

Successful Secessionist Movements and the Uncertainty of  
Post-Secession Quality of Life

by  
Chloe Stein

A THESIS

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Presented May 9, 2016  
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David Bernell

A prevalent assumption among those engaging in secessions is that their quality of life will improve once they establish their own nation. This study examined this assumption by looking at how a successful secession impacted peoples' quality of life. Despite the sheer number of active secessionist movements, very few actually manage to successfully create a nation. Since World War II there have only been four: Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971, Eritrea from Ethiopia in 1993, Timor-Leste from Indonesia in 2002, and South Sudan from Sudan in 2011. Five indices were used to assess both pre- and post-secession quality of life for these four successful movements. Four of these indices were political rights, civil liberties, casualties of war, and economics, while the fifth index, overall quality of life, was a composite measure of the other four. Furthermore, post secession was broken down into time intervals to determine whether quality of life improves as time goes on and movements get farther away from their liberation. Analyses found few trends across any of the indices or time periods. Thus the quality of life of people after they successfully seceded is uncertain.

Key Words: Secession, Quality of Life

Corresponding e-mail address: [Steinch@oregonstate.edu](mailto:Steinch@oregonstate.edu)

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APPROVED:

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David Bernell, Mentor, representing Political Science

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Sarah Henderson, Committee Member, representing Political Science

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Eric Hill, Committee Member, representing Honors College

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Toni Doolen, Dean, Oregon State University Honors College

I understand that my project will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University, Honors College. My signature below authorizes release of my project to any reader upon request.

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Chloe Stein, Author

## Successful Secessionist Movements and the Uncertainty of Post-Secession Quality of Life

As Catalanian poet Salvador Espriu so eloquently put it in his 1968 book *La Pell de Brau (The Bull-Hide)*, "...men cannot exist if they are not free." Freedom to most people is the ability to choose the course of one's own life without the interference of others, be it other people or a larger governmental body. We have an innate desire for freedom and it manifests itself in various ways. Children exert their freedom by exploring their surroundings, teenagers rebel against their parents, and adults choose where they work, who they marry, and where they live. Yet it is the same innate feelings that cause these actions which can also swell to drive freedom fighters to stand up and topple governments.

Politically, this desire for freedom is regarded as the notion of self-determination. It was first introduced as a reputed human right by Woodrow Wilson in his Fourteen Points Speech. Wilson believed that every nationality should have the right to choose who governs them. The right to self-determination became an official human right with the signing of the Atlantic Charter by US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in 1941. The Charter states that "they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."<sup>1</sup> With its official recognition as a human right, self-determination became the international standard for any people seeking to remove themselves from their current situation. Under the banner of self-determination, the urge for freedom has been the genesis for revolutions, separatist movements, decolonization, dissolutions, and secessions across the globe and throughout history.

One specific manifestation of self-determination is secession, or the act whereby a region of a nation removes itself from that larger nation. An example of this is Catalonia's 375 year fight to gain independence from Spain; the grievances of which have remained unchanged from 1640 until now. Although Catalonia is just one example, there are currently hundreds of these movements occurring across the globe, each at differing degrees of legitimacy and commitment to their secessionist ideals. Yet of even the most committed and the most legitimate very few of these movements actually successfully secede. In modern history (largely defined as post-World War II) there have only been four successful secessions. These successes are Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971, Eritrea from Ethiopia in 1993, Timor-Leste from Indonesia in 2002, and South Sudan from Sudan in 2011.

Each movement, both the successes and those still ongoing, go into their battle for freedom with the simple assumption that with their freedom they will improve their quality of life. This thesis examined the validity of this assumption. It used five indices to assess both pre- and post-secession quality of life for the four successful movements. Four of these indices were political rights, civil liberties, casualties of war, and economics, while the fifth index, overall quality of life, was a composite measure of the first four created by the author specifically for this study. Furthermore, post-secession was broken down into time intervals to determine whether quality of life improved as movements got further away from their liberation.

Analyses found few quantitative trends across any of the indices for the four cases. This means that in regards to the five indices, there appears to be no certainty in the resulting quality of life of secessionists after they successfully secede. Yet it was



discovered that each movement established an authoritarian dictatorship in the early years of nationhood. Once past these early years, the futures of each new nation resulted from whether or not they were able to displace these dictators. This indicates that good political institutions significantly influence the future success of a secessionist movement as a nation. Yet one should be wary about focusing on political institutions exclusively as although they are highly important, they do not arise out of nothing and do not remain standing without equal emphasis on social and economic development.

### **Literature Review**

The secessionist actions of the Catalonians are not to be confused with that of a revolution as they do not wish to overthrow the government; they just want to leave Spain to become their own country. A secessionist movement is a movement whose main aim is to remove itself from the larger nation in which it finds itself. Thus a successful secessionist movement is one in which the movement not only successfully removes itself from its former nation, but in turn manages to create a new government to rule the newly liberated territory that is recognized both internally and internationally. These types of movements are distinctly different from separatist movements. Separatist movements, unlike secessionist movements, do not want to remove themselves from the larger state entity; they instead only want regional autonomy.

Regional autonomy is the decentralization of the federal government for a specific region of a state.\* The amount of autonomy is dependent upon the agreement reached with the parent nation, but can include things like the right to form their own government, the right to levy taxes, and the right to interstate commerce. What keeps these regions tied to their parent nation is commonly foreign affairs and the sharing of a defense force.

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\* When all regions of a nation have regional autonomy the nation is considered a federation.

For example, Kurdistan has regional autonomy in Iraq as it wanted control over the oil revenues gained from the oil fields that pepper the region. But Kurdistan does not conduct foreign affairs with the United States; instead the United States interacts with Iraq and the Iraqi Armed Forces.<sup>2</sup>

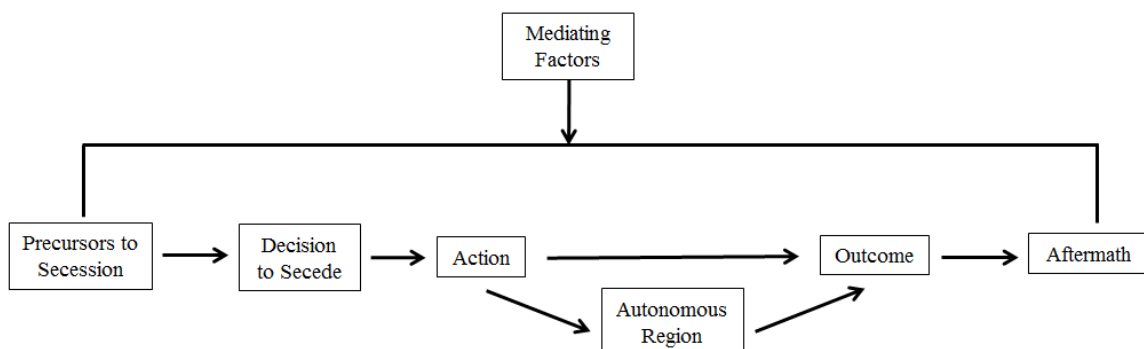
Further the distinction between secessionist movements and separatist movements is perhaps best captured by noting the difference between the movements in Basque and Catalonia, two regions of Spain who have taken distinctly different approaches to the wealth gap between their regions and the rest of the nation. Basque and Catalonia are the two richest regions of the nation, and both believe that their wealth is being taken from them to power the rest of the nation's economy. In response, Basque pushed for the creation of the Basque Country, an autonomous region within the nation which retains control over its own economy.<sup>3</sup> Conversely Catalonia, recognizing its wealth, has pushed for the Spanish government to let it leave the nation entirely and create its own nation.<sup>4</sup> Catalonia is a secessionist movement; Basque is a separatist movement.

Often these two types of movements are confused for one another as central governments will commonly offer regional autonomy to secessionist movements in an attempt to placate them. A prime example of this placation is China's handling of Tibet. Although Tibetans have wanted to be their own country for a while, China, who has had Tibet as a tributary since the Qing Dynasty, has been unwilling to lose control over the region and so gave it greater power over its internal affairs.<sup>5</sup>

There also is a distinction to be made between secessionist movements and both the end of colonialism and the dissolution of a nation. Dissolutions of states occur when

the state splits up and no single part remains of the previous whole. In such instances the original state ceases to exist, yet in a secessionist movement the larger nation continues on despite a region breaking away from it. Although in some cases a part of the previous whole will take up the mantle of the previous entity (for example, Russia taking the place of the USSR after its fall), the entity itself no longer exists. Prominent examples of dissolutions are the fall of the Soviet Union, and the break ups of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.<sup>6, 7, 8</sup> The reason that dissolutions are different from secessions is the same reason that the end of the colonialism is distinctly differently from secessionism. In these two cases it is unclear whether the system collapsed due to the desires of the smaller body or because the larger body simply realized that it was no longer economical to retain control of the smaller entity. As for decolonization, although desires for independence were present before, it is not until after the UN's issuing of General Assembly resolution 1514 in 1960, which demanded that colonial powers give their colonies freedom, that one starts to see a major wave of decolonization.<sup>9</sup> For the next decade and a half, colonial empires fell as a host of new countries gained their independence (e.g., Algeria gained independence from France in 1962; Kenya from the United Kingdom in 1963; Mozambique from Portugal in 1975). Yet in successful secessionist movements they gain their independence through their own actions or through the actions of those with shared interests, not because it was simply handed to them by a larger government.

Figure 1. General Model of Secessionist Movements.



Each secessionist movements follows a general model (see Figure 1), in which grievances lead to the decision to secede, which leads to the act of secession, leading to an outcome, and then the aftermath. All of these stages are influenced by overarching mediating factors such as amount of violence, type of government in the nation, economic status, and current world issues. Most movements become stuck at the action stage, leaving them to be perpetually ongoing. There are currently hundreds of actively ongoing secessionist movements and as such most of the literature about these movements focusses on this stage of the model. To keep with the discussion of Catalonia, Dowling argues that Catalonia's economic growth relative to Spain's economic decline following the 2008 global financial crisis paired with increased dissatisfaction with current political parties has led to a recent uptick in Catalanian desires to be free from Spanish control.<sup>10</sup> In their book Sisson and Rose showed how the unresponsiveness to the Bengali's desires for autonomy led to increased insolation within East Pakistan, which bred both secessionist desire among the Bengalis and distrust among the Western Pakistanis. Further, it analyzes how over the course of a relatively short period of time a separatist movement became a secessionist movement, and the implications this had on the movement, most notably that of the movement's leader's continual attempts to

reconcile Bengali differences with Pakistan throughout the duration of the Bangladesh Liberation War.<sup>11</sup>

The action stage can be plotted onto a continuum of violence, with the two extremes being a completely peaceful vote for independence, like was seen in Scotland, or a horrifically violent movement, like that which was seen in Chechnya. An example of a middle ground for this continuum would be Quebec's movement for independence. The violent actions of the secessionist group Front de libération du Québec culminated in the kidnapping of a British diplomat and the kidnapping and murder of a provincial cabinet member. Yet these acts were so grisly that they turned the entire movement off of violence for the rest of Quebec's movement, and in the end Quebec held two referendums (one in 1980, one in 1995) regarding its independence both of which resulted in not enough support a new nation of Quebec.<sup>12</sup> For some movements, the action stage is uninterrupted and undeterred. These movements move straight from their decision to secede through the active movement to an outcome. Other secessions though may be waylaid by governmental attempts to placate them with regional autonomy in the hopes of preventing territorial loss for the larger nation. Such movements thus have an interrupted action stage.

The outcome, although appearing to be a simple assessment of whether a movement succeeded or failed to create their own nation, is more complicated than it first appears. Take the example of Quebec; their referendum resulted in a no vote, so does this count as a failed movement, or just an ongoing movement that hit a roadblock? Or are the ongoing movements only those that have not gotten a chance to hold a referendum? Further how does this apply to those movements that travel a more violent path? Also

how can one determine if a movement is over or just slinking into the shadows after an embarrassing defeat? Considering that Catalonia's has been going on for 375 years, there is likely to have been periods of less activity during that length of time. Because of this, the distinction between an ongoing and a failed movement is unclear.

Thus the focus of this paper will be on successful secessionist movements as one can clearly determine if a movement was successful by simply seeing if a new nation was created due to the movement's efforts. Since World War II there have only been four successful secessions: Bangladesh in 1971, Eritrea in 1993, Timor-Leste in 2002, and South Sudan in 2011.<sup>13</sup> All four of these movements were the result of violent secessions, which should be noted for two reasons. First it has an effect on where these new nations are starting from (i.e. war torn regions) and second it is important to note that no peaceful movement has been successful since WWII. While not the focus of this paper, it would be interesting to study why this is.

Very little of the literature on secessions focusses on the aftermaths of secessionist movements. A few articles on South Sudan and a book on Timor-Leste are about the extent of the research that discusses the relationship that these countries' secessionist past has on their current world standing.<sup>14, 15, 16</sup> Yousif and Rothbart argue that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement's (CPA) inability to resolve major areas of dispute and its incomplete implementation has made it difficult for Sudan and South Sudan to negotiate peace. Two particular areas of tension that the authors point to are the Sudan People's Liberation Movement's (SPLM; the main secessionist movement and now the main political party in the south) continual support of offshoots in the North who are fighting the Sudanese government in regions like Darfur and control over the oil rich

border region of Abyei. The authors further argue that UN's attempts to stop the two sides from fighting have created a tentative peace but have done nothing to resolve the main issues between the two nations.<sup>17</sup> Alternatively, Kingsbury's book examines the effect that Timor-Leste's years under Indonesian rule had on how their secessionist movement took shape and the fragile state that was formed with their independence. He argues that Indonesia continues to play a role in East Timorese politics (for example, backing coups against the established government) and that this has created frustrations in the process for democratization in the new nation.<sup>18</sup>

This study addresses the lack of literature on the aftermath of secession. It answers the question what effect does successful secession has on the quality of life of the secessionists. This study uses two techniques to answer this question. First, it compares the quality of life of secessionists after they seceded to that of their quality of life before they gained independence to see if it got better. Secondly, and more importantly, it separates the aftermaths out into time periods to see if there is a change in the quality of life as a secessionist movement becomes more established as a nation. This allows for the chance to see if there are trends that occur over time, which would potentially allow for predictions based on future generations to come. Considering the myriad of secessionist movements that keep arising, one must start with the base assumption that quality of life increases after a successful secessionist movement.

### **Methods**

To determine if quality of life of people increases after secession, each of the four successful secessions (Bangladesh, Timor-Leste, Eritrea, and South Sudan) were measured across four indices—Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Casualties of War, and

Economics—which were then combined to create a composite score for overall quality of life (Quality of Life). Each of these five indices were divided up by time period for each movement, which was dependent upon the length time that each movement has been independent.

### **Definitions**

Due to the varying lengths of time between the present day and when each movement achieved secession, each movement has been broken down into four different time periods—pre-independence (before secession), immediate (less than five years after independence), one generation past independence, and two generations past independence. As Bangladesh is the only successful secession to have more than two generations pass since its independence, it is the only one included in this level.

Alternatively, South Sudan, the shortest of the four, is still in the first five years after independence and thus only has data for immediately following its independence. Below in Table 1 are years in which each movement underwent each time period so as to provide some historical context for when each secessionist movement occurred.

*Table 1. Dates of Time Period.*

Time Period	Bangladesh	Timor-Leste	Eritrea	South Sudan
Pre-Independence	1947–1971	1975–2002	1961–1993	1983–2011
Immediate	1971–1976	2002–2007	1993–1998	2011–Present
One Generation Past	1976–1991	2007–Present	1998–Present	
Two Generations Past	1991–Present			

### **Indices**

Three of the five indices that were used in this study are measures commonly used in political science for different aspects of quality of life (Political Rights, Civil Liberties, and GDP PPP per capita). The fourth index, Casualties of War, was created to account for



the sheer loss of population that these movements often endure, particularly before independence. The final index, Quality of Life, was created by the author to quantify a highly qualitative construct. The use of numbers rather than descriptors allows for a quicker understanding of the differences in quality of life at a given time period, and allows for an easier recognition of trends in the quality of life of secessionists. The scores for each index provide a representative snapshot of the time period. Lastly, as all of these indices do not cover regions of countries, but rather only focus on entire nations themselves, the scores for each movement's pre-independence time period are compositions of the parent scores and historical data attesting to whether or not a movement was worse off than the rest of the nation pre-liberation.

*Political Rights.* Freedom House issues a Freedom of the World Report that is comprised of numerical scores for both political rights and civil liberties. The overall score for political rights is composed of the individual scores given to a nation based on 10 political rights indicators, which take the form of questions. Three of these questions are regarding the electoral process (e.g., Are election commissions or other election authorities independent and free from government or other pressure and interference?); four questions regard political pluralism and participation (e.g. Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system open to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?); and the remaining three are about the function of government (e.g. Are allegations of corruption by government officials thoroughly investigated and prosecuted without prejudice, particularly against political opponents?). Each question is answered on a scale from 0 to 4, with the highest possible score for all of the political rights

indicators being a composite score of 40. Based on a country's score on all the questions they are assigned a rating of 1 through 7 ( $36-40 = 1$ ;  $0-5 = 7$ ), where 1 indicates that a country enjoys a wide range of political rights while a 7 indicates that the country has no political rights whatsoever.<sup>19</sup>

*Civil Liberties.* The methodology for civil liberties is similar to that of political rights as they are both take from the same Freedom of the World Report by Freedom House. The overall civil liberties score is composed of 15 indicators; four questions of which regard freedom of expression and belief (e.g. Are religious institutions and communities free to practice their faith and express themselves in public and private?); three questions for association and organization rights (e.g. Are peaceful protests, particularly those of a political nature, banned or severely restricted?); four regarding rule of law (e.g. Are law enforcement officials free from the influence of non-state actors, including organized crime, powerful commercial interests, or other groups?); and four on personal autonomy and individual rights (e.g. Do individuals enjoy freedom of travel or choice of residence, employment, or institution of higher education?). The total possible score is a 60, and scores of 53-60 are awarded a 1, while scores of 0-7 are given a 7.<sup>20</sup>

*Casualties of War.* As all of these successful secessionist movements are the product of violence, this index encapsulates the loss in population these movements suffered either due to their people being killed, their people fleeing from the destruction (refugees), or internal displacement. To remain consistent, the egregiousness of loss has been placed onto a scale from 1 to 7, with 1 representing little to no loss of population, while a 7 accounts for huge losses in population.

*Economics.* The income of the average citizen is measured in international dollars using gross domestic product (GDP) per capita with purchasing power parity (PPP). Gross domestic product is the monetary value of all goods and services produced within a nation during a specific period of time. GDP per capita divides the GDP by the population to determine the average income of a nation's citizens. Finally, accounting for PPP helps to eliminate differences in GDP that arise due to the strength of the nation's currency. The World Bank provides numerical details for the GDP (PPP) per capita for every country since 1990.<sup>21</sup> Under this section is also a discussion of these nations' poverty levels. It should be noted that the World Bank considers living on \$1.90 living in abject poverty. This equates to an annual income of \$693.50. This is the extreme low for the international poverty line; the higher poverty line is set at \$3.10 a day, which equates to an annual income of \$1131.50.

*Quality of Life.* The measure Quality of Life is a measure of the overall well-being of the people in these secessionist movements. Although the concept of quality of life has come to be understood as being comprised of both environmental and psychological factors, the measure in this study quantifies only the environmental factors that influence a person's well-being.<sup>22</sup> There is little consensus over how to study quality of life (health related quality of life is often measured by reduction in pain or symptoms, while psychologists measure it on a scale of happiness) and most attempts to measure this concept use some sort of stand in for quality of life (for example, reduction in crime, increases in freedoms, or just general happiness).<sup>23</sup> In the field of political science, the United National Development Program has long used the Human Development Index (HDI) to assess people's quality of life across the globe. The HDI is a composite measure

of life expectancy, income, and years of education, and although the idea for a composite measure to assess quality of life tracks with the conceptual understanding that quality of life is comprised of numerous different factors, the HDI is not composed of the relevant factors needed to assess the quality of life of a movement of people desiring to create their own government.

As such the measure of quality of life in this study was a composite score of the four indices (Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Economics, and Casualties of War), and looks at the interplay between these factors to get an overall assessment of quality of life, rather than just seeing it as sum of each individual part. For example, Timor-Leste during its immediate time period had political rights, civil liberties, and casualties of war scores (3, 4, and 1, respectively) which would seem to indicate a high quality of life. Yet at the time the East Timorese were incredibly poor, had no hope for economic prosperity any time soon, and were facing political corruption and rampant gang violence. Taking these factors into consideration, it was determined that overall Timor-Leste had a poor quality of life, thus earning it a score of 5.

A country's quality of life was rated on a 7 point scale, where 1 is the highest possible score and 7 is the lowest. Countries with a rating of one (1) enjoy a great quality of life. They have extensive political rights and civil liberties with a high GDP per capita and few people getting killed. Countries with a rating of two (2) have a good quality of life although they are faced with some problems. Countries with a rating of three (3) have a fair quality of life, but lose out on the rating of a two because their issues may be more extensive or ingrained. Countries with a rating of four (4) have a mediocre quality of life. They face some threats to civil liberties, political rights, or their economies, and also

potentially saw some major loss of life. Countries with a rating of five (5) have a poor quality of life. They face significant threats to some combination of their civil liberties, political rights, and/or their economy, and also potentially saw some major loss of life. Countries with a rating of six (6) have a terrible quality of life. Yet for some combination of reasons, such as more money, less death, or more political rights and civil liberties, these countries are not as bad off as those who score as 7. Countries with a rating of seven (7) have an atrocious of quality of life. These countries have little to no political rights or civil liberties and dreadful economic conditions.

### Results

The results have been set up in a case study format. This allows for the idiosyncrasies of each movement to be accounted for (i.e., recognizing that the path to secession of Eritrea is distinctly different from that of Timor-Leste). Each movement has further be divided down by index, so as to allow for further explanation and elaboration of the numbers provided in the tables at the beginning of each case.

### Bangladesh

*Table 2. Measures of Quality of Life for Bangladesh.*

Time Period	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Casualties of War	GDP PPP per Capita (\$)	Quality of Life
Pre-Independence	2	4	5	135	4
Immediate	--	--	1	---	6
One Generation Past	2	4	1	871	4
Two Generations Past	4	4	1	3,123	3

*Note.* On the Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Casualties of War, and Quality of Life scales lower numbers indicate higher scores. For GDP per capita (PPP) higher numbers indicates more money. Dashes indicate missing data due databases not going back that far.

*Political Rights.* The Bengali movement started out as a separatist movement. The leader of the Awami League, the political party in Pakistan that represented the east wing

of the nation (i.e., Bangladesh), sought to make Pakistan into a loose federation in which Bangladesh would have its own regional government. In the years leading up to the war the Awami League retained a total majority in Pakistan's parliament, the National Assembly. The reason that this movement turned towards secession and away from regional autonomy was due to the actions of the leader of the opposition party who coveted the position of Prime Minister. This opposition leader, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was able to convince the interim leader of the central government to institute martial law and to suppress the Awami leadership in the east. Because the Awami League had already established a government in Bangladesh before the war, they were easily able to establish a new government after the war. Yet this did not stop the new nation from having issues in the years immediately following its independence. After ignoring rampant corruption by his family and military leaders, the leader of the Awami League, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (commonly known as Mujib), created a one-party state, ignored the guarantee for personal rights detailed in the new nation's constitution, and created a dictatorship based on the cult of personality that surrounded him. Mujib's assassination in a coup on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1975 brought about two years of military rule followed by a restoration of political parties and democratic institutions. The next president was overwhelmingly popular among the people, but despite progress towards democracy during this period, it was brought to a halt when he too was assassinated on May 30, 1981. The next president was dismissed by General H. M. Ershad, who reestablished martial law on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 1982. After four years, martial law was lifted, but the Ershad managed to retain control of the civil government.<sup>24</sup> Pro-democracy demonstrations led to the resignation of Ershad in 1990, leading to elections in 1991. Elections in 1996 saw the return of the Awami

Party (the political successor of the Awami League) to power.<sup>25</sup> The change in Bangladesh came with the turn of the century as tensions between the Awami Party and its opposition has led to various bouts of political violence due to the increasing polarization of the political system. The nation has seen some imprisonment and harassment of the political opposition, and in 2014 the main opposition party boycotted the national elections causing a further consolidation of power by the Awami Party.<sup>26</sup>

*Civil Liberties.* Since its independence, Bangladesh's civil liberties have not gotten any better, but neither have they gotten any worse (as seen in Table 2). Before their independence, the ethnic divide between the people of the movement and those in the rest of Pakistan was important. In West Pakistan the ethnic majority was Punjabi who spoke the language Urdu, while East Pakistan was comprised almost exclusively of Bengalis who spoke the language Bengali (or Bangla). These differences became important in 1948 when the central government, located in West Pakistan, decreed that the only official language of the new nation would be Urdu.<sup>27</sup> The immediate years following independence saw Bangladesh descended into a dictatorship in which the rule of law ceased to exist and bands of militias roamed the county side exacting their own justice. Further, any personal rights that were guaranteed in the constitution were ignored. After Mujib's assassination, the next two generations saw civil liberties maintained at a constantly mediocre level. One generation following independence saw the restoration of public order and the establishment of an independent judiciary branch of the government. It was during this period that Islam was made the state religion, but as 83 percent of the population is Muslim, this has led to little religious strife, although those of other religions do face some social discrimination.<sup>28</sup> Violence against women is common, but

contradictorily, the nation parliament also sets aside a specific number of additional seats specifically for women.<sup>29</sup> In recent years there has been some targeting of the Hindu minority, and although there is a ban on the size of gatherings (a maximum of 5 people), demonstrations have become increasing common as politics has become more polarized. The judiciary system has fallen victim to both corruption and discrimination towards ethnic and religious minorities. Generally people are free to move about the country, although violence against women remains a problem and women have less rights than men.<sup>30</sup>

*Casualties of War.* The Bangladesh Liberation War was considered to be genocide, as the Pakistanis systematically raped, murdered, and mutilated the Bengali people, and although the Bangladeshi government claims that the death tolls of their struggle for independence were close to 3 million deaths, independent sources have put the total closer to between 300,000 and 500,000 dead.<sup>31,32</sup> Since its liberation Bangladesh has not be engaged in a major war, thus earning it a score of 1.

*Economics.* In the immediate years following its independence, Bangladesh tried nationalizing its economy hoping that a socialist economy would resolves the issue of poverty that was rampant post secession. Yet the death of Mujib brought in a more conservative leadership who reversed Mujib's economic policies. In the generation following, the Bangladeshi economy advanced slowly, and the 1980s were marked by agrarian expansion and attempts to diversify the nation's industry. Notably, the major exports at the time were only clothing and seafood, and 70 percent of the people were still living in extreme poverty.<sup>33,34</sup> From the 1990s onward Bangladesh actively pursued an export-led economy which has led to a significant influx in wealth within the nation.



Policies to liberalize the economy by reducing tariffs and the number of banned goods have further allowed the nation's economy to thrive.<sup>35</sup> The economic boon in GDP PPP per capita from \$871 to \$3123 is reflected in the significant decrease in the nation's poverty rates. From 1992 to 2010, poverty decreased by 25 percent, and currently, only 31 percent of the population lives in poverty.<sup>36</sup>

*Quality of Life.* Bangladesh's quality of life has improved slightly, despite going through a rough patch in the immediate years following independence. The nation saw a drastic reduction in the quality of life under the authoritarian government of Mujib in the immediate aftermath of liberation, which not only reduced people's civil liberties and political rights, but also the socialization of the economy during this time caused there to be rampant poverty across the nation. A generation after liberation saw a return the quality of life that was seen during the pre-independence years. The most recent generation has seen a bit of an improvement in quality compared to past generations because, although there has been a recent uptick in political violence, there has been a significant reduction in poverty since the early 1990s.

### **Timor-Leste**

*Table 3. Measures of Quality of Life for Timor-Leste.*

Time Period	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Casualties of War	GDP PPP per Capita (\$)	Quality of Life
Pre-Independence	7	7	7	1,120	7
Immediate	3	4	1	1,178	5
One Generation Past	3	3	1	2,227	3

*Note.* On the Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Casualties of War, and Quality of Life scales lower numbers indicate higher scores. For GDP per capita (PPP) higher numbers indicates more money.

*Political Rights.* East Timor pre-independence "autonomous" government was comprised of politicians blatantly beholden to the Indonesians and thus supported

unification with Indonesia despite Indonesia's genocide.<sup>37</sup> The immediate years following liberation saw increasing amounts of state violence that was seen as arbitrary and without cause. During these years the government centralized power and limited the development of political institutions.<sup>38</sup> Further, both the government and police were corrupt: the former was pocketing the nation's oil revenues; the latter was extorting the people and taking bribes.<sup>39,40</sup> This led to an outbreak of gang violence from 2005 to 2008, which peaked in 2007. In 2007, the central government was ousted through democratic elections. A generation later, there is still some concern over corruption, as the current president has faced various corruption scandals over the last few years, and there is also some concern regarding his commitment to democracy. Yet the president reconciled with the leader of the opposition party (the party of the previous central government) and there has been an increase in the internal security and political stability in the nation.<sup>41</sup>

*Civil Liberties.* The start of Indonesia's annexation of East Timor is said to have begun on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 1975, with the murdering of five journalists who were there to cover what was going on. This served as an omen for the next 25 years and the distinct lack of civil liberties that the region had. The Indonesians committed genocide against the East Timorese, going so far as to move 150,000 Indonesian volunteers into the region from west Timor in an attempt to de-Timorize the east.<sup>42</sup> The East Timorese had no rights, as the Indonesians wanted them gone, hence the pre-independence score of a 7. In 1998 when the new Indonesian president Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibe announced that he would support a referendum for East Timorese independence, the military commanders, angry at his decision, created militia's which, although supported by the Indonesian military, were not an officially a part of it and thus out of Habibe's control.<sup>43</sup> In the years

following independence, civil liberties improved greatly (as shown in Table 3), but were still mediocre. Gatherings became subject to scrutiny and dissident speech was frowned upon, although attempts to outright banned it and back the ban with jail time were silenced. Religious freedom is respected as the population is 98 percent Roman Catholic. The largest issues in the immediate years were the fragility of the state and the absence of rule of law that went along with that.<sup>44</sup> Although, a generation later the nation has once again seen an improvement in civil liberties (an improvement from a 4 to a 3), civil liberties are still hampered by issue regarding freedom of the press. The largest hinders to freedom of press is the lack of the infrastructure and the illiteracy of the nation, which makes it hard for reports to get to places to cover stories and to disseminate news to a population whose majority cannot read. Although there are laws regulating gatherings that are political in nature, these laws have not been enforced in recent years. Travel is unrestricted and the East Timorese who fled to West Timor during the 1999 reign of terror are returning to the nation.<sup>45</sup>

*Casualties of War.* In East Timor, the Indonesians subjected the East Timorese to numerous human violations including to random massacres, starvation, coerced sterilization of their women, and forced movements of large populations (for a full list, see Hainsworth et al., 2000).<sup>46</sup> By the end of the Indonesia occupation over 200,000 East Timorese, or one third of East Timor's pre-invasion population, were either killed or had "disappeared." In response to East Timor's vote for independence Indonesian militias razed 70 percent of East Timor's buildings and a third of the East Timor's population fled to West Timor in the weeks following the ballot in an attempt to avoid retributive

bloodshed.<sup>47</sup> Since its liberation Timor-Leste has not be engaged in a war and has not suffered a significant loss in population.

*Economics.* In 2001, just a year before official independence while the nation was still under the rule of the UN, 36 percent of the population was in poverty, and unfortunately the East Timorese saw no immediate economic boon upon their liberation. This was in large part due to micromanaging of the budget at the federal level, which saw little money move from the central government into the hands of the local governments.<sup>48</sup> As the private economy of the nation was virtually non-existent at this time, the people were highly reliant on money from the federal government as a means of income. The change came with the withdrawal of the UN forces in 2006.<sup>49</sup> This served as signifier for international companies that Timor-Leste was finally stable enough to invest in. Yet this did not bring immediate financial relief as in 2007 the World Bank found that 50 percent of the East Timorese were living in extreme poverty.<sup>50</sup> The double in GDP per capita from \$1178 to \$2227 that the East Timorese saw after a generation past, hides the fact that Timor-Leste is presently one of the poorest countries in Southeast Asia.<sup>51</sup> For comparison, Indonesia's GDP per capita (PPP) for 2014, was \$10,517, while Cambodia, the next poorest country in the region had a GDP per capita (PPP) in 2014 of \$3,262.<sup>52</sup> Timor-Leste's GDP per capita (PPP) a generation after independence is only \$2227 because it has only one main export, coffee, and royalty payments from its offshore oil fields, which it jointly shares with Australia, accounts for 80 percent of the nation's GDP.<sup>53,54</sup> Despite these economic setbacks the nation has lowered its poverty to an estimated 37 percent as of 2011.<sup>55</sup>

*Quality of Life.* The East Timorese had an atrocious quality of life under the Indonesians, thus there is a significant improvement in their quality of life once they gained independence. It actually should also be noted that Timor-Leste became freed from the Indonesians in 1999, but that the United Nations created the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) until 2002. In this period although the East Timorese were not getting killed, their quality of life did significantly not improve and this period is often referred to as “benign colonialism”. Thus although the political system had some major issues and the economy was stagnated, it was still an improvement from the life these people were facing before. A generation later quality of life has improved once again. The nation is more stable, refugees are returning, and although the nation is the poorest in the region, the money in the average person’s pocket has almost doubled from what it was when the nation was created.

## Eritrea

*Table 4. Measures of Quality of Life for Eritrea.*

Time Period	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Casualties of War	GDP PPP per Capita (\$)	Quality of Life
Pre-Independence	7	6	5	749	6
Immediate	6	4	4	1,345	4
One Generation Past	7	7	2	1,411	7

*Note.* On the Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Casualties of War, and Quality of Life scales lower numbers indicate higher scores. For GDP per capita (PPP) higher numbers indicates more money.

*Political Rights.* In Ethiopia, the Eritreans were initially under an *ancien regime* ruled by an emperor who was overthrown in a coup d’etat by communist revolutionaries who quickly proved to be as fascist as the regime they overthrew.<sup>56</sup> Following their independence, the Eritreans thought that they were on the path towards democracy, yet this proved to not be true. Instead, the adoption of a constitution was indefinitely put on

hold, political parties based on religions or ethnicity were banned, and the nation has had the same president, Isaias Afwerki, since independence who has repeatedly expressed his dislike and distrust of multiparty political systems.<sup>57</sup> Presently Eritrea is considered to be one of the most repressive regimes in the world, so oppressive in fact that has been dubbed the “North Korea of Africa.” The government holds thousands of political prisoners and is highly intolerant of any dissident speech against the president.<sup>58</sup>

*Civil Liberties.* The worst case scenario for a secessionist movement is what happened in Eritrea. Eritrea’s pre-independence years were marked by few civil liberties as shown by its rating of a 6. In 1959 the Ethiopian emperor banned the labor movement and although Christian Eritreans were able to move elsewhere to find work, Muslim Eritreans found themselves unable to find work outside of Eritrea due to their religion.<sup>59</sup> This hatred towards Muslim Eritreans, who make up half of Eritrea’s population, carried over into the government of the fascist Derg who overthrew the emperor. One of the Derg’s military tactics during the war was to create a peasant army to march against Eritrean which was sold to the Ethiopian peasants as a Christian march against a Muslim invading force. It also was an attempt to drive a wedge between the two halves of the Eritrean fighting force—the predominantly Christian Eritrean People’s Liberation Forces (EPLF) and the predominately Muslim Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF).<sup>60</sup> In the years immediately following independence Eritrea’s major increase in civil liberties (earning it a score of a 4) was why the nation was heralded as an African success story in the making. During this time police cracked down on crime, the beggars were put to work, and the religious divide between Muslims and Christians did not lead to civil war. Despite the improvement, the immediate years still saw some major concern regarding

civil rights. The lack of beggars was because they were put to work in government work programs, Jehovah's Witnesses who refused to fight in the liberation war for religious reasons had their rights and livelihoods stripped away, and journalists were barred from investigating certain stories.<sup>61</sup> Many of the reasons that Eritrea is now called the "African North Korea" and scores a 7 on civil liberties have roots that can be traced back to these years immediately following success. The Eritrea of today is described as a "prison state"; the government controls every aspect of its citizen's lives from the time that they are 16 or 17. Children only go to school to get government permission slips to be able to go outside, and only children who go to school are able to get said slips. Child soldiers are common, and if a child goes through all their schooling when they turn 16 they become military conscripts for the rest of their life. This program had started as a temporary work force comprised of beggars as a way to revitalize the nation, yet now it enslaves its people.<sup>62</sup>

*Casualties of War.* In the case of Eritrea, the Eritrean War for Independence is estimated to have resulted in 100,000 deaths—60,000 of which were soldiers and 40,000 civilians—as well as nearly 1 million refugees, the majority of which fled to Sudan.<sup>63</sup> This does not account for the casualties and refugees resulting from the concurrent Ethiopian Civil War as the Tigrayan ethnic group suffered the brunt of those losses. In 1998, Eritrea became embroiled in the Eritrea-Ethiopian Border War, which lasted until 2000. This war is estimated to have affected around 370,000 Eritreans, a total which accounts for both death and displacement.<sup>64</sup> Notably, although Eritrea has not engaged in

another armed conflict since its border war with Ethiopia, three percent of its population is currently attempt to flee from its totalitarian government.<sup>65, \*</sup>

*Economics.* Eritrea's post-secession boon was in large part due to the terrible state that their economy was in before the independence. The Derg, who had removed the previous emperor, was a communist regime, and as such nationalized Eritrea's main factories. They then dismantled the rest of Eritrea's economy, leaving Eritrea with only the port of Asmara on the Red Sea and small agriculture as a means of making money.<sup>66</sup> Thus post-independence, when Eritrea had its own government, it established a fully functioning and healthy economy. At the time of its independence in 1993, 69 percent of the Eritrean population was measured to be living under the international poverty line.<sup>67</sup> Unfortunately for the nation, the economy was disrupted by the border war with Ethiopia in 1998, and Eritrea never managed to reestablish its economy after the war.<sup>68</sup> This accounts for the meager growth in income from \$1345 to \$1411 that is seen between the immediate and one generation past time periods. A 2004 estimated by the CIA placed the percentage of the population in extreme poverty around 50 percent.<sup>69</sup>

*Quality of Life.* Eritrea had a brief moment of post-liberation jubilation in which the Eritrean people's quality of life significantly increased. Unfortunately, this was then followed by the reality that life in fact got worse. In the immediate aftermath of freedom, wealth significantly increased, civil liberties increased, and although the political institutions looked troublesome the Eritrean people were unwilling to criticize their emancipators. A generation later this euphoria was gone; the political institutions that

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\* The reason Eritrea gets a rating of a 2 instead of a 1 normally given for lack of combat is because of the sheer number of Eritreans fleeing the government. This is the only time this index accounts for any losses in population that were not the result of armed conflict. Yet Eritreans are the third most common refugees fleeing across the Mediterranean Sea and into Europe, and this is a fact that cannot be ignored and needed to be accounted for in some way.



were once worrisome were now ingrained and had complete control of both the government and people's lives. Although the Eritrean-Ethiopian Border War was fought in the first five years after independence and caused a major amount of Eritreans to lose their lives, the notable effect it had on the nation was that it severely diminished future growth in the nation's economy. These economic effects were not felt until after the war was already over and the government had already lost its luster.

### South Sudan

*Table 5. Measures of Quality of Life for South Sudan.*

	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Casualties of War	GDP PPP per Capita (\$)	Quality of Life
Pre-Independence	7	7	7	3,592	7
Immediate	7	6	5	2,019	7

*Note.* On the Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Casualties of War, and Quality of Life scales lower numbers indicate higher scores. For GDP per capita (PPP) higher numbers indicates more money.

*Political Rights.* South Sudan was born with no political rights in large part due to the terrible civil wars endured in its struggle to gain independence. Before South Sudan's independence, the central government of Sudan was located in the north and comprised almost entirely of people whose ethno-religious identity was distinctly different from those in the south.<sup>70</sup> South Sudan almost immediately fell into a civil war after its secession which it is still currently being fought. This civil war the result of a long-standing rivalry between the president and his deputy.<sup>71</sup>

*Civil Liberties.* South Sudan's deprivation of civil liberties arose largely due to its distinctly different ethno-religious identity from that of the north. The north was predominately populated by Arab Muslims while the south was inhabited by Africans who either practiced tribal animist religions or some form of Christianity due to British

efforts to Christianize the region.<sup>72</sup> Throughout both Sudanese civil wars the central government tried to impose both Islam and Arabic on the people of the south.<sup>73</sup> Further the government imposed Muslim shari'a laws on the nation which treated all non-Muslims as second-class citizens.<sup>74,75</sup> In the period following secession the current civil war has impeded progress towards civil rights. The slight raise in the civil rights rating that the South Sudanese see after their secession is largely due to the fact that the current government of South Sudan is not Muslim and thus neither imposes shari'a laws upon the people nor forces them to convert to Muslim. Otherwise although the current interim constitution (official elections were supposed to be held in 2015) calls for the freedom of religions and press, the current war as found both journalists critical of the government and places of worship under attack.<sup>76</sup>

*Casualties of War.* Before independence, South Sudan is estimated to have lost half a million lives in the First Sudanese Civil War (1955-1972) and a further 2.5 million in the Second Sudanese Civil War (1983-2005).<sup>77,78</sup> In 1988 it was estimated that around 85 percent of the south's population was displaced due to the scorched-earth tactics used by both the north and the south.<sup>79</sup> Two years after independence, South Sudan fell into civil war which is estimated to have claimed over 50,000 lives so far and is responsible for 1.6 million internally displaced people.<sup>80</sup>

*Economics.* The reason for the drop in South Sudan's GDP per capita (PPP) from \$3592 to \$2019 is because South Sudan's economy is heavily reliant on oil—60 percent of their GDP is based on oil exports.<sup>81</sup> The pre-independence figure of \$3592 was taken in 2008 when oil prices were at an all-time high of \$145 per barrel, and while the post-independence figure is from 2015 when oil prices were \$40-\$60 dollars a barrel. Thus

because the nation's economy is so heavily reliant on oil, any fluctuation in oil prices is going to be felt by its citizens, and a severe drop from \$145 to \$60 is going to cause the GDP per capita (PPP) to drop significantly.<sup>82</sup> Also, the Second Sudanese Civil War, which was the main fight between the north and the south regarding potential southern secession and rights to oil in the south's oil fields, was brought to a close with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005. Thus from 2005 to 2011 South Sudan enjoyed the wealth brought in from the oil fields within its region, but still remained a part of Sudan. Measurements from 2009 (the most up to date data available) estimate that despite the region's oil wealth 51 percent of the South Sudanese population still lived in extreme poverty.<sup>83</sup> It is likely that the GDP (PPP) per capita of South Sudan before the CPA was much lower than the pre-independence figure listed, as the north unabashedly siphoned both oil and oil revenues from southern oil fields to the line the pockets of northern elites. Lastly, the civil war in the nation has all but eliminated the flow of oil out of the nation and what is being exported is being sold at prices drastically under market price.<sup>84</sup>

*Quality of Life.* The quality of life for the south Sudanese while a part of Sudan was atrocious. The south Sudanese were subjugated at every turn by a government that was only interested in the region for the oil it contained. It was long thought that if South Sudan became a nation it was going to be born a failed state, and so far this is proving to be true.<sup>85</sup> Upon independence, the quality of life for the average south Sudanese has not gotten much better. While there are fewer of them dying and they have a few more civil liberties, the nation is embroiled in another civil war which has destroyed both its political and economic infrastructures.

## Discussion

This study, like most of the literature on secessions, was set up with a case study approach. This is done because each movement arises for its own reasons, and although they can be generalized as the movement's grievances, the grievances of Catalonia against Spain are not the same ones that the Kurds have against Iraq or that the Scottish held against England. Thus most literature does not attempt to try to integrate these movements; preferring to instead analyze why a movement arose in the conditions existing in each given case (i.e., the conditions of the Kurds in Iraq). Yet in his article, Woods laments this approach to research on secession, arguing that "there is at present no coherent, systematic way of analyzing the origins of secession. ... The development of a theory would force political scientists to be explicit about the model of secession they hold in their minds as they reach for explanations of specific cases."<sup>86</sup> In recognition of this lack of assimilation of secessionist movements into a cohesive understanding of their precursors, actions, or aftermaths, the results of this study have been compiled. This has been done to see if there are any trends on any of the five indices studied—Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Economics, Casualties of War, and Quality of Life. It should also be noted here that there have only been four successful secessions in the time frame that this study looks at and thus there are a limited number of cases from which to ascertain a trend.

As shown by the data, there are no trends as to the effect that a successful secession has on the secessionist's quality of life. South Sudan saw its quality of life stay the same, Bangladesh's quality of life improved slightly, Timor-Leste's quality of life improved significantly, and Eritrea's got worse. Further there is no trend as to whether

Political Rights, Civil Liberties, or Economics would development or depress. Bangladesh had its Political Rights worsened, for South Sudan they stayed the same, in Eritrea they got better before returning to the previous level, and Timor-Leste saw an improvement. In regards to Civil Liberties, South Sudan and Timor-Leste saw improvement, but Timor-Leste's was more significant than South Sudan's, while Bangladesh's stayed the same and Eritrea's worsened. Economics saw the closest thing to a trend as three of the four countries (Bangladesh, Eritrea, and Timor-Leste) saw economic improvement, but there was no trend as to when this development would occur, and the final nation (South Sudan) saw its economy decrease. The only trend that occurred was that all of these nations saw fewer Casualties of War after secession, but there was no trend regarding when this reduction would take place (i.e. immediate after secession, one generation past, or two generations past). There was a regional trend here in that the two Asian countries (East Timor and Bangladesh) have enjoyed a complete lack of warfare since independence while the two African countries (Eritrea and South Sudan) both became embroiled in wars post independence. The measure of quality of life did not even see this kind of regional trend though, as of the two African movements Eritrea got worse, while South Sudan stayed the same, while of the two Asian movements Bangladesh stayed the same while Timor-Leste got better. The complete lack of trends means that uncertainty exists regarding post-secession quality of life.

### **Transfer of Power**

Although not measured, there an interesting qualitative trend which emerges in the mindset of secessionist leaders post-secession. The leaders of these four secessionist movements believed that because they freed their people from persecution they had the

*right* to rule the new nation's government. This perception of entitlement extends to whatever form of government is chosen and that they should be given the highest governmental positions. After secession, the leaders in all four cases felt entitled to rule and each created an authoritarian state to consolidate their power. The differences between the futures of the Asian countries and the African nations arise from the political response to their leaders' assumption of this right. While one would hope that this would happen in a peaceful way; it's not a necessity.

In the two Asian nations, the responses of the political opposition allowed them to end their authoritarian regimes and become fledgling democracies. Bangladesh almost immediately found itself under the rule of President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Mujib) who used his role in the struggle for independence to create a de facto dictatorship and who showed favoritism to those who fought in the war. His assassination in summer of 1975 paved the way for the creation of a new form of government in Bangladesh. In Timor-Leste, the Fretlin party ruled the government based on this perceived right for the first five years after the nation's independence, subjecting the nation to instability, violence, and rampant corruption. Under intense pressure from both the UN and the East Timorese citizens, the Fretlin president decided not to run in elections in 2007 allowing for an independent candidate to become the new president. Alternatively, the African nations have not seen an end their dictatorships. In Eritrea there has been a muted political response due to the president's extreme grasp of power and this has yet to result in a change in the nation's leadership. The political response of South Sudan has resulted in an ongoing civil war between the secessionist leader and his political rival. Although the war has yet to conclude, the latest negotiations for peace have solidified the

secessionist leadership, and thus the current authoritarian regime. It should be noted though, that while both Eritrea and South Sudan have never seen changes in power, South Sudan is still in its infancy and Eritrea is 23 years old. The differences between the paths of the African and Asian nations leads to the tentative conclusion that to avoid becoming or remaining an authoritarian state, the new country needs to oversee a transfer of power from its secessionist leaders to another leader.

### **Implications**

To understand what future secessionist movements should do and should avoid, perhaps it is best to first determine the causes of the differences between the two drastically different paths travelled by the East Timorese and the Eritreans. The East Timorese saw their quality of life significantly improve upon their independence, and then saw another dramatic improvement in quality of life when their dictator-esque president agreed to step down. Conversely the Eritreans thought that they had secured a good quality of life for themselves, but as the years dragged on and the same president remained in power, they realized that they had been duped and their quality of life was actually terrible. The roots of the two nations' differences lie in their political leadership. Timor-Leste was fortunate enough to see a transfer of power yet Eritrea never has. A country's political institutions significantly impact people's quality of life.

Good political institutions can establish functioning economies that see a high average income, protect the civil rights of the citizens, and prevent the nation from becoming embroiled in another war. In their methodology Freedom House gets at this same point by stating that countries rarely have more than a two point difference between their political rights and civil liberties scores. The same can be said about the scores of

political rights and quality of life. Even though people might be willing to accept less political rights when they have more money, there is a point when people will no longer mutely accept the distinct absence of these rights. This is particularly true when the lack of political rights develops into a strangulation of people's civil liberties, as it so often does. Further the absence of political rights, even when citizens enjoy abundant civil liberties and are awash with money, is often indicative of troubling future. Eritrea found this to be exceedingly true. In their immediate years the Eritrean's enjoyed many civil rights and their average income doubled, but the lack of political right in these first five years were the precursor to the prison state in which they now find themselves.

Although political rights is the main overarching indicator of a county's future it is important to remember that a movement's ability to establish functioning political institutions are affected by the situations from which they came. The more war torn a region is, the less infrastructure the region has. This can affect the nation's ability to set up a functioning economy, schools, and hospitals. Currently, Timor-Leste's biggest obstacle to free press is the illiteracy of the people and the nation's lack of infrastructure which prevents the dissemination of news. Civil liberties, like freedom of press and more education, allow for more people to become involved in politics and provide checks for those that are. Finally a functioning economy provides more money for more citizens which helps establish a social equality that is part and parcel with political institutions in which each people of all classes having a say in government. Further, a greater abundance of resources helps hamper the innate desire to grab and control resources which occurs when resources are scarce. For these reasons perhaps Timor-Leste's three years under UN control, which despite being referred to by locals as a new form of



colonialism, did more good for the fledgling nation than they realized. It potentially gave the new nation a stable platform from which to build itself and three years to spend focusing on increasing both infrastructure and civil liberties. A future study regarding the UN's rate of success when helping new nation's establish themselves would be needed to test the validity of this statement and provide insight on the usefulness of UN intervention.

Thus, when movements successfully secede they should establish good political institutions which protect the interests of the people and prevent against the abuse of power. Secessionist movements should have plans for their post-secession life in place before they secede. Considering that these movements are trying to create their own nation, the results of going into nationhood without the smallest minutiae of political, economic, and social policy planned can potentially be catastrophic for the very same people who just laid down their lives for freedom. Thus these movements need to plan on how they will avoid the trap of dictatorship, establish checks for if someone becomes power hungry, how the economy be set up, and ensure that there will be no infringement on the guaranteed the rights of the people. It is imperative for the quality of life of everyday citizens of these movements that these details are planned for even before the region secedes.

Even though the recommendation for good political institutions does not specify that these institutions need to be democratic, there is an implicit urging that these fledgling nations should establish democratic political institutions. This is because some variation of democracy (whether it be a presidential or a parliamentary system) when fully functioning, is at present the best political system in the world at protecting the

rights of everyday citizens while also ensuring against an abuse of power. In evidence for this position, it should be noted that both the Bengalis and the East Timorese enjoyed the best quality of life when their governments were the most democratic. Yet as Kingsbury notes in his book, the failure of the UN in Timor-Leste was democratic fatalism, and this failure should be expanded to most secessionist movements. Democratic fatalism is the assumption that democracy (when defined idealistically and shaped in reality) will be the natural course of politics and political institutions.<sup>87</sup> This argument is supported by the cases examined here as all four quickly fell into authoritarian dictatorships. Thus ongoing movements, like Catalonia, need to ensure that if they want a democracy they actively work towards it. Each movement's path to secession will affect how difficult it will be to establish and maintain good political institutions, but it will be difficult for them all.

### **A Thought for Future Studies**

After examining the aftermaths of secession, one is left to ponder whether or not there is a point at which a nation created from secession should no longer be evaluated in terms of its secessionist past. For example perhaps Bangladesh should no longer be studied in a secessionist context because it has been independent for 45 years. So then, what is the cut-off point—for how many generations or years past independence does one still need to consider the country's secessionist past? It seems logical to connect the first 5 to 10 years to how the nation was created, but past that it seems almost dependent on what one is studying. For example, in 16 years there is the potential for four different presidential terms (if a nation has 4 year presidential terms), but the children born after independence will not even be adults yet. This means that while one might see political change in 5 or 10 years that makes the secessionist past no longer relevant to politics, it is

unlikely to have been the same type of social change, thus making the secessionist past potentially still socially relevant. Yet to return to the example of Bangladesh, this nation has seen two generations be born and become adults since independence. Arguably, it seems fair to judge the Bengalis' quality of life not in the terms of the fact that their nation secede from another, but rather as a Bengali country that has had time to establish itself.

### **Conclusion**

When beginning their struggles many secessionist movements assume that one's quality of life will improve upon secession. Yet this study shows that this is not actually true, but neither is it actually false. In essence, secession guarantees nothing. Remember, as Espriu stated, we as human beings desire freedom. Perhaps the chance to choose how one's life will look like—sink or swim—is just the point, rather than that the secession will bring a great boon to one's quality of life.

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