



Secession as an International Phenomenon: From America's Civil War to Contemporary Separatist Movements

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About half of today's nation-states originated as some kind of breakaway state. The end of the Cold War witnessed a resurgence of separatist activity affecting nearly every part of the globe and stimulated a new generation of scholars to consider separatism and secession.

As the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War approaches, this collection of essays allows us to view within a broader international context one of modern history's bloodiest conflicts over secession. The contributors to this volume consider a wide range of topics related to secession, separatism, and the nationalist passions that inflame such conflicts. The first section of the book examines ethical and moral dimensions of secession, while subsequent sections look at the American Civil War, conflicts in the Gulf of Mexico, European separatism, and conflicts in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa.

The contributors to this book have no common position advocating or opposing secession in principle or in any particular case. All understand it, however, as a common feature of the modern world and as a historic phenomenon of international scope. Some contributors propose that "political divorce," as secession has come to be called, ought to be subject to rational arbitration and ethical norms, instead of being decided by force. Along with these hopes for the future, *Secession as an International Phenomenon* offers a somber reminder of the cost the United States paid when reason failed and war was left to resolve the issue.

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