement's Taint Is All in Hindsight," *New York Times*, May 25, 2008.

46. See Charles L. Glaser, "Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994-95), pp. 50-90, especially, p. 60.

47. Jama Mohamed Ghalib, *The Cost of Dictatorship: The Somali Experience* (New York: Lillian Barber Press, 1995), p. 185.

48. See, for example, Steven Erlanger, " Hamas's Radical New Strategy: Taking Part in Elections," *New York Times*, January 2, 2005.

49. Tull and Mehler, "The Hidden Cost of Power-Sharing," p. 388.

50. See Tull and Mehler, "Hidden Cost of Power-sharing." Similarly, Englebort and Hummel write that "In Africa, political violence usually provides the means of fighting for (re)insertion into the system by marginalized and excluded groups. It does not represent attempts to challenge, reform, revolutionize, or break away from the state." See "Let's Stick Together: Understanding Africa's Secessionist Deficit," *African Affairs*, vol. 104, issue 416 (2005), p. 417.

51. See Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 66.

52. IRIN Interview with Major General Muhammad Gani, *Integrated Regional Information Network*, July, 2000.

53. Edward Luttwak, "Steering into Civil War," *Globe and Mail*, February 14, 2005, p. A17. According to research conducted by Daniel Kahneman and Jonathan Renshon, leaders disabuse themselves of the assumption that violence does not solve anything. Being a "hawk," they say, is more often regarded as the preferred option among policymakers. Their work suggests that decision-makers are psychologically biased in favor of conflict rather than concession. See "Why Hawks Win," *Foreign Policy* (January/February 2007), pp. 34-38.

54. Barbara F. Walter, "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement," *International Organization*, vol. 51, no. 3 (Summer 1997), p. 335.

55. John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001), p. 3.

56. Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy: Toward a Diplomacy for the Twenty-First Century* (London: Free Press, 2002), p. 290.

57. See Lydia Polgreen, "Justifying A Costly War In Sri Lanka," *New York Times*, July 19, 2009, p. 6.

58. Ironically, perhaps, the report argued that since it was so difficult to create institutions that did not favor one sect, the end result was more likely partition rather than domination. David Brooks, "A Million Little Pieces," *New York Times*, June 5, 2007.

59. Edward Wong, "Iraq's Curse: A Thirst for a Final Crushing Victory," *New York Times*, June 3, 2007.

60. Snyder and Jervis, "Civil War and the Security Dilemma," pp. 29-30.

61. The term "akazu" means Little House and refers to the extremist members associated with the Hutu regime. See Bruce D. Jones, "Civil War, the Peace Process, and Genocide in Rwanda," in Taisier M. Ali and Robert O. Matthews eds., *Civil Wars in Africa: Roots and Resolution* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's, 1999), pp. 60, 78.

62. Francis Fukuyama, "Women and the Evolution of World Politics," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 77, no. 5 (September/October, 1998), p. 36.

63. "Angola's Elusive Oil Riches," *New York Times*, (editorial) June 15, 2004, p. A22.

64. Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 78, no. 4 (July/August 1999), p. 36.

65. See International Crisis Group, "Sierra Leone: Time for a New Military and Political Strategy," April 11, 2001, p. iii.

66. Edward Wong, "Iraq's Curse: A Thirst for a Final Crushing Victory," *New York Times*, June 3, 2007, sec. 4, p. 3.

67. In Somaliland, as we shall see, the opposite was also true. The government of Ibrahim Egal acquired national armed forces because he thought it would enhance the likelihood that Somaliland would receive international recognition.

68. Robert Jackson, and Carl G. Rosberg, "Sovereignty and Underdevelopment: Juridical Statehood in the African Crisis," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol. 24, no. 1 (1986), p. 2.

69. See for example, Nicholas Sambanis, "Partition as a Solution to Ethnic War: An Empirical Critique of the Theoretical Literature," *World Politics*, 52, no. 4 (2000), pp. 437-483; Radha Kumar, "The Troubled History of Partition," *Foreign Affairs*, 76, no. 1, (1997), pp. 22-34; I. William Zartman, "Posing the Problem of State Collapse," in *Collapsed States*; Paul Collier, "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy," and Mohammed Ayoob, "State Making, State Breaking, and State Failure," both in *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, eds. Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall (Washington: United States Institute of Peace 2001).

70. Donald Horowitz "The Cracked Foundations of the Right to Secede," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 14, no. 2 (2003), pp. 5-17.

71. Walter, "Civil War Settlement," p. 355.

72. Englebert and Hummel, "Let's Stick Together," pp. 400 and 402. While they are somewhat vague on the number, the authors cite Eritrea's secessionist war against Ethiopia; Katanga and South Kasai in Congo; Biafra in Nigeria; Casamance in Senegal; southern Sudan; Cabinda in Angola; as well as the activities of liberation movements in Mali, Niger and the Comoros. See their chart on p. 401.

73. Article 3 (b) says that the "Objective of the Union shall be to: ... defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member states." Article 4 (b) says that the "Union shall function in accordance with the following principles: ... Respect for borders on achievement of independence."

74. See for example, Laurence Piper, "Nationalism Without a Nation: the Rise and Fall of Zulu Nationalism in South Africa's Transition to Democracy, 1975-99," *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 8, no. 1 (2002), pp. 73-94. The call for secession was most explicitly made by Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini. While it was publicly denounced by Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, his nationalist rhetoric was seen as an attempt to draw attention to his movement and allow him a more prominent role in the post-apartheid political process. See also the discussion of various Somaliland clan factions in post-Siad Barre Somalia in chapter 3.

75. Ayoob, "State Making, State Breaking, and State Failure," p. 138.

76. Taisier M. Ali and Robert O. Matthews, "Conclusion: The Long and Difficult Road to Peace," in Taisier M. Ali and Robert O. Matthews eds., *Durable Peace: Challenges for Peacebuilding in Africa* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), p. 399.

77. Englebert and Hummel, "Let's Stick Together," p. 417. Donald Horowitz also concludes that the infrequency of successful secessions can be attributable not to the legitimacy of contemporary borders or the efficacy of conflict resolution but to the inherent weakness of many secessionist movements relative to the strength and determination of the central governments which seek to defeat them. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985), p. 265.

78. Steven R. David, *Third World Coups d'Etat and International Security* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1987), pp. 79-84.

79. As Herbert Howe has observed, the supplies of weapons are difficult to monitor but have likely involved transfers of several million weapons. See Herbert Howe, *Ambiguous Order*, chapter 3.

80. Posen, "Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival*, 35, no. 1 (1993), p. 30.

81. Herbert Howe, *Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2001), p. 88.

82. Snyder and Jervis, "Civil War and the Security Dilemma," p. 26.

83. See Robert D. Kaplan, "History's Cauldron" *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1991, 93-104; "A Reader's Guide to the Balkans," *New York Times Book Review*, April 18 1993, pp. 1, 30-32; and *Balkan Ghosts: A Journey Through History*. For criticisms of this view, see Noel Malcolm, "Seeing Ghosts," *National Interest* (Summer 1993), pp. 83-88; and V. P. Gagnon, "Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia," *International Security*, vol. 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/95), pp. 133-134.

84. Englebert and Hummel, "Let's Stick Together," p. 418.

85. Margery Perham writes that, at the time of writing, Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie claimed “the whole of the modern Eritrea and also Italian Somalia as ‘lost provinces’ The claim is based . . . upon some rather indefinite references to early history and migrations, almost every sentence of which cries out for comment or correction.” See *The Government of Ethiopia* (London: Faber and Faber, 1969), pp. 480-481.

86. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic,” 30-31; Snyder and Jervis, “Civil War and the Security Dilemma,” p. 26; Stephen Van Evera, “Hypotheses on Nationalism and War,” *International Security*, vol. 18, no. 4 (Spring 1994), pp. 23 and 25.

87. Posen, “Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” p. 31.

88. On this point, see Snyder and Jervis, “Civil War and the Security Dilemma.” They argue that a *perceptual* element is crucial to a complete explanation of the security dilemma. See also John J. Mearsheimer, “Reckless States and Realism,” *International Relations*, vol. 23, no. 2 (2009), p. 247.

89. Paul Collier, “Economic Causes of Civil Conflict” in Crocker, Hampson, Aall, *Turbulent Peace*, p. 152.

90. Notably, Horowitz downplays the significance of wealth as an economic motivator for secession. “Economic loss or gain plays the smallest role,” he says, “ethnic anxiety the largest.” Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p. 259 and pp. 249-250.

91. Collier cites Eritrea as a region with twice the per capita income of the rest of Ethiopia. Collier, “Economic Causes of Civil Conflict,” p. 152.

92. Tony Hodges, *Angola: Anatomy of an Oil State* (Oxford: James Currey, 2004), p. 26. While Angola’s diamond wealth is distributed in a number of regions in Angola, it was generally beyond the territory encompassed by “Savimbiland.”

93. Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p. 236.

94. See Graham Bowley, “Declaring Something a Lot Like Independence,” *New York Times*, March 2, 2008, sec. 4, p. 1.

95. This tendency is noted by Henry Kissinger, *Years of Renewal*, p. 944.

96. Ted Robert Gurr, “Minorities and Nationalists: Managing Ethnopolitical Conflict in the New Century,” in *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict*, Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2001), p. 164.

97. Van Evera, “Hypotheses on Nationalism and War,” p. 17.

98. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” p. 30.

99. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p. 267.

100. Tull and Mehler argue, for example, that while Africa’s incidence of violence—the highest in the world—“should not be attributed solely to outside actors, it remains nonetheless true that the foreign policies of Western countries continue to have an appreciable impact on the political processes on the continent.” See “The Hidden Cost of Power-Sharing,” p. 386.

101. That is, at least until they have a realistic chance of achieving power in government. Some scholarship has pointed to the fact that rebel movements will undertake the most heinous acts of cruelty in order to draw in the international community and benefit from the vast resources they provide in their efforts to

alleviate suffering. See for example, Danny Hoffman, "The Civilian Target in Sierra Leone and Liberia".

102. South Africa provided various forms of support against regimes in Congo, Mozambique, and Angola.

103. This is the general argument of Tull and Mehler, in "Hidden Cost of Power-Sharing."

104. See, for example, René Lemarchand, "Consociationalism and Power-Sharing in Africa: Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo," *African Affairs*, vol. 106, no. 422, p. 11, footnote 22.

105. Lijphart argues that in all of the consociational democracies "the cartel of elites was either initiated or greatly strengthened during times of international crisis, especially the First and Second World Wars." See Arend Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy," *World Politics*, vol. 21, no. 2 (January 1969), p. 217.

106. Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," *Foreign Policy* (November/December 2004), p. 58.

107. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, p. 240.

108. Douglas Hurd before the Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, June 1993. Cited in Baylis and Smith, *Globalization of World Politics*, 1st edition, p. 367.

109. Chester Crocker, "Intervention: Toward Best Practices and a Holistic View, in *Turbulent Peace*, Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall, eds. (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2001), p. 238. More recently, in 2006 Senator Joseph Biden and Leslie Gelb proposed a plan to decentralize Iraq by "giving each ethno-religious group ... room to run its own affairs." Referred to by others as the "Biden plan" or "the partition" (because it cited Bosnia as an example), President George W. Bush claimed that such a plan would be "like pouring oil on fire" and was, accordingly, "not even a starter." Biden was forced to clarify his views and later denied that his intention was partition. See Joseph R. Biden Jr. and Leslie H. Gelb, "Unity Through Autonomy in Iraq," *New York Times*, May 1, 2006 and Peter Wallsten and Paul Richter, "Bush Dismisses the Idea of Partitioning Iraq," *Los Angeles Times*, August 16, 2006, p. A12.

110. Mark Zacher notes that the "1963 OAU Charter contains a strong article in support of territorial integrity (Article 3), but a much more specific statement was adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in 1964 after both Morocco and Somalia had launched wars of territorial revision against neighboring states. All member states except Morocco and Somalia approved a resolution calling on members 'to respect the borders on the achievement of national independence.'" See Mark W. Zacher, "The Territorial Integrity Norm: International Boundaries and the Use of Force," *International Organization*, vol. 55, no. 2 (Spring 2001), p. 222.

111. See, for example, the Communique of the 139th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, 29 June 2008, Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt.

112. Englebort and Hummel write: "It can plausibly be argued ... that the OAU set rules of territorial integrity that were more stringent than elsewhere. Yet, the continent-wide nature of these rules fails to account for the few actual instances of African separatism. In addition, the incapacity of weak African

states to enforce them suggests that they may not *per se* be an impediment to separatist action.” See “Let’s Stick Together,” 412, footnote, p. 32.

113. See Zacher, “The Territorial Integrity Norm,” pp. 215-250.

114. Communiqué, 138th Meeting of the Peace and Security Council (of the AU), June 29, 2008, Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

115. By 1995, the RPF had already lost key members of their organization—the prime minister and the minister of the interior being two—who subsequently made allegations about the government’s abuses of power and its violation of human rights. See Filip Reyntjens, “Rwanda, Ten Years On: From Genocide to Dictatorship,” *African Affairs*, vol. 103, issue. 411, p. 178.

116. The most prominent discussion of this issue is presented in Mats Berdal and David M. Malone eds. *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2000).

117. Jeffrey Herbst, “Economic Incentives, Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa,” *Journal of African Economies*, vol. 9, no. 3 (2000), pp. 270-294.

118. Jonas Savimbi’s successor, Isaias Samakuva, emphasized how Savimbi “would punish people who take everything for themselves and not look after the inferiors.” According to Samakuva, “He would not contemplate his generals living nicely and his soldiers starving.” Interview with the author, July 14, 2004.

119. Barbara Crossette, “Singling Out Sierra Leone, U.N. Council Sets Gem Ban,” *New York Times*, July 6, 2000.

120. See Charles Cater, “The Political Economy of Conflict and UN Intervention: Rethinking the Critical Cases of Africa” in *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance*, Karen Ballentine & Jake Sherman eds. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2003), p. 29. Regarding the involvement of Liberia’s President Charles Taylor in the same conflict, a report published by the International Crisis Group also noted that “President Taylor is not just interested in money and diamonds. As one senior Liberian commentator put it, ‘he’s in Sierra Leone not for the money but for his political agenda.’” International Crisis Group, *Sierra Leone: Time for a New Political and Military Strategy*, April 11, 2001, p. 13.

121. Cited in John G. Stoessinger, *Henry Kissinger: The Anguish of Power* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), p. 68.

122. Cited in James Traub, “Taunting the Bear,” *New York Times*, August 10, 2008, Sec. 4, p. 1.