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UNDER THE SHADOW OF PRECEDENT: THE CHANGING RHETORIC OF
RECOGNITION OF STATEHOOD BY THIRD-PARTY MAJOR POWERS

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Abstract

International recognition is an integral component of state sovereignty; however, International Relations scholars have only recently begun questioning this practice. Early pioneers have offered some guidelines for thinking about the motivations behind sovereign recognition, especially in the context of a closed and territorially defined international system. This project contributes to this literature by asking why states recognize the way they do? By understanding the form and framing of a recognition decision, we can observe the motivation behind the decision, glean the interests that are at play, and assess the care given to the consequences of these actions. I argue that certain domestic and international conditions will determine the decision, form, and framing of international recognition of statehood. While this project hypothesized a motive behind the policy itself, the focus of this study is the rhetorical strategies that inform their official statements. Furthermore, the theoretical backbone of this story will evaluate how each country considers their circumstances, their interests, and the consequences of their actions. Through the qualitative study of three cases of recognition, the first component reviews if, how, and why states are concerned with setting precedents through the sovereign recognition of a new entity. The second component of this project utilizes these lessons and unpacks the rhetorical variation within recognition statements emitted by state officials to see how this precedent setting concern translates on paper. With a focus on theory building and exploration, I observe the phenomenon within the case studies and offer an initial theory of rhetoric of recognition that can be expanded upon in further research.

Acknowledgments

The road to completing a dissertation is a long and arduous one. This endeavor is often compared to running a marathon, however, I'm not much of a runner. To better relate, I'll switch analogy to that of a solo road trip. The first two years are busy, much like navigating the trafficked streets of a city, trying to make your way to the highway. There's coursework and papers, a master's thesis, and then the inevitable toll one must pay known as the comprehensive exams.

Once you make it to the highway and you begin to put the skyscrapers behind you, you start to see the large high school campuses, the water towers, and rows of suburban housing as you begin to develop the seeds of your project. Time has started to slow as you spend your days reading while you think of an innovative question. You form bonds with specific mentors as they guide you in different directions, but ultimately tell you to trust your gut. Once you settle on a question, and come up with a reasonable answer, you're ready for the final brake check, at the edge of the metropolis, where you become a candidate.

Fully stocked up on water, snacks, and gas, you head on that long road. Occasionally some cars speed past you, while others fall behind. While you'd love to speed up the trip and reach the end, teleportation is just not an option. As the driving starts to get hard, you reach out to those same mentors for help with navigation. If you're lucky, they see a good shortcut you can take. If that's not an option, they offer some guidance, encouragement, and a reminder that this is your drive.

As you enter that fourth or fifth year in your program, life outside hasn't stopped just because you're on the road. You hear the pings on your phone as your friends blow up the group chat. She's getting married, he's having a kid, they bought a house. You only see snippets of the

messages since you're focused on the road. You wish you could respond, but you don't feel like you have much to share, all you've done is drive.

As you feel the drag of research along the road, you can always count on the calls from your family. "how's it going?", "you're not done yet?", "you got this! We love you". While you appreciate it, you really wish they could join you on this trip and give you a hand. Fortunately, even though the drive is lonely, the road isn't always. Along with the other drivers on the highway, you always encounter a few who lend a hand to change a tire or enjoy a chat as you translate old archives. Even though you may each get back in your respective cars to keep driving, their understanding offers some comfort.

As you continue down the road, wrestling with a stubborn theory chapter, you might come across a hitchhiker who is willing to keep you company for a few miles. While most of them get dropped off at the next town over, ever so rarely, you find one who wants to join you for the rest of the journey. They provide a breath of fresh air as they cheer you on and motivate you to keep driving. Most importantly though, they help you navigate as the road gets dark and the rest stops are closed because of a global pandemic.

Despite setbacks and detours, you keep going, even though you start to get the sense that the destination you've been driving towards for a few years now is not for you. You see the exit signs for other highways but never get off because you're afraid of getting lost. You prepared to drive on this highway for a long time, to reach the same destination as everyone else on the road, but now that you're on it, you're not convinced. Everyone has suggestions for getting through the rut of the drive, but even through you're in your sixth year and the end should be in sight, you still see nothing but trees. Eventually, this overwhelming uncertainty leads to an inevitable breakdown and now there's smoke coming out of the car.

Fortunately, you have insurance, and you can get a tow. As you meet the kind tow-truck driver, they offer to give you a ride to an auto-shop that is in a nearby region. While on this ride, they tell you all about the area and the people who live there. You're surprised to learn that most of them were once on the same road as you and after they reach their destination, they moved away. At the shop, the mechanics give you a map of the area for you to explore and with a patched-up car you take a quick stroll. This place feels right. However, to be able to relocate to this area, you must finish your original drive.

With a purpose and renewed motivation, you head back on the road. Along with your co-pilot, you don't need to make any more stops. You call your mentors, family, and friends from the road to let them know you're not going to be staying long at the destination, but you'd still appreciate their help as you finish the last stretch. With full support and a strategy in place, you focus and go.

I'm finally seeing the street signs that signal the destination is near, and I am thankful. I'm happy I took this trip, and I am grateful for all the other drivers on the road. Their feedback and enthusiasm helped me see the good in the drive. I am thankful for my mentors who were always a call away and always saw my potential as a driver on this kooky quest of mine. I'm similarly indebted to all my friends who would send encouraging messages during my drive, and for the select few who stood by me through the pitch-black night drives when I couldn't see past my nose. Furthermore, I am thankful for my family, for their patience, their support, and their unconditional love. Their calls and reminders of who I am helped me go further than they could ever know. Most of all, I am incredibly thankful for my co-pilot, my passenger princess, for the sanity checks, taking care of me, and for reminding me that it's important to take breaks and sit down for meals.

Thank you.

Chapter 1 - Introduction: A Study on Recognition Behavior

On January 1st, 1979, United States President, Jimmy Carter, addressed the nation with the following statement:

“The United States of America and the People’s Republic of China have agreed to recognize each other and to establish diplomatic relations as of January 1, 1979.

The United States of America recognizes the Government of the People’s Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China. Within this context, the people of the United States will maintain cultural, commercial, and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan.”(Office of the Historian 1978)

This address formally brought an end to decades of diplomatic tension between the two nations, which had begun in 1949 with the Mao Zedong-backed communist defeat of the nationalist government. Since the United States had backed the exiled government in Taipei as the sole government of China until 1971, this 1979 address granted legitimacy of rule and sovereignty back to the government in Beijing. By the same token, recognition of the Republic of China, Taiwan, was retracted, with sovereignty of the island now assumed under the People’s Republic of China. The process and rationale that preceded this policy shift was the result of geopolitical Cold War agitations, alliance interests, and a domestic opinion favorable to this change. The full text¹ of the Carter communiqué reflects these conditions, with carefully crafted rhetoric that conveys both attention to national interests and respect for the shift this would cause in the status quo.

International recognition is an integral component of state sovereignty, and yet, it has been neglected in academia and treated as a given within the scholarship. Historically the competency of International Law, International Relations scholars have only just begun opening the black box that is statehood and questioning the theoretical foundations that make up the basic unit of analysis

¹ For the full text of the 1979 Address to the Nation, please see appendix 1

known as the state. Early pioneers have offered some guidelines for thinking about the motivations behind sovereign recognition, especially in the context of a closed and territorially defined international system. With the age of discovery behind us, the status quo of existing boundaries is constantly challenged by secessionist entities seeking self-government and reaffirmed by their host states.

These challenges to the status quo, however, have not been truly unpacked. Focused on the motivations that undergird the policy decisions, the few scholars of international recognition have so far tried to understand *why* states recognize or not. This project, however, asks a different *why*, namely why do states recognize the way they do? By understanding the form and framing of a recognition decision, we can both observe the motivation behind the decision, as well as the interests at play and the care given to the consequences of these actions. In sum, this follows the premise that how you present the news is just as important as the news itself.

To this effect, I argue that certain domestic and international conditions will determine the decision, form, and framing of international recognition of statehood. While this project hypothesized a motive behind the policy itself, the main thrust and focus of this study is the in-depth understanding of the rhetorical strategies that inform their official statements. Furthermore, the theoretical backbone of this story will evaluate how each country considers their circumstances, their interests, and the consequences of their actions through the concern for setting an adverse precedent.

Through the qualitative study of three cases of recognition, I first observe if, how, and why states are concerned with setting precedents through the sovereign recognition of a new entity. The second component of this project utilizes these lessons and unpacks the rhetorical variation within official recognition statements to see how this precedent setting concern translates on paper. With

a focus on theory building and exploration, I observe the phenomenon within the case studies and thus offer an initial theory of rhetoric of recognition that can be expanded upon in further research.

In the pages that follow, I first introduce the concept of recognition, the existing typology, and the components behind the act. The second section offers an overview of the existing scholarly literature and its shortcomings. The third section summarizes the argument that supports this project and is followed by a detailed explanation of the research design followed in this manuscript. The fifth section unpacks the academic and political contributions of this project, as well as a nod to its limitations. The final section of this introductory chapter offers the roadmap of the rest of the book.

Concept and Context

The example above is complex in that it comprised not only recognition of statehood, but also that of government. Given the competing claims between the People’s Republic of China on the mainland and the Republic of China in Taiwan, the announcement also showcased how a state can retract a recognition previously given. What the presented text of the statement misses, however, is the rest of the justification. While it can be observed in its entirety in the appendix, a few other excerpts of note include the following,

“The change that I’m announcing tonight will be of great long-term benefit to the peoples of both our country and China—and, I believe, to all the peoples of the world. Normalization—and the expanded commercial and cultural relations that it will bring—will contribute to the well-being of our own Nation, to our own national interest, and it will also enhance the stability of Asia. These more positive relations with China can beneficially affect the world in which we live and the world in which our children will live.”

In this paragraph, President Carter sought to sell this decision by appealing to the global advantages this normalization of relations could bring. He justified this formal recognition on the benefits of greater commercial and cultural exchange; on the stability it would bring to Asia, and as a general

boon for American interests. However, this announcement was not solely for the American people, but also the people of Taiwan, for whom this policy decision left at a huge disadvantage:

“I have paid special attention to ensuring that normalization of relations between our country and the People’s Republic will not jeopardize the well-being of the people of Taiwan. The people of our country will maintain our current commercial, cultural, trade, and other relations with Taiwan through nongovernmental means.”

The acknowledgment that this result would be a disappointment to an important allied nation, while meaningless in practice, still sought to assure their friends that they stood with them, and this action would not diminish their amity. In the superpower’s view, the ends had to justify the means, at least rhetorically. While the President ended the statement with the optimistic sentiment that “[t]he normalization of relations between the United States and China has no other purpose than this: the advancement of peace.” History has shown us that this act served the Cold War interest of weakening the Soviet Union by weakening its global ties.

As for the consequences to the losers of this decision, the assurances to the Taiwanese, vacuous in substance as they may be, were still purposefully sent. In fact, every rhetorical strategy employed in the address was carefully crafted to promote and protect American interests domestically and abroad. Why recognition and non-recognition decisions are so carefully crafted is the subject of this project. Notwithstanding, before delving into the intricacies of this work, I first unpack the key concepts just mentioned.

Recognition, in international law, means the acknowledgement of the existence of an entity or a situation with an indication that the full legal consequences of that existence will be respected (Peterson 1997). No recognition has inspired the most efforts at regulation than that of new states and new governments. However, as the primary actors in an arguably anarchic world order, it has been left up to each government to determine for itself when an entity has qualified for statehood.

Now an act of diplomatic practice, this nineteenth century inheritance originated from the highly formalized dichotomies between established states and claimant political communities. The belief was that recognition by others gave a political community the status of statehood (1997). For example, France formally recognized the United States' independence from the United Kingdom on February 6th, 1778, with the signing of two treaties in Paris, the Treaty of Alliance and the Treaty of Amity and Commerce (“Traité d’alliance Éventuelle et Défensive” 1778; “Traité d’amitié et de commerce” 1778). While France’s support was integral for the American Revolution, for the French, it was also an effort to weaken their bitter rivals, the British and take advantage of their troubles (US Department of State n.d.). Similarly, the United States formally recognized Mexico’s independence from Spain in 1822, twelve years after the first declaration of independence and one year after the declaration of victory in the war for Independence (US Department of State n.d.). In both instances, a third-party state acknowledged the existence of a new entity.

Types of Recognition

While these previous examples showcased recognition of statehood, I have identified four main types of recognition events that third-party nations tend to consider of their peers. The first, and previously mentioned, is the recognition of sovereignty or statehood. While the formal act of recognition has existed since before the first wave of decolonization in the late 18th century, it has been since 1945, with the development of the closed membership system of the United Nations, that the act of recognition of statehood has been a routine feature of international affairs. This is the most significant as it establishes the right of existence of a new nation through an implicit act of intervention by the international community. Usually, this act goes by without great

complication, as was evidenced by the rapid increase in UN membership as a result of decolonization. However, even then, there have been important variations in how this recognition has come about, which I will expand on below. Examples of this type of recognition include recognition of South Sudan's independence from Sudan, Croatia's independence from Yugoslavia, or Kosovo's recognition of independence from Serbia. All these cases have faced varying degrees of conflict related to their recognition. This form of recognition, namely that of a state's existence, will be the focus of this project, since without an assurance on existence, other forms of recognition are premature.

The remaining three types are all recognitions that do not contest a country's existence, but rather some contentious aspect of it. The second type, recognition of government, is the recognition of a country's form of rule or their leader. This refers to when a country recognizes the legal person and the agents entitled to act on their behalf. It is generally practiced in international law, that each government determined for itself what entities qualify as states and who qualifies as their governments (Peterson 1997). This serves as a basis from which to distinguish between the many claimants to rule and the established government. Examples of this include the recent US recognition of the opposition leader in Venezuela, Juan Guaidó, in opposition to Nicolás Maduro's recent election due to perceived widespread fraud. Another example includes the explicit removal of recognition of Chile's Pinochet government by Mexico in 1973. The Mexican government did not dispute Chile's sovereignty or existence, but rather the coup and subsequent authoritarian regime.

The third type is the recognition of territorial boundaries. This can occur as part of recognition of statehood bound by a specific territorial boundary or by emitting a recognizing opinion regarding a territorial dispute between two sovereign nations with claims to the territory.

Examples include the recognition of Russia's annexation of Crimea from Ukraine, the US recognition of the Golan Heights as a part of Israel, or the general abstention from most countries to recognize Jammu and Kashmir as part of either Pakistan or India.

The fourth type of recognition refers to the recognition of seat of government, or capital. While this rarely requires an overt declaration, since countries will generally situate their embassies in the capital city as established by the government, on rare occasion there is a dispute over where the capital of a government should lie based on opposing claimants to power. Generally, this is tied with other forms of recognition, such as recognition of government (many countries have their seats of government spread across more than one city) or recognition of territorial boundaries (in the event of a disputed territory). An example of the latter includes the recent recognition by the United States of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

The nature of recognition events is a far broader agenda from which this project develops, but it is important to first lay out all the possible components of recognition to understand the importance of the issue, as well as the diverse implications. As previously mentioned, while some scholars have delved into some aspects of international recognition, there has not been a systematic attempt to understand the full breadth of the recognition events and how they vary. This is a deficit not just to the discipline but also to the understanding of foreign affairs, as it also sorely underestimates the political impact of status definition in the international system. While this project will focus on the rhetoric of recognition of statehood, it aims to be the first component of what will be a much larger research agenda.

Academic Grounding

While an in-depth view of the scholarly work on recognition can be found in the next chapter, in these pages I offer a summary of the state of the literature and the gaps herein. The scholarship on international recognition within International Relations limited. Most works on this topic have been subsumed within studies of sovereignty (Aalberts 2012; Agnew 2009; Bahcheli, Bartmann, and Srebrnik 2004; Barkin and Cronin 1994; Osiander 2001; Krasner 2001); others have broached the act of recognition, either through the view of the secessionist claims to statehood (Ker-Lindsay 2009; Caplan 1998; Driest 2015; Brace and Hoffman 2016; Caspersen 2012; Bilefsky 2014; Cabestan and Pavković 2013; R. D. Griffiths and Muro 2020; R. D. Griffiths 2016; Tir 2005; Pavković and Radan 2007), or through case specific reviews of independence movements (White 2015; Muharremi 2008; Mark-Thiesen and Mihatsch 2019; Malmvig 2006; Koinova 2011; Giragosian 2001; van den Driest 2015). Direct works on international recognition of statehood, from the side of the recognizer, however, are few (Coggins 2014; Peterson 1997; Agné et al. 2013; Fabry 2013; Krasner 2013). Moreover, none consider the process of recognition, with a deconstructed view of the decision, the form, and the framing. This manuscript thus intervenes to add to this budding scholarship.

Beyond these works on sovereignty and recognition, this project also contributes to the comparative politics literature on secession, which has thus far focused on the side of the secessionists seeking recognition through diasporas (Ambrosio 2002; Brubaker 2005; Djuric 2003; Astourian 2005; Bamyeh 2014; Byman et al. 2001; Mandaville and Lyons 2012; Webb 2014; Wayland 2004; Fair 2005), the host state trying to prevent recognition (Blitz 1996; Shain 2002; R. D. Griffiths and Muro 2020; Brancati 2006; Butt 2017; Ker-Lindsay 2012; Lustick, Miodownik, and Eidelson 2004; Saideman 1997; Tir 2005), and the fights for independence writ large

(Coppieters 2018; R. D. Griffiths 2016; Heraclides 1990; Muro, Woertz, and Barcelona Centre for International Affairs 2018; Sobers 2019). While the recognizing side might seem to belong solely to the field of International Relations, the domestic politics behind recognizing behavior remains understudied.

Finally, as will be noted in the following chapter, there is an important academic lacuna in the study of precedent within International Relations. While International Law was offered some work on this topic with an eye towards its international value (Guillaume 2011; Hall 1916; Pelc 2014), few in the discipline have considered its political usage (Kier and Mercer 1996; D. Griffiths 2010; Dirks 2022). This project highlights what has been taken for granted and uses it as a mechanism of international action. The specifics of how concern for precedent influences foreign policy behavior is detailed below and in the following chapters.

The Act of Recognition

At the core of the project lie two puzzles: the variation in the decision to recognize and the variation in the rhetoric used to do so. First, what determines the actual decision being made (whether to recognize or not)? This question is by no means easy to answer, as a myriad of domestic and international factors can contribute the actual decision (Coggins 2011). This project addresses this question in conversation with the work done by Bridget Coggins, before moving on to the core contribution of this study -- what determines the framing and delivery of this decision? There are two aspects to this second puzzle: the form of recognition, including speed, venue, and speaker; and the framing of recognition, which refers to the rhetoric that is publicly used to justify the decision.

The importance of understanding the decision to recognize is simple. As Coggins emphasizes, “the international state system is better categorized as an international community wherein influential members determine which aspiring states will succeed and which will be left outside on their own”(Coggins 2014, 6). In this sense, a state does not exist without the recognition of major powers, hence the decision these great powers make is of vital importance for the stability of a region and the international community at large. Understanding why states choose to recognize or not a particular secessionist entity over another is necessary, but it is also complicated. It is necessary because de facto statehood and secessionist conflict makes up an important part of the political violence in the world and studying the international determinants of this conflict, namely the role that third party recognizers play, is integral for comprehending old and emerging patterns of behavior (Lemke and Crabtree 2020; Risse and Stollenwerk 2018). Notwithstanding, this academic effort is complicated because there are countless motivations for recognition and different independence movements have different historical conflicts, differing levels of violence, and varying circumstances between host state, secessionist entity, and third-party recognizers.

Understanding the form of recognition is akin to understanding the international practice of recognition. In most instances, international recognition happens in a set manner, with specific actors performing this public facing act. The form in which a recognition is delivered is strategic, conveyed through tacit communication to other individuals engaged in the same performance (Adler and Pouliot 2011). Understanding the form in which it is delivered helps us see how powers pull the strings and then subsequently wield influence (Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014). These non-rhetorical actions can help us understand the nuances of recognition. By observing the order and speed of recognition we can see how influence creates a wave of recognition or how it blocks any further attempts. For example, Kosovo declared its independence in 2008 and it was

immediately recognized by many countries, including the United States. However, many others have recognized over the course the decade since, such as Pakistan in 2012 or Singapore in 2016. Similarly, the venue and messenger of a recognition statement can speak volumes about the importance granted to a specific issue or political significance of rejection versus acceptance and the attention granted to it. When Catalonia declared their independence from Spain in the fall of 2017, a State Department spokesperson delivered the statement in favor of Spanish unity, whereas the recognition of South Sudan in 2011 was delivered by the President of the United States (Nauert 2017; Obama 2011).

Finally, a study on the rhetoric, or framing, of recognition is necessary because, as mentioned above, language is thought to have a mitigating effect on actions. When an action is popular, the rhetorical strategies used will aim to strengthen and publicize the behavior. On the other hand, if an action is unpopular or an easy target for criticism, the statements on the action will seek to mitigate, distract, or offer an alternative narrative that aims to shift the public and peer opinion. These rhetorical adaptations can either alter norms or reinforce their permanence (J. M. Dixon 2017; Fung 2020). If states were not concerned with the consequences of their actions and the potential precedents to be set, we would not observe the patterns that have emerged in foreign policy rhetoric or the careful crafting of public statements by governments. Specifically, with regards to recognition, the rhetorical strategies used to acknowledge or deny the sovereignty of a new state can directly affect relations with a host state, the allies, and with rivals. A well-crafted message can signal confidence in an action and present the intentions a state wants others to perceive. The understanding of the rhetorical strategies used by states when recognizing a new entity can thus offer an understanding into how states aim to create perceptions.

Theory

The main question that has motivated this project asks why states recognize as they do? The question, vague as it seems now, gets at all three components mentioned above. Why do states choose to recognize or not in the first place? How do states recognize, and through which means? Why do states justify their recognition decisions and what influences their statements? All these questions thus seek to understand the decision, the form, and the framing behind recognition of statehood.

As I detail in the following chapter, while the direct object of study is the recognizing actor's final statement, its decisions and behavior are informed by the triadic relationship it has with the secessionist entity and the host state. The ultimate outcome of interest, however, is the rhetorical behavior each state adopts over the course of the recognition process. To that effect, I posit that the construction of recognition follows a series of considerations along a decision tree, the end of which is one of six types of possible behaviors.

The first, and arguable most important stage in the decision to recognize or not a secessionist claim to statehood. From there, I posit a recognizer will elect to present the decision publicly and explicitly or remain silent and mere change their respective actions towards an entity. Should they remain silent, then there is no moving to the final stage. However, if they opt of explicit recognition, they final choice lies in the rhetorical strategy of presentation. The choices are between rule-based rhetoric, which highlights international law and norms that could be applicable to other cases, and situational rhetoric, which, on the contrary, underscores the unique and non-transferable reasons for recognition. The next chapter details each of the six types in greater detail.

I argue that the domestic and international conditions a recognizing state is facing at a given time, will determine how states recognize or not a secessionist entity. I propose two independent variables, where each one intervenes at different stages of the decision tree. Specifically, I argue that if recognizing state has its own domestic separatist problem, they will likely not recognize another secessionist entity. If they do not a national independentism movement, they will be more likely to recognize. Once the decision is taken, I reason that the recognizing state's geopolitical relations will determine both whether they emit a statement or not, and the nature of the justifications given.

The mechanism undergirding this theory and working at every stage presented, is the concern for setting a precedent with their behavior that could negatively affect them down the line. Specifically, the concern lies in the example it could set about how an actor treats existing conventions. By breaking with the existing norms, these can become eroded, until the status quo that actor has benefited from is no longer accessible. Furthermore, this concern for setting a negative precedent stems from the acknowledgement that their behavior might not be in their interests in the moment or down the line.

While I explain each component of this theory in depth in the chapter to come, it should be noted that the primary goal of this project is to understand the rhetoric of recognition. While I offer a hypothesis for why states recognize or not, the innovation and thrust of this project is the typology of justification behavior. A secondary caveat of this theoretical proposal is that it relies on the assumption that states, for the most part, want to maintain the status quo and thus will be risk adverse in their behavior. These limitations are further unpacked in the following paragraphs, through the detailed outline of the research design.

Research Design

To explore the theoretical mechanisms outlined above, I crafted a research plan that allows for a systematic exploration of this variation. To do so, it is worth first narrowing down the unit of analysis. To this effect, three important considerations need to be made: who are the actors? What is the action interest? And what is the time horizon and iteration? These three questions make up the core of the unit of analysis (Gonzalez and Poast 2022). The actors in question the recognizer, the secessionist group, and the host state. The event under study is the decision, form, and framing of a recognition or non-recognition of statehood. Namely whether sovereignty is granted or not, and how this is justified through official or unofficial statements. Finally, the time horizon for this phenomenon varies. While some recognitions are dragged out and disputed over the course years or decades, others happen quickly, with minimal lead up to the decision. This variability makes determining a specific scope of study difficult and dependent on each case.

Having determined that this project is triadic in nature, to best understand the various components of recognition, the most appropriate research approach is a qualitative review that can grasp the nuances behind every choice made. This project approximates two specific nuances. First, the variation in the decision taken and an understanding of the motivations behind these. This requires an extensive look into how elites discuss these issues, either through interviews or through the personal and declassified documentation of their deliberation process. The second phenomenon this project ventures into is the variation in the rhetoric of recognition. This objective can be achieved by closely unpacking the public statements issued by policymakers about their recognition decisions.

To this effect I conduct two types of case studies. The first is a longitudinal study of a single recognizer over time to observe how their recognition policies change as conditions change

over time. The goal is to glean whether decision-makers consider the possibility of setting a precedent as an underlying motivation for their recognition behavior. For this manuscript, I opted to study France as the recognizing actor in the triadic relationship. I reviewed the variation in response during two contentious decades of the third wave of decolonization, from 1954 to 1974. This case selection is telling given the domestic and international changes France underwent in this period. Not only did the French undergo their own decolonization struggles, but they also had to contend with the context of the Cold War.

For this project, while I study France's recognition policies generally, I use two specific decolonization struggles to thread how French policies changed over the course of the two decades of study. The evidentiary support used was a compendium of primary sources of declassified notes, memos, telegrams, and other documented foreign policy material, held by the French Diplomatic Archives. The first thread was that of France's changing approach towards Portugal's African colonies. Given the colonial allyship held between the two European nations, France's geopolitical relations would play a role in their recognition behavior. The second thread cover France's complicated relationship with South Africa from 1954 to 1974 and latter's unsupported annexation of South West Africa, present day Namibia. While France did not share that continental affinity with the South Africans, the Cold War context altered France's available approach towards Namibia's separatist impulse. These two threads comprise the first two empirical chapters of this manuscript.

The second type of case study undertaken in this draft is that of multiple recognizers towards a single secessionist movement, following a unilateral declaration of independence. While the previous case study helps understand the variation in behavior as conditions change, this approach explores how, holding conditions as stable as possible, the existing international and

domestic realities of major powers influences their behavior towards the same conflict. The specific focus on major powers matters because these generally include states that have important leveraging power in setting foreign policy trends directly and indirectly.

Concretely, I focus on the recognition of Kosovo's independence in February 2008 by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. I chose these three countries to observe if there was variation in their responses to similar questions based on the same action. All three countries broke with their traditional behavior of coordinating their recognition of new states with Russia and China. However, they each have different national and international circumstances, so they offer an opportunity to review the different trends and similarities in their responses.

With a constrained period of two years, from March of 2007 to October 2008, we can observe, albeit for a snapshot, the role the determinants of recognition play on the subsequent justifications of their actions. To observe this variation in language I reviewed the press briefings from each country's executive body. In total I collected over 300 documents for all three countries and conducted a keyword coding of each source to obtain a typological aggregate of the justification strategies. While this methodology does not offer the evidentiary purchase of a large-N, quantitative study, it still provides an understanding of the dynamics behind this phenomenon in an instance that deviates from the status quo.

This approach is not without its limitations. The limited scope of this project to only major power recognition certainly reduces the generalizability of this project and ultimately disregards large swaths of the world. However, as a theory testing endeavor, evaluating major power behavior, especially given the influence they wield, can offer a glimpse into the major maneuvers that occur within international forums. Similarly, limiting the study to qualitative methodologies limits generalizability, but it does offer a deeper picture of specific cases and a clearer

understanding of the motivations. Finally, the limitations in resources and documents studied restrict the observance of the full picture. However, as a pioneering project in the study of rhetoric of recognition, the results, bound as they are, certainly motivate future research to expand the scope, methodology, and data collection.

Contributions

A project on the variation of the rhetoric of international recognition of statehood matters because sovereignty is a key principle of the international structure and it is, in large part, granted by other states through recognition. The construction and acquisition of sovereignty, however, has been taken for granted by scholars and a detailed unpacking sovereignty has been thus far neglected. Opening the black box of statehood in this way would help answer many of the unanswered questions regarding the anomalies of independence and rule in the world today. Wars of secession, displaced nations, exiled governments, among others, can be better approximated if we see how misused recognition has made victims of these groups.

More concretely to academia, this project offers three important contributions to the field of international relations and the broader discipline of Political Science. First, this study aims to further develop the understudied field of international recognition. By adding to the conceptual agenda, it creates an avenue for future research that measures the variation in the different types of recognition, as well as variation along the various components that underlie them. Furthermore, the theory can serve as a template for studies on atypical diplomatic and military intervention, as well as status signaling.

The second contribution this project has is towards the broader work on secession. Many scholars have long since accepted that recognition is the highest goal of a secessionist movement

and the final step in what is usually a lengthy struggle. As previous scholars have pointed out, secessionism has often been subsumed under comparative politics and the domestic determinants of separatism. On the other hand, international recognition, commonly viewed as a necessary component of sovereignty, has mostly remained in the arena of International Relations. While not the first to bridge the gap, this project can benefit both agendas.

The third contribution this project has is on the work on precedent. While scholars have considered the premise of a potentially damaging example in other roundabout ways, direct understandings of this concern for precedent are few and mostly within International Law. Moreover, by considering the concern for precedent as the underlying mechanism between the independent variables and dependent variable of recognition behavior, this dissertation will further the work on precedent-setting in foreign policy, namely, its relevance for policy makers and states. Several scholars have either taken concerns for precedent for granted or outright dismissed them for its long-term presumption. However, their effect on recognition appears far more powerful and thoroughly understudied.

In addition to the scholarly contributions this project can have, evaluating how the process and rhetoric of recognition varies can help shed light on how policy makers consider the consequences of their foreign policy and how this influences the entrenchment or erosion of the status quo. This project pushes aside the discipline's reticence to explore the work done within diplomatic studies and its willful dismissal of what practitioners have reiterated. Not only does the act of recognition occupy immense diplomatic resources, but the crafting of these statements is, and has been, a meticulous effort that can make or break stately relations between nations. With these stakes in mind, this study joins the few pioneering efforts to unveil sovereignty and explore the nuances of state recognition.

Roadmap

Chapter One laid the contextual and conceptual foundation for the chapters to come. It introduced the concept of international recognition broadly and details the types and components of recognition. In addition to a detailed discussion of the research design, I carefully consider both the theoretical and methodological limitations. Finally, this chapter ended on an extensive reflection of both the academic and political contributions of this project.

Chapter Two lays out the theory undergirding this project. It begins with a focused discussion on recognition of sovereignty and an in-depth review of the literature to identify several theoretical and empirical lacunae in our understanding of international recognition of statehood. This evaluation then leads into a detailed construction of the dependent variable, its components, and the unit of analysis. The second half of the chapter unpacks the existing hypotheses and arguments for explaining this phenomenon before delving into the specific independent variables, domestic secessionism and geopolitical relations, of this project and their mechanism, concern for precedent. This chapter ends with an explanation of the full theory and the expected behaviors.

Chapter Three as the first empirical chapter, introduces the complex processes behind France's colonial decline and subsequent interests in Africa. The first half begins with the background and context of Europe's ending empires and specific case of French-Portuguese relations. With an emphasis on the conflicts in Angola and Mozambique, the second half analyzes the archival material and crafts a historical and political narrative that weaves the private discussions surrounding the consequences of recognition with the broader theory offered. Through this review of twenty years' worth of French diplomatic documents regarding Portuguese decolonization, I conclude with a reflection of France's geopolitical and domestic concerns for setting precedents.

Chapter Four as the second empirical chapter follows a similar focus to the previous one, with the same spotlight on France as the main recognizer under study. This section, however, also delves into the international context of the Cold War as an additional backdrop to the complexities of France's relations with South Africa. In the context of Apartheid and the annexed trusteeship of South West Africa, I delve into the primary sources for the detailed analysis of France's complicated sentiments regarding recognition of would-be Namibia. After these two decades worth of material, I conclude with a theoretical discussion of recognition of sovereignty in a context of decolonization and geopolitics.

Chapter Five becomes the third empirical chapter of this project, with a shift away from the mechanism and towards a verification of variation in responses to foreign secession. To focus on a single case and the recognition from multiple actors, I study the contentious international recognition of Kosovo. For this case, I limit the analysis to only public statements to best glean the rhetorical variations intended for public consumption. I observe a wider variation in justifications of recognition based on the different domestic and international conditions of the United States, France, and the United Kingdom.

Chapter Six concludes the entire project with a summary of the results from the three cases and a report card of the proposed theory. I offer reflections based on the outcome and introduce a discussion of prompts for future research. Finally, I return to the sentiments in the introduction and evaluate the anticipated contributions of the project.

Chapter 2 - The Case for Recognition and the Complexities of Triadic Relations

The French government stood firm that Cyprus was a British territory. They maintained that they supported their ally, the UK, and that the conflict was a matter to be resolved internally. They expressed explicit concern that recognizing the independence of Cyprus without support from the UK would set a secessionist precedent for the growing independence movement in Algeria. When Cyprus was granted independence by the British government, the French were adamant that the solution in Cyprus could not be transposed to Algeria. They remained silent on the recognition of Cyprus, but they established provisional relations in 1960, before formal diplomatic relations were established in 1961. This followed the general trend of French recognition for the decade prior, where the French would not formally recognize a state, but they would establish diplomatic relations. However, France's response to secessionist movements completely changed after the independence of Algeria. The government enthusiastically advocated for the self-determination of the people of Namibia from South Africa and actively supported the fight for independence. In May 1981, the French government explicitly recognized Namibian independence and established diplomatic relations, nearly a decade before the host state, South Africa, recognized the independence of Namibia. These two episodes show how the presence or absence of domestic secessionist movements impacts if, and how, states justify their recognition of other emerging states.

What determines the recognition decisions following claims for statehood from third party states and what rhetorical strategies do they employ to justify them? Third-party recognition can ensure short-term stability as a reprieve from conflict, but it may also create system-wide problems in two ways. First, this practice conditions new states' entry on the basis of external political

considerations and not necessarily on the authority or capacity of the nascent states themselves. Second, these practices can also set precedents for other separatist movements. These two problems each correspond to different scholarly literature that have yet to be in full conversation. While legal scholars have often grappled with this phenomenon on a case-by-case basis, political scientists have only just started to theorize about international recognition and the political consequences of setting precedents. This project will bring together the works of these scholars and contribute to the understanding of the nature of recognition and its consequences.

In the cases of both recognition and non-recognition of statehood, there is variation in the decision, form, and framing. The project proposes six types of recognitions based on a hierarchy of concern for setting a precedent. The construction of these types follows a series of considerations that are reflected in two independent variables. Briefly stated, the third-party state's decision to recognize a secessionist entity will depend on whether it has its own domestic secessionist threat. Once a decision about recognition is made, the third-party state will determine the form and framing of its action based on the interests of its geopolitical allies, enemies, and rivals. By understanding the variation in the decision, form, and rhetoric of recognition we can observe how states consider the consequences of their actions and how these set precedents that ultimately alter or erode international norms of recognition and the status quo of the international system.

This chapter has two main objectives. In the first section, I lay out the conceptual construction for understanding international recognition of statehood. Based on this, the following part justifies the theoretical importance of the decision, the form, and the framing of a recognition, or non-recognition, of sovereignty. From there, I construct the dependent variable of this project, the nature of recognition statehood, by unpacking the decision, form, and framing used. The

second objective of this chapter is to present a general understanding of the determinants of recognition, followed by an explanation of the two main independent variables: the presence of a strong domestic secessionist movement in the recognizing state and the geopolitical relations of the third-party recognizer. This chapter closes with a detailed description of the full theory as a set up for the subsequent empirical chapters.

Why do states recognize?

International recognition is an act by which one state formally ratifies some change in the status of another state (Chwaszcza 2013). It is an integral part of everyday global affairs. Countries recognize their peers' actions every day. By the same token, there are many considerations that go into a recognition that can have important implications for a state's international relationships. The first and most important act of recognition is that between 'states' as legal subjects of international law. This mutual recognition grants a theoretical legal equality and access to international organizations and international aid. This recognition is meant to grant sovereignty to entities with territory and formal juridical autonomy (Krasner 1999).

The term sovereignty has a long history and a myriad of definitions. The same word can be used to refer to different interacting mechanisms of authority, control, and legitimacy (Krasner 1999). It has been taken up and parsed out in multiple disciplines, most notably in International Law and International Political Sociology. International Relations, the field that seems most fitting to cover this, however, has, until recently, taken sovereignty as either a given assumption or a practice between actors. By taking for granted the sovereignty of states, scholars have either disregarded the international determinants of secessionist conflict, or they inadvertently limit their theories to broad, black-boxed conceptions of sovereignty.

The ideal sovereign state, according to internationalists, should possess three attributes: domestic political structures that can exercise effective control, that are not subject to external authority, but are internationally recognized (Krasner 2013). Many in the discipline in the last two decades have started to unpack the components of sovereignty to understand the growing number of cases that deviate from the ideal. Most of these scholars, however, have focused exclusively on the first two, and only a few have considered the role of international recognition and the granting, or acknowledgement, of sovereignty.

Notwithstanding, the few scholars on this topic define international recognition as the unilateral transaction where one state explicitly ratifies that another entity fulfills their criteria for statehood (Coggins 2014). Through an implicit act of intervention, the international community declares that a new state has achieved the capability to defend its authority against domestic and international challengers (Thomson 1995). This recognition of sovereignty is almost universally desired, even by those in territories that lack juridical independence or even a territory because it serves as an entry into the international arena and thus access to material and rule-based resources (Krasner 1999).

Recognition is ultimately a norm-based political act by which states also acknowledge that they have certain responsibilities towards the newly recognized state (Chwaszcza 2013). These acts of recognition are performative in character, and they serve as conventional moves within a system of rules and norms. “As a performative act, recognition marks a change in the relations of relevant states, which must then become ordinary practice in the mutual behavior of states toward each other.” (Chwaszcza 2013, 162)

The convention when it comes to this practice is that recognition occurs as a consensus between major powers and with the support of the host state. As a result, recognition, or non-

recognition, generally occurs with minimal controversy, as was evidenced by the rapid increase in UN membership following decolonization, or the recent case of unified recognition of South Sudan's independence from Sudan. On rare occasions, however, secessionist entities have faced varying degrees of conflict related to their recognition. For example, Croatia's independence from Yugoslavia, or Kosovo's recognition of independence from Serbia came with significant conflict among potential recognizers, some of which lingers today.

The mutual recognition between formally independent territorial entities, which stands as a basic rule of international sovereignty, is not always universally applied. Nonrecognition is just as much an instrument of policy as is recognition. Nor does nonrecognition stand in the way of day-to-day international exchange. Denying recognition does not bar commerce and diplomatic discourse (Krasner 1999). States have maintained administrative contacts and signed agreements with entities they do not formally recognize. For example, after the United States recognized the People's Republic of China as the legitimate government in China in 1979 and withdrew recognition of the Republic of China, it created a special status for Taiwan. This act stipulated that Taiwan would continue to participate in international financial institutions and the US would maintain an officially nongovernmental office that would function as an embassy.

Understanding the actual practice of recognition, beyond notions of an ideal criteria, is important because many of the political entities in the international system, recognized, unrecognized, and partially recognized do not conform to the ideal type of sovereign statehood. This is the result of clashing political interests, non-rule-based decision making, and the presence of multiple and conflicting principles and norms (Krasner 2013). Some examples of practices of recognition that deviated from the ideal include instances of recognition of states that did not have effective domestic governance, as was the case of many African countries that were granted

statehood in the process of decolonization without a process of state building. These are the cases of states that had *de jure* sovereignty, but not *de facto* authority. On the other hand, there are also the cases of entities that have effective domestic governance but have not benefitted from widespread international recognition. Notable examples include Taiwan and Kosovo, both of whom have fully functioning democratic governments, but have not been acknowledged as such by a large swath of the international community. These are the instances of *de facto* authority, but no *de jure* backing.

Scholarship of Recognition

The literature on the international recognition of statehood has been largely absent from the field of International Relations and normatively stalled in legal scholarship. The latter group's interest lies in the politicized debates between the declaratory versus constitutive theories of statehood and debates regarding the norms of territorial integrity versus the right to self-determination (Grant 1999). While this topic has been of key interest in legal scholarship, they rarely consider the larger implications of recognition for how the international community adapts to changing borders and the importance of recognition for establishing diplomatic relations and general community interaction (Coggins 2014; Fabry 2010).

As part of the growing literature unpacking sovereignty, political scientists have taken up the debate in international law about declarative vs constitutive sovereignty and they have mostly settled on the idea that statehood needs recognition. The legal debate, understandably, has limited its focus on legal or quasi-legal texts when determining the role of international recognition. However, as Fabry points out, and as the examples of *de facto* versus *de jure* sovereignty above highlight, the *practice* of recognition has rarely relied solely on a legal basis. "Recognition,

however, is a prerogative of central governments and a competence of their executive branch. Acts of recognition are neither formal nor fixed; they entail discretionary judgement that includes legal, political, moral, economic, security, and other considerations.” (Fabry 2013, 166)

While much of the international law literature has focused on debating the criteria for statehood and setting standards for recognition, the reality is that the reasons for recognition, and non-recognition, ultimately stem from circumstances that go beyond a narrow set of qualifications. Examples include considerations of regional stability, preservation of peace, historical justice, pragmatic conflict resolution, among many more. Given the wide of array of options, it would be futile to come up with a list of necessary and sufficient conditions for legal recognition (Chwaszcza 2013). As many recent works have highlighted, since the late 1950s, the determining factor in foreign acknowledgement of new states has been whether the entity is considered to have a pre-existing right to be a state, rather than the capacity to be one (Fabry 2013). Understanding the actual practice of recognition, beyond notions of an ideal criteria, is important because many of the political entities in the international system, recognized, unrecognized, and partially recognized do not conform to the ideal type of sovereign statehood. This is the result of clashing political interests, non-rule-based decision making, and the presence of multiple and conflicting principles and norms (Krasner 2013).

As all of this makes clear, it is not enough to dismiss recognition as a part of sovereignty just because it does not conform to strict standards. In fact, it is precisely because states have deviated from the norms and “rules” in the international system that it must be studied. States are not sovereign unless other states identify them as such. How states go about recognizing, whether through some specific criteria or as an inefficient patch to a conflict, has been woefully

understudied to the detriment of the discipline. No field is better suited to answer the questions of recognition of statehood than IR, and yet this is the field that has most taken it for granted.

The few IR scholars that have addressed the phenomenon of recognition with their work all come together to make the many normative and legal debates surrounding recognition intelligible to political science. Caspersen and Stansfield's edited volume introduced the process by which unrecognized states emerge and the problems they pose for international stability (Caspersen and Stansfield 2011). Ker-Lindsay's work on how host states prevent the recognition of these contested states further shows the nature of the closed international system. Coggins' work on the international determinants of recognition sets the puzzle within the broader American IR discipline, while Fabry presents historical trends of this phenomenon (Coggins 2014; Fabry 2010).

Scholarship on Secession

In addition to the previously mentioned literature, we could supplement our understanding on the international recognition of statehood by drawing on work from the comparative politics literature on secessionism. Secession, understood as the efforts by a region to break away from an existing state to create a new, internationally recognized sovereign state (R. D. Griffiths and Muro 2020), plays an integral role in recognition. Just as any study of secessionist conflict is incomplete without considering the efforts of and the interactions with third party states, so too is any study of recognition incomplete without considering the relation between recognizers and the secessionist group and their host state. Any study on recognition must keep this triadic relationship in mind.

Recent work has begun examining the strategic interaction between secessionists groups, host states, and recognizing states. Some offer theories for why some entities succeed in achieving recognized statehood over others (Krause 2017; Roeder 2018; Duerr 2017; Newman and Visoka

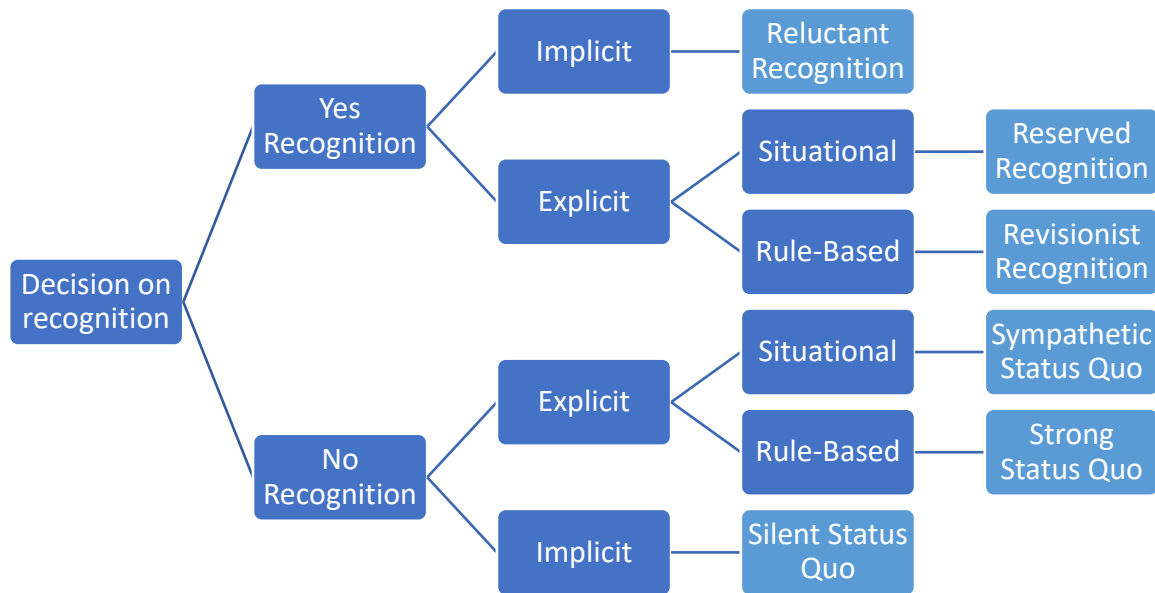
2016). Others have written on strategies of host states in the face of domestic secessionist movements (Butt 2017; R. D. Griffiths 2016; Closa 2017). All of these works have been instrumental in developing a full picture of the quest for statehood from the side of separatists. However, as Horowitz posits, “whether and when a secessionist movement will emerge is determined mainly by domestic politics, by the relations of groups and regions within the state. Whether a secessionist movement will achieve its aims, however, is determined largely by international politics, by the balance of interests and forces that extend beyond the state” (Horowitz 1985, 230). In this sense, the act of seceding is the last step in a long domestic process and international politics is the key to its success. I focus on this last stage of secession and the triadic relationship involved. In what follows, I lay out how the relationships between the recognizer, the host state, and the seceding character all influence the granting of sovereignty by the international community, with a special focus on considerations taken by the third-party recognizer.

Types of Rhetorical Justifications for International Recognition of Statehood

The decision to recognize and the form and framing of the action go hand in hand. To understand a recognition decision, it is key to consider how it was framed in the first place. The framing, or rhetoric, gives us an indication of the intent, the why of the decision, as well as the justification given. The reasoning given and the actual motivation may not be the same, but they may be inextricably linked. The justification given in the explicit statement can clue us in on who the audience is, what their interests are, and what are the global ramifications they have in mind. As previously stated, the main concern is often linked with protecting both their foreign and domestic interests. States are often wary of altering the status quo in a way that may set an unwanted precedent for the future. All these considerations go into both the decision to recognize, and into

the resulting justification. As a result, this project accounts for both the perceived binary variation in the decision (whether to recognize a new state or not), as well as the more nuanced variation in the justification given.

Figure 2-1: Types of Justifications for International Recognition



The variation in the decision ultimately falls into whether a recognizing state explicitly or implicitly ratifies the existence of a new sovereign entity. States must consider where they stand; they either recognize or they do not. The emission or omission of a statement does not change the fact of the action, but it may indirectly hide it. An abstention from comment is still usually backed by some diplomatic action or inaction. Mexico has a policy of not explicitly ruling on the existence or validity of a state or government; they either establish diplomatic relations or they do not. The United States has also similarly acted without an explicit statement of recognition with regards to Taiwan. While they have not explicitly maintained recognition, they maintain indirect diplomatic relations, especially following the 2018 Taiwan Travel Act and the signing of mutual consular acts

in 2019. While no explicit or formal recognition was given, their actions are a strong indicator of their decision.

As per this example, the decision is ultimately a binary action that expresses either a “yes, we recognize” or a “no, we do not recognize”. Even in that latter case, a deferral of recognition is still a non-recognition. On the other hand, the variation in the rhetoric is far more nuanced and it reflects the complex factors that have gone into a decision. The justification given is the expression of a public facing motivation. There are three types of rhetorical strategies that can take place after a decision is taken. The first type is the silent statement, or the event of no explicit statement. The absence of an explicit justification given for an action can signal several motivations or concerns. It may signal that there is an apprehension about the reputational consequences of a direct comment that the recognizing (or non-recognizing) state would rather avoid, preferring for an action to go unnoticed. For many years, such was the stance taken by the United States with regards to Taiwan, whereby they established informal relations through the creation of the de facto embassy call the American Institute in Taiwan. This instauration of indirect diplomatic relations is an action of recognition that lacks an explicit statement. The concern is ultimately one of security and economic interests. A recognizing state could end up setting themselves up for greater problems and commitments by openly recognizing; as a result, silence can be the optimal justification. A further exploration of silent recognition and non-recognition would be beneficial to the discipline, especially to further understand the potential precedent-setting risk this would ensue. However, while there are a handful of other cases such as this one, such as France with Palestine and Russia with Nagorno-Karabagh, this project will focus on explicit statements of recognition.

The remaining two types of justifications expressed are explicit and they can be either rule-based or situational motivations directly reflected in the content. Their use stems from whether an

action is consistent or inconsistent with their statement, and their underlying interests. In this project, consistency of decision with statement is observed from whether their statement or justification makes a judgment about the legitimacy of both the rebel group and the host state's claims over a territory. They may find either the government's claim to be legitimate, or they may argue the rebel group's claim is legitimate. Since they operate inversely, if they justify one actor's claim to be valid, this implies the other's claim is not. For example, a state may deem the rebel's claim over a territory to be stronger based on historic factors or based on abuses from the host state that indicate a need to provide a protected space for this group. Such a statement was made when the United States recognized the independence of Kosovo from Serbia. They declared that based on the human rights abuses committed against the Kosovars and in light of the breakup of Yugoslavia, the entity should be recognized (Rice 2008). Alternatively, the rebel group might be judged as illegitimate for trying to violate the host state's claim to the monopoly of the use of force in a territory and for having conducted many violent acts against the government and its supporters. Such was the case for Germany when they chose not to recognize the independence of Catalonia from Spain. They asserted that the solution needed to be found within the framework of the Spanish Constitution (Gabriel 2017). Both examples lay out cases of consistency of statement with their decisions of recognition or non-recognition, respectively.

An inconsistent action would have a more costly backlash than a consistent one. To issue a situationally based statement signals that the action might potentially be inconsistent with the interests at stake. For example, if a recognizing state supports the host state but recognizes nonetheless, this would be potentially damaging for their global interests if they set a costly precedent for the future. On the other hand, if the third-party state has supported the secessionist entity but has not formally recognized, this inconsistent behavior would trigger a situational

justification. An example would be a justification based on the need for regional stability or for the provision of aid to a region. The recognizing state ultimately would want to maintain the status quo moving forward, so the inconsistent action must be classified as one of uniqueness or context specific.

The final type of rhetorical strategy expressed is the rule-based justification. Since these statements are generally based on international law or norms, they are more generally applicable to other cases. In this sense, norm-based statements can more easily be used to set a standard and thus signal a stronger conviction behind an action. If a recognition statement has a rule-based bent, we would expect the recognizer to have a certain conviction of action and an awareness of the precedent it could set. This would most likely occur if the recognizer's justification were consistent with its actions (support for the host state would be consistent with a non-recognizing action). A state will use norm-based language because it is either not concerned with setting a precedent for future action or it is consistent with a standard they do want to set. An example would be a justification based on the defense of the norm of territorial integrity or of self-determination. Such was the response from the Indian Government with regards to the independence of Kosovo, which they vehemently opposed on the grounds of preserving the territorial integrity of Serbia (Indian Ministry of External Affairs 2008).

Based on the preceding framework of international recognition of statehood and the rhetorical strategies of acknowledgement, along with multiple examples of recognition statements, this chapter develops a typology of recognition decisions and statements based on the three types of motivations that result in six main types of strategies (to account for both recognition and non-recognition) showcased in Table 1 above. Below I explain the main components of each type based on the decision taken and justification given, as well as examples of each type.

Table 2-1: Types of Justifications for International Recognition

<i>Type</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Rhetorical Justification</i>	<i>Example statement</i>	<i>Example case</i>
Strong Status Quo	No	Rule-based	“We must support the territorial integrity...”	Germany → Catalonia
Sympathetic Status Quo	No	Situational	“It would cause regional economic instability...”	France → Palestine
Silent Status Quo	No	No statement	NA	Mexico → Taiwan
Reserved Recognition	Yes	No statement	NA	US → Taiwan
Reluctant Recognition	Yes	Situational	“To permit the people of [X] to protect themselves”	US → Kosovo
Revisionist Recognition	Yes	Rule-based	“We must support the right to self-determination...”	France → Namibia

The first three types correspond to the event of a negative or the non-recognition of a secessionist state. First, where there is consistency between the decision taken and the interests, the third-party state will act to defend the status quo in their statement and behave as a *strong status quo* supporter and use norm-based language in their rhetorical strategy. Such was the response from the Germans in light of the Catalonian declaration of independence or the response from the Indians with regards to the independence of Kosovo (Gabriel 2017; Indian Ministry of External Affairs 2008). In both cases, the recognizing country declared these unilateral declarations of independence a violation of the territorial integrity of their host states.

Second, when there is inconsistency between the decision and their apparent interests of who they support, their rhetoric will reflect a position of a *sympathetic status quo* supporter. In this case they will opt for situationally motivated language to justify a decision that is a counter to their interests or alliances. This has been the case of France towards Palestine (Sarkozy 2011). In this case, the major power has sustained in their statements that Israel should maintain peace with Palestine and ensure their autonomy, however they have, repeatedly, refused to recognize the entity as sovereign.

Finally, if there are potential security or economic concerns, the recognizing state will avoid any statement lest it bring attention to their behavior and endanger their interests. In this instance they are behaving as *silent status quo* supporting states. Such was the case of Mexico, where they voted in favor of the UN Resolution 2758 which granted the People's Republic of China as the only legitimate representation of China to the UN, as a blow to Taiwan, while also being one of the only countries not to emit a statement during proceedings (United Nations General Assembly 1971). Mexico has historically been in the uncomfortable position of having to tread carefully in their foreign policy to appease their hegemonic neighbor, the US, while also pursuing their interest in maintaining positive relations with the People's Republic of China, a strong rival of the United States (Schiavon 2004). Given this balancing act, Mexico often refrains from emitting statements that could affect their relationship with their neighbor in the event of actions that go against American interests.

On the other hand, in the first of the positive recognition types, if there are no inconsistency concerns, the recognizing state will overtly go against the status quo and vocally support the secessionist entity and their claim to sovereignty. In this instance, the third-party acts as a *revisionist recognizer* and will use rule-based language to support their decision. An example of this type of justification is the recognition statement from France regarding the independence of Namibia from South Africa, where they supported the self-determination of the people against the "illegal occupation by South Africa" (Dumas 1990).

Second, when there is concern about a behavior that contradicts a third-party's stated interests, such as supporting the host state's claim over an entity but recognizing said entity nonetheless, the recognizing state is acting as a *reluctant recognizer*, and they will use situational rhetoric to defend their decision. An important example of this type is the American recognition

of Kosovo's independence, where they very explicitly highlight facts on the ground and the need to protect the Kosovars from the abuses of the Serbian government in the late 80s (Rice 2008).

Finally, states with concerns about security and economic risks will avoid giving statements of support for entities they either *de facto* or *de jure* recognize as sovereign. In this instance, the recognizing state behaves as a *reserved recognizer*. One example is that of the United States towards Taiwan. As American relations with the People's Republic of China sour, the US has increased its presence and diplomatic support for the island entity whilst avoiding an outright sovereign recognition statement that could trigger a more outright conflict with their rival (Pompeo 2021).

Existing Theories of Recognition

When it comes to understanding why there is variation in the decision, form, and rhetoric of recognition, some scholarly studies have started to provide some answers. As mentioned previously, IR scholars have begun to confront the conventional wisdom that state emergence is exclusively determined by domestic factors and thus a *fait accompli* for international politics (Coggins 2011; 2014; Fabry 2010). They argue that statehood is in fact social, and that external politics plays a significant role in state birth.

The first stage in this effort has been to focus on the determinants of recognition, both from a domestic and an international lens, to gather just how significant and overlooked the international determinants have been. Four main hypotheses have emerged in the literature: first, the role of domestic secessionist groups has been studied in order to determine whether they influence the decision to recognize or not a secessionist group (Coggins 2014; Saideman 2001; Walter 2006). Utilizing different metrics and methods, scholars have argued for and against the role of

secessionist groups in influencing their government's recognition decision. Saideman, for example, posits that ethnic politics does not always inhibit foreign policy, rather, "the demands of ethnopolitical competition will cause politicians to assist secessionists in other states under certain conditions and limit them from doing so under other conditions." (Saideman 1997, 726). However, this does not necessarily contradict the main premise of this hypothesis that states are concerned about the contagion effect of secessionist mobilization, especially if policymakers do not share the same ethnic ties as potential secessionists. This fear becomes more salient if a state has a strong secessionist movement of its own (Lake and Rothchild 1998).

Second, the alliance structures of third party recognizers with regards to both rivals and allies in secessionist regions, including the host state, has been evaluated as an influencing factor in recognition decisions (Coggins 2011; Saideman 2001). The idea with this hypothesis is that relations between the recognizer and either the host state directly or regional powers will influence the behavior of the recognizer. Coggins tests this hypothesis by evaluating behavior towards rival host states and separately evaluating the behavior of regime-similar allies (Coggins 2014). The main constraint with this hypothesis is just how limited it is. It focuses exclusively on whether there has been conflict between rivals or whether allies must share a regime type. As per Coggins, the logic is simple, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend, and the enemy of my friend, is my enemy" (Coggins 2014, 44).

Third, the nature of the military balance between the actors has been used to explain the number of states in the international system (Glaser and Kaufmann 1998; Gilpin 2002). This series of hypotheses posits that the relations between the recognizer, the host state, and the secessionist entity will depend strongly on whether the recognizer favors defense over offense. Should it favor a defensive strategy, it will opt to maintain the status quo, at least rhetorically (Gilpin 2002).

Notwithstanding, secessionist entities can influence the recognizer to support it, especially if the host state is favoring an offensive strategy against the territory and is also a rival to the recognizer. The secessionists need to balance against their host state to survive and will seek out support from another sovereign state that can provide money, resources, and ideally, sovereign status (Heraclides 1990; Byman 2001; Nexon 2009; Florea 2017).

Fourth, Coggins argues that recognition is a coordinated effort set up to ensure international stability (Coggins 2014). Unilateral recognition is a violation of a host state's sovereignty and ultimately ineffective because a secessionist entity will not be a part of the international club, until a threshold of great powers has recognized it. This system of coordination favors the status quo and heavily protects the host state's territorial integrity (R. Griffiths 2014). The main premise of this hypothesis is that powers are more likely to recognize a secessionist entity when another power has already done so. As a result, recognition is the result of a coordinated snowball effect amongst major powers. This is particularly the case in the norms around recognition as employed by EU members (Coppieters 2018).

While this project focuses on the external determinants of recognition, it is worth noting some of the most prominent domestic determinants of recognition. First, scholars have focused on the degree of state building in an entity as an explanation for why a third-party recognizer would acknowledge sovereignty. The main premise being that a higher degree of state building would lower the likelihood of reintegration, whether it be violent or peaceful (Florea 2017; Fabry 2010; Caspersen 2012). Second, the level of fragmentation within a separatist insurgency impacts the cohesiveness of a secessionist message. As a result, recognizing states are less likely to concede or feel compelled to grant statehood (Cunningham 2011; Christia 2012; Cunningham, Bakke, and

Seymour 2012). Finally, ethnic distinctiveness has also been posited as an argument for why states recognize some entities over others (Hale 2008; 2000; Horowitz 1985; Roeder 2018).

Mechanisms

One key aspect that remains to be considered within all these hypotheses, is the underlying mechanism that ultimately links them to their recognition decisions. The high emphasis on the anticipated consequences of recognition noted above, not only for the recognized state, but also for the recognizer, is at the heart all these decisions and the subsequent framing of their justifications. This ultimately boils down to a concern about potentially setting a precedent by breaking with both conventions and interests. Scholars have yet to consider what triggers this concern that would have states worried about the signal they send to other similar disputed territories.

In this vein, when it comes to understanding precedent, the theory is far more complicated and far scarcer. There is none that directly relates to international recognition or sovereignty at all. Precedent is an ambiguous concept with different meanings depending on the field. In common law systems, precedent is the rule established in a previous case that can guide or bind how a judge reviews subsequent cases, historically considered as one of the sources of law for some legal systems (Hall 1916). In international law, however, due to the proliferation of autonomous jurisdictions, different cases become more complicated to judge as global conditions change. As a result, this rule has been explicitly excluded from international courts. For this reason, the legal certainty of precedent is often questioned because it is non-binding. Notwithstanding, international judges often refer to prior rulings, the only difference is that they are under no obligation to do so (Guillaume 2011).

Given the informal nature of this use of precedent, it remains understudied in the field of International Law, although it has been of scholarly interest for many years. James Parker Hall wrote on the topic in 1916 with clear IR implications. His interest was in understanding how the international system often hesitated to replace certain rules or established customs in law. Rather, actors insist on judging actions based on previous cases, even in circumstances that have evolved to a point that requires a new law (Hall 1916). Similarly, Ian Johnstone's work at the crossroads of International Law and International Relations considers the rhetorical use of legal arguments to make cases in international forums. Legal arguments have a sense of objectivity to them that confer procedural legitimacy and substantive justice to a rule structure in the international system (Johnstone 2003). He argues that, given its non-binding nature, international law serves a discursive purpose to justify actions. States feel compelled to justify their actions out of a sense of obligation to the international community they belong to, and to the norms they have been socialized into (2003). This practice and concern, which has always been an international convention, is at the very core of what motives recognition of statehood.

As shown, the literature on precedent setting in a global arena is sparse in international relations and under theorized in international legal scholarship. A few key scholars on the subject include Pelc with his study on the manipulation of precedent in the WTO, as well as Kier and Mercer's studies on the use of precedents for military intervention and weapons of mass destruction (Pelc 2014; Kier and Mercer 1996). They define it as an "act or statement that serves or is intended to serve as an example, reason, or justification for a later one" (Kier and Mercer 1996, 79). With this aim, precedents serve to hold state officials accountable and set expectations for future behavior. If they break from anticipated behavior, they could potentially set a new

precedent. If a norm is important policy makers will be aware of these consequences and how they could have an impact.

As noted above, the direct study of precedent is sparse in the International Relations literature. However, there are cognate ideas in the studies of legitimation, hypocrisy, and diffusion, particularly as they pertain to compliance with sovereignty norms. Hurd posits that the legitimacy of norms has gained authority over states because of the process of internationalization, whereby an actor's self-interest has become constituted by outside forces simply by logical necessity in the face of multiplying borders (Hurd 1999). This legitimacy has been borne not just from necessity but from repetition that led to diffusion (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). In particular, a diffusion that forms from the local to the international, to the point where the norm is commonplace and cosmopolitan but originated within the interests of those with greatest influence (Acharya 2004).

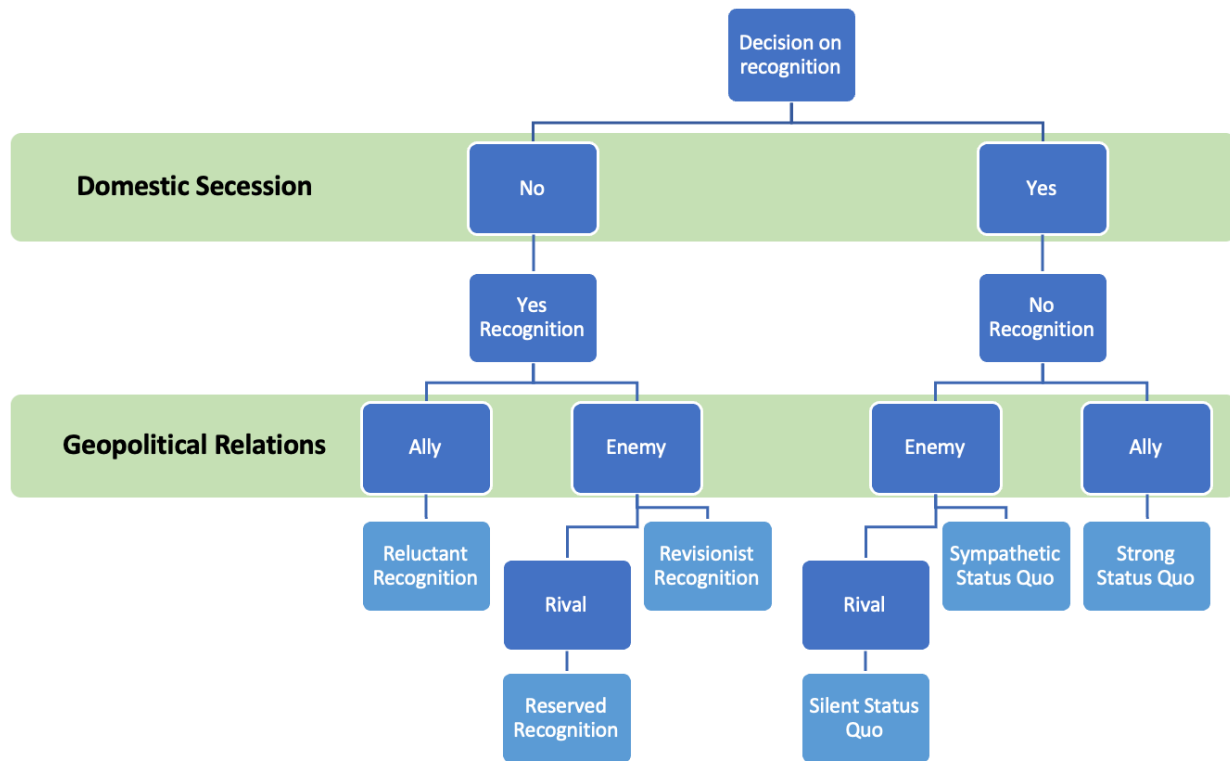
Notwithstanding, Krasner has highlighted the hypocritical nature of states as they uphold the norm of sovereignty. He posits that the continued adherence to sovereignty functions because behavior and norms simply do not add up. Self-interest in the ultimate name of the game in his argument, whereby rulers have opted to follow norms only when it is convenient (Krasner 1999). This expediency can go both ways however, since hypocritical actions can have a negative impact on their international and domestic interests. Thus, the innovation I bring to this study is that states have concerns for setting precedents when there is an inconsistency between their behavior and their interests. This presence or absence of this concern is the mechanism that will propel their rhetorical choices when it comes to the promotion or refusal of recognition of sovereignty.

Determinants of Recognition Behavior

While all the different hypotheses highlighted here are significant for advancing our understanding of international recognition and the decision-making process in foreign policy, this project adopts and expands the first two types of determinants above to explain the decision, form, and framing of recognitions of statehood. States have an interest in being consistent with the type of justification they use in similar cases. When they switch, they set a precedent for future occasions which can then be used against them or their credibility. As such, they will aim to use the strategy that best protects their reputation and mitigates or lessens any potential precedent against their interest. States will be more concerned with setting precedents if they are directly vulnerable to the consequences of their decisions. This vulnerability increases or decreases under different domestic and international conditions.

Given the ordered nature of the dependent variable, I argue that two different determinants will influence the object of study depending on the state of recognition. Specifically, I argue that the vulnerability to domestic secession will be the strongest determinant behind the decision to recognize or not, and an initial benchmark for the justification based on a possible concern for setting a negative precedent. The geopolitical relations of the recognizing state will then influence the form and framing of a recognition statement depending on the nature of the alignment. This can be initially gleaned in Table 3, of which I expand on more below.

Figure 2-2: Determinants of Recognition of Statehood



Domestic Secession

The first determinant I explore is whether the third-party recognizing state is vulnerable to domestic secession. As mentioned above, several authors have explored some ways in which domestic pressures can impact foreign policy decisions. Scholars have focused on how domestic secession in a sovereign state can impact how that state responds to a secessionist entity abroad. While different authors have made different cases for how this might influence, I strengthen this hypothesis by unfolding the mechanism that undergirds this argument. Namely, that states are wary of setting domestic and international precedents, not just through their actions, but through the rhetoric they use in their statements.

Specifically, I posit that a domestic secessionist threat will not only impact the decision to recognize but framing behind recognition (or non-recognition) statement. The mechanism that

motivates this hypothesis is the concern for setting or changing precedent from the existing status quo, especially if maintaining the current conditions and norms are in the recognizing state's interest. While there may not be binding measures of accountability for negative actions, as noted above, states have international economic and security interests they aim to preserve, as well as domestic power interests they need to retain. If a country with an independence movement were to recognize another such entity, they could face internal pressures by the movement to recognize its claims on the same grounds. Likewise, they would face backlash from their domestic audience for having set the precedent of supporting of a separatist entity which could potentially lead to greater instability in their country. Since policymakers ultimately want to stay in power, they will focus on appeasing their constituents, even if it is only rhetorically. It is assumed that the domestic population will be against supporting a division of their territory to any secessionist claims. For these reasons, if leaders recognized a foreign secessionist movement whilst having one in their own country, the administration would most likely face disapproval and condemnation from within and from abroad.

I focus on whether there exists a strong and active domestic secessionist movement in a recognizing major power. A strong or significant secessionist movement is one where there has been violence, the government has actively denounced the claims at the highest level, or the movement has made strong political strides to achieve its independence (such as referendums, formal votes, or unilateral declarations of independence). This specification is in response to Coggins, who includes this argument in her book, but she posits that it is the number of secessionist challenges that can decrease the likelihood of recognition. However, I argue that even one secessionist challenge, if strong and visible, can pressure the government into preferring, or at least justifying, the status quo.

This hypothesis applies to both the recognition decision and the justification that ensure in the typology that follows. While this hypothesis posits that a third-party state with an active secessionist movement would most likely not to recognize another separatist claim, if it did, it would reflect an inconsistency between behavior and interest. To stave off accusations of hypocrisy that could add fuel to a domestic fire, the leadership will avoid rule-based and international legal rhetoric because they otherwise set themselves up for accusations of applicable precedent-setting. In this instance they would behave as *Reluctant Recognizers*, where the use of situational motivators in their rhetoric would serve to avoid setting a precedent that could be used against them in their own domestic struggles. If, however, the recognizing state does not face domestic contestation and they support the rebel claims, they will not only be likely to promote the sovereignty of the secessionist group, but it may be more likely to engage in rule-based rhetoric in their positive recognition of the group and behave as *Revisionist Recognizers*.

On the other hand, in the event of non-recognition, if the recognizing state is both vulnerable to domestic secession and supports the host government's claim, it will likely refuse an external separatist entity sovereignty, and not face any concerns about potentially setting a precedent. Since their actions are consistent with their response to their own domestic strife, they would send a message about their position. In this event of domestic secession, it is in their interest to support the host-state position following a secessionist event, and they will be more likely to explicitly support the government's claim. In this instance they are behaving as *strong status quo* supporters with rule-based arguments found in international law and norms. However, if a non-recognizing state does not face domestic secession, they do not need to have as strong of a stance on maintaining the status quo. For this reason, they may be more sympathetic to the rebel group

and thus more likely to placate them using cost-benefit rhetoric in their justification by behaving as *sympathetic status quo* supporters.

Geopolitical Relations

The second determinant I explore is geopolitical relationships. Namely, the relations between the recognizers, the host state, and the broader region. The relationship between states can take varying forms and strengths. Along spectrum, bilateral relations can range from states with very close cultural and military ties, to warring states in active conflict with each other. The table below lays out a rough spectrum of relations, with the understanding that there is no perfect fit of relations within each category, but rather to examine the most common types of relations along the continuum.

Table 2-2: Types of Geopolitical Relations

Category	Relationship	Ties	Example
Ally	Formal Ally	Cultural or military ties	Russia and Belarus
Ally	Security Ally	Security alliance	France and Germany
Neutral	Economic Partners	high trade reliance	China and India
Neutral	Neutral Relations	Diplomatic	Finland and the Philippines
Enemy	Enemy	Political condemnation	United Kingdom and Syria
Enemy	Rivalry	Political enmity with security concerns	United States and China
Enemy	Warring factions	Active fighting or tentative ceasefire	North Korea and South Korea

The first and closest type of relationship is that between states that share very close historical, cultural, and military ties. The clearest example of this type is the relation between modern day Russia and some of the former Soviet republics like Belarus or Kazakhstan. To this day, the political, military, and cultural ties between these states remain deeply intertwined and dependent

upon the former host state of Russia. The closeness of these relations can best be noted in the Belarussian response to the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict and the integral role they have played on behalf of Russia. While these relations can be asymmetrical, as those noted here, they can also occur between peer states, such as the close relations between the Baltic states.

The second broad type of relationship down the spectrum are the security allies, such as France and Germany, where both not only share membership within NATO, a security-based alliance, but they are also members and leaders within the European Union and often caucus together in other international forums. While these states have very close relations, they still behave as independent nations and can occasionally disagree. Additionally, they are not close historical or cultural allies, but rather they have overcome their fraught past and cultural differences in favor of similar foreign, economic, and security policy goals.

The third type of relationship on the continuum is that between states with strong economic ties. Close economic relations can make states be invested in their trading partner's territorial wellbeing to stave off any economic turmoil contagion. The economic relations between the BRICS states of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, are one such example. For instance, when considering the historically relationship between India and China, it is noteworthy that, despite occasional disputes, they are both amongst the other's top trading partners. As a caveat, given the reality of a world of economic interdependence, focusing on sheer quantity of trade between countries does not help elucidate the nature of a relationship, since economic relationships can still be contentious with regards to security or ideology. For this reason, this relation ultimately falls under a neutral relationship.

The fourth bilateral relation is that which can best be described as either neutral or standard. In these cases, while there are diplomatic ties, occasional high-level visits, and certain economic

exchange, these relations are neither economically outstanding, nor closely reliant upon each other. This category can best describe relations between Finland and The Philippines. While they maintain diplomatic offices in the other's country, their relations are otherwise unremarkable. These types of relationships might have some element of political contention, as was the case between Mexico and Thailand when the former condemned the 2014 coup d'état in the latter and urged a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

The fifth category refers to the broadly contentious instances where states have adverse relationships, whether it be for ideological or political disagreements. These are usually accompanied by ruptured or displaced diplomatic relations, and in some instances one of the states recognized a different government within the country and disavows the current leader. Such was the case between the United Kingdom and Syria. After the 2011 civil war began, the UK were amongst the first recognize the opposition as the sole representative of the Syrian people. Additionally, the British embassy in Syria has been closed since 2013. In this instance, these states can ultimately be considered enemies. Enmity disregards any power asymmetry between the states. States of equal or unequal power can broadly consider themselves enemies.

The sixth category, however, refers to those enemy states that pose a credible security threat to each other. If these units are peers in military size, wealth, or global influence, and they can credibly conquer each other or their interests, they can be considered rivals. This is the current case between the United States and China. While their ideological differences date back several decades, their rivalry on military, financial, and influence-related matters are at the top of the United States security concerns. While relations between these states may still be diplomatically active, relations between them are publicly quite contentious.

The final category refers to those parties that are in a state of active war either through ongoing conflict or an indefinite ceasefire. Relations between these states are usually diplomatically non-existent. This state of conflict threatens each state's survival, resulting in the highest possible adversarial relationship. One representative example would be the conflict between North Korea and South Korea. While both states have been under a ceasefire since 1953, no peace treaty has been signed, and thus they remain in a nominal state of war.

Given the amorphous and relatively common nature of purely neutral relations, the construction of the theory will focus on the more extreme ties within alliance and enemy. On the one hand, I focus on the efforts of alliances, or positive relationships between states. In particular, the geopolitical alignments of the recognizing state with the host state and other parties with strong interests in the secessionist conflict. States have incentives to preserve their allies' interests to avoid losing their cooperation and to prevent a precedent of alliance betrayal that might be used against them. While some states are formal allies, whereby they have signed an explicit treaty of economic or military cooperation and commitment. For the sake of the argument presented, I include the category of Economic Partners within this set given the high reliance on the partnership. Such would be the case of the United States with Vietnam. While this relationship has oscillated between positive and negative for decades based on ideological and political differences, they currently are on warmer terms and even potential allies given the territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

Since states have strong incentives to preserve their relationships with their allies, their geopolitical alignment can inform the decision to grant recognition of statehood, depending on whether they have a secessionist movement of their own. If a recognizing state has a strong geopolitical alignment with states interested in the territorial integrity of the host state, they will

be less likely to recognize a rebel group. However, if a recognizing state is allied with states interested in the self determination of the secessionist group, they will be more likely to recognize. Notwithstanding, if the recognizing state does have a domestic separatist problem, geopolitical alignment will still serve to inform the rhetoric used in the justification.

On the other hand, the other focus of geopolitical relations is that of enemies. Since the advent of settlements, administrative and communal units have been in conflict with each other over people, resources, and land. These opposing parties, whether in active violent conflict or not, can best be described as enemies. If these units, in turn, are peers in size, wealth, or population, and they can credibly conquer each other, they can be considered rivals. Given that rivalry is a subset of enmity based on credible mutual conquest, to practically study these phenomena, it is worth scoping this variable for the purpose of this study.

Previous scholarship has defined rivalry and enmity as interchangeable concepts. Thompson refined rivalry as a “perceptual categorizing process in which actors identify which states are sufficiently threatening competitors to qualify as enemies” (Thompson 2001). He specifically notes strategic rivals are those that are part of a historical process where pairs of states create and sustain a relationship of atypical hostility over a period. In this sense, the term rival is very much a psychological one. Whether a recognizer considers another state to be an enemy and/or a rival relies on both objective measures of power and on the perception of power and historical or ideological differences and conflict.

For example, the United States considers China an enemy based on historical and ideological differences, and they are also a rival because of the military, financial, and diplomatic power China wields in the international system. These perceptual and tangible concerns threaten the United States’ influence on the world stage, as well as its military and financial interests

globally. By this token, China is an enemy and a rival state. On the other hand, Syria is an ideological and political foe, but the United States is, by no means, militarily and financially threatened by Syria. The Syrian government might have more powerful allies that are rivals to the United States, but by themselves, they are not rivals. As a result, Syria is considered only an enemy state.

The nature of the triadic relationship between the recognizer, the host state, and the secessionist entity is formed through a myriad of ways. It could stem from a relation between sovereigns on mutual security interests. Alternatively, the relation between the recognizer and the secessionist group can be informed from past assistance, aid provision, or even through networks of diasporas or refugees in a recognizing country (Byman 2001; Heraclides 1990). In either instance, these ties can influence, to an extent, the recognition decision, however its true weight come in on the subsequent rhetorical strategy to defend their policy action.

It should be noted, however, that within these geopolitical relations, there are also broader interests might also influence the decision, the form, and the framing of a recognition decision. Examples include preserving the regional stability in an area of interest; military interests, such as the presence of bases or troops in the area; economic interests with security implications, such as natural gas and oil pipelines that pass through an area, and/or creating conflict free/buffer areas between the recognizer or allies and rivals. All these variations play into their relations and interests when considering a secessionist claim.

Concretely, I argue that the geopolitical relations of the recognizing state influence the rhetorical strategy they use to justify their decisions, and, in the absence of a domestic situation, it can even influence the recognition decision. To elucidate the fluctuating but inciteful nature of this variable it is worth considering the different responses the United States has given to the Kurdish

secessionist effort in within Turkish territory versus within Syrian or Iraqi territory. On January 9th, 2023, during an exchange between US State Department spokesperson Ned Price and a member of the press corps on the matter of Kurdish allies in Syria and the implications for relations with Turkey, Mr. Price asserted that,

“Our Kurdish partners on the ground have been an important element in that campaign that I referenced to take on and to roll back and ultimately to eliminate Daesh. Of course there are terrorist groups that pose a threat to Türkiye. The PKK is one of them. We have been clear about that. We can work to address Türkiye’s legitimate security concerns without losing sight of what is ultimately our shared objective, and that is to see to it that ISIS is not in a position to regain strength or to reconstitute itself.” (United States Department of State 2023)

As this exchange shows, how the United States views the Kurdish secessionist struggle in Turkey versus Syria depends on the relations the Americans have with each host state. As Ned Price makes clear, Turkey is a strong NATO ally, and thus they consistently issue strong status quo statements against the Turkish Kurds. On the other hand, the Assad Regime in Syria is an enemy of the United States and thus the Americans have no qualms partnering with the Syrian Kurds to support their interests and their language is far more favorable to the Kurdish struggle.

The motivator that serves as the mechanism for this hypothesis is the preservation of their international and security interests. If their interests lie in preserving an alliance with either the host state or an invested third-party state, they will aim to defer to the actions the ally has taken with regards to this secessionist effort. If the host state has recognized the separating entity, the recognizing power should have no objection to this new sovereignty; however, if the host state has not recognized, and/or refuses to recognize this secession, the recognizing state will want to avoid damaging that relationship by endorsing a loss of their territory. On the other hand, if the host state is an enemy, the recognizing state would seek to destabilize their adversary by promoting the secessionist conflict and encouraging independence. The sole exception to this would be if the

enemy is also a rival since this destabilizing act could have important security implications for the recognizing state's interests.

An example of this relation is the present-day recognition of Taiwan and the relation between China and the United States. While Taiwanese American relations have shifted back and forth in terms of diplomatic recognition since 1949, it took an unofficial diplomatic approach in 1979 following the establishment of formal relations with the People's Republic of China. The status quo until recent years has been to maintain cultural and commercial ties, while selling arms for self-defense and maintaining the ability to come to Taiwan's defense (while not committing to do so. This strategic ambiguity has governed relations between the three actors for forty years. Recently however, in the face of Chinese aggression, the United States has altered its explicit policy to favor Taiwan and has also shifted, in implicit ways, the formality of its relations with Taiwan. It has established a de facto embassy in Taipei and engaged in senior-level symbolic talks with Taiwanese officials. Many of these and more actions have pointed to an increasing favoring of Taiwanese independence from China. However, given China's growing military capabilities and assertiveness, the United States government would be weary to explicitly grant sovereignty to the island lest it precipitate a Chinese incursion (Maizland 2022).

Notwithstanding, states are concerned with how they set precedents for their geopolitical relations. If the recognizer's actions could be detrimental for its relations with an ally, they may, seek to mitigate the effects through rhetorical strategies, depending on how this might have domestic consequences for the recognizer (as explained above). Similarly, if its decisions could have negative consequences for a rival, they would opt to remain either silent or cautious about their foreign policy, lest it result in a negative reaction towards them.

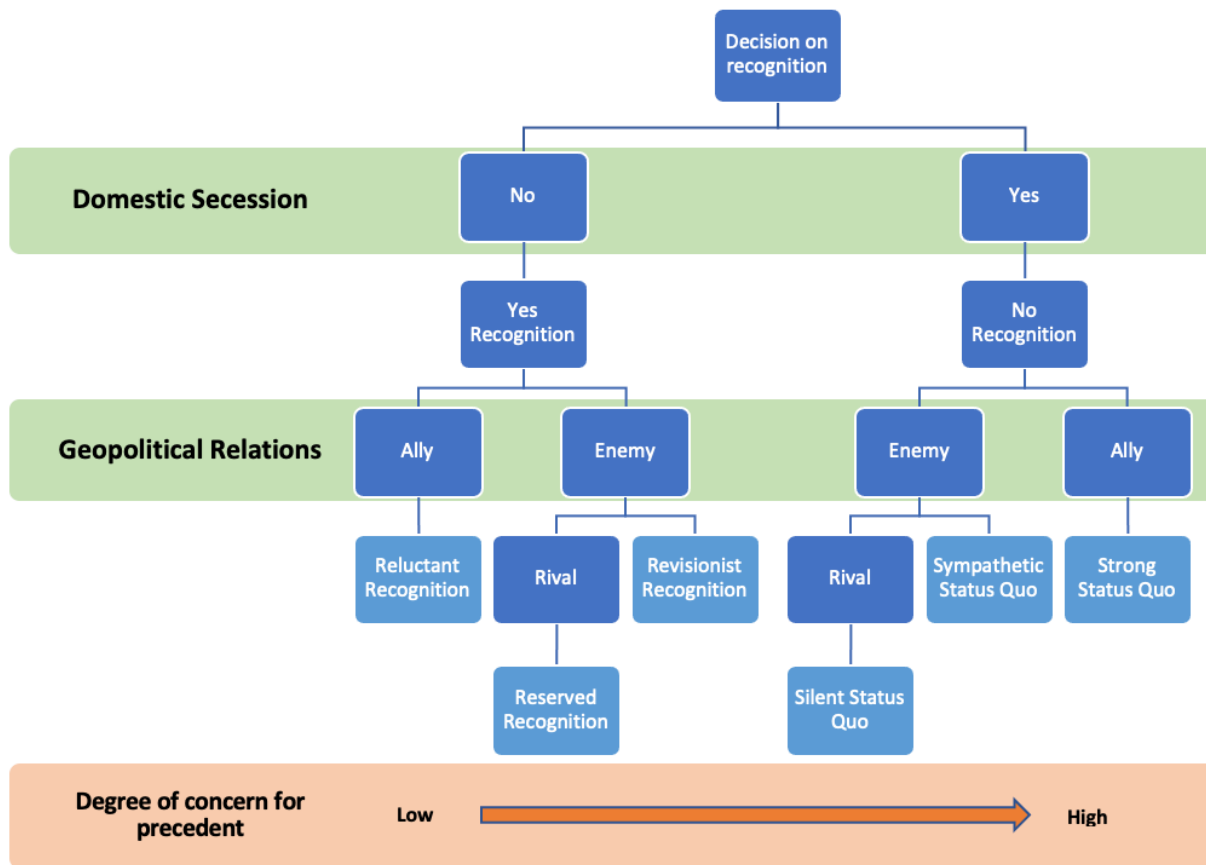
The innovation of this hypothesis is in merging the works of both Coggins and Thompson expressed above. As Coggins has argued, the relations between third party recognizers and the host state does play an influencing role in recognition decision given the need to preference for preserving the status quo amongst major powers (Coggins 2011). As noted however, the test she runs is limited in the scope of what is a rival and what is an ally. To this effect, I reconsider her definitions and scopes through the qualitative and nuanced lens provided by Thompson's labor intensive categorization of relations between states (Thompson 2001). By merging Coggins' intuition with Thompson's categorization, we can better ascertain the strength of the argument through a more nuanced and conceptually established view.

Theory on the Behavior of International Recognition of Statehood

Having reviewed all the separate components, Table 5 brings them all together to showcase the full theory. The first paragraphs below explain this overall decision tree and the initial potential outcomes that happen before the emission of a statement with the decision and the form.

Afterwards I breakdown the focus of this project, which is the rhetorical strategies used to justify their recognition decisions, namely, the framing. I outline the four possible expected outcomes and their implications.

Figure 2-3: Theory of Recognition of Statehood



International recognition of sovereignty starts with the decision to either recognize or not a secessionist entity. As the first step in the process, why recognize or not determines the rest of the choices that follow. In some cases, based either on public opinion or international consensus, the decision is easy in either direction. Other cases, where consensus is lacking and opinion is split, the decision requires greater consideration, especially among major states, because the stakes might be higher, or the status quo could potentially be disturbed. For most states, upending the current status quo has risks for security, commercial, and diplomatic relations. As clarified above, protecting the status quo, if that is the goal, requires not only finesse in rhetoric, but first and foremost, careful consideration of the policy decision that is to be made.

I argue that third party states will base their recognition decisions on their geopolitical alignments. Specifically, I posit that the policy choice will depend on the relation between the major recognizing power and the host state. If the recognizer is allied or has strong positive ties to the host state, the recognizing state is less likely to grant sovereignty of an entity separating from their ally. The reasoning behind this argument is that state interests are best favored when their ally is stable and in good standing with them, lest they intervene in their security or commercial interests. Additionally, they must consider how the support of separatism in an allied nation might set a concerning precedent for other allies and their relations with the recognizing major power.

On the other hand, if the third-party recognizer has a neutral or antagonistic relationship with the host state, they are more likely to recognize the secessionist entity. The logic of this argument is that a major power could possibly benefit from an adversary's instability and loss of power and resources, especially if the separating entity granted the recognizer benefits it sought from them. While there could still be a concern for disturbing the status quo, the security and commercial benefits could overcome this worry.

Once the decision is made, whether asserting sovereignty or denying it, the next significant consideration is whether to emit a public statement or to remain silent and simply alter the security, commercial, or diplomatic behavior. I posit that the public nature of a policy decision that is this significant will stem from the military balance at play between the secessionist entity and the host state (or the host state's main major benefactor in some cases). If the recognizer grants sovereignty and the host state does not have an offensive dominance or preference, the recognizer is more likely to be public with its decision. This publicity would then trickle down the tree to the next consideration. However, if the host state does have an offensive dominance over the secessionist entity, the recognizer will likely remain silent to protect the separatist entity, however it will

increase its ties as a show of recognition. This recognizing state would be behaving as a *reserved recognizer*, where it is keeping the formal decision quiet, but its actions reveal the true intentions.

In the opposite event where the recognizer chooses not to grant sovereignty to the aspiring state, there is generally less of an incentive to remain quiet, but they will be more likely to go public if the host state is not offensively dominant, since they do not need to have concerns about their decision having any significant ripple effect. However, if the host state does have an offensive dominance, they will most likely remain silent and simply reduce their ties with the secessionist entity. In these instances, the state behaves as a *silent status quo* recognizer. By not emitting a public statement, they do not draw attention to themselves, however their retracting actions would convey the truth.

While this is an important part of the process of international recognition, this step will not hold a significant role in this project. The key focus is the final step of this decision tree, namely the framing of the policy change for all audiences. Once the decision has been made and the conditions allow it to be a public choice, the recognition statement countries issue can have significant consequences domestically and internationally. The language they use to justify their decision can take either a rule-based or situational direction. While components of both can and do exist in all statements, they generally tend to favor one over the other based on goals and concerns they might have with decision they have reached. As mentioned above, I posit that the type of rhetorical strategy used in the justification will depend on whether the recognizing state has a domestic secessionist group within its own territory. Below I lay out the expected outcomes of the theory at this stage.

First, if a recognizing state has a strong domestic secessionist movement at home, they have high stakes in a potential precedent being set. Therefore, their language will vary depending

on the decision they end up taking. If the third-party state opts to not recognize the foreign secessionist entity, they not only are not concerned about setting a negative precedent, but they even have an interest in highlighting this position to their audiences. In these cases, the recognizing state will behave as a *strong status quo* non-recognizer. Their statement will be characterized by significant norm-based language that will emphasize their stance. An example of this language includes a strong appeal to preserving the territorial integrity of the host state. These states have a vested interest in maintaining stability in the international system in order to preserve their territory intact. Examples of this type of recognizer would be China given their various domestic independentist movements and how they respond to all secessionist movements' plea for sovereignty against their host state's consent. They have strong reactions against these foreign movements to send a message to both domestic and international audiences that they will not accept this change in the status quo.

Second, if the recognizing state does not have a secessionist movement of their own and they have decided to recognize, their behavior will be aligned with their interests and will thus generally not be concerned with setting a dangerous precedent. For this reason, they will also be employing rule-based rhetoric in their recognition statement as they behave as *revisionist recognizers*. An example of this type of language includes an appeal to the self-determination of the secessionist entity. Generally, this framing does not emphasize the status quo or stability since it is justifying its decision with a generalizable tone for other similar instances. An example of this type of recognizer is France following Kosovo's declaration of independence. They were very supportive of Kosovo's right to be a sovereign nation (Sarkozy 2008).

Third, if the recognizing major power does have a secessionist movement but they have opted to recognize the secessionist entity within an adversarial host state, then they are behaving

as *reluctant recognizers*. This behavior ultimately goes against their domestic interest and they, more than any other, have a concern with setting a dangerous precedent that could be used against them and their domestic troubles. Given this concern, they will most likely emphasize situational factors in their rhetoric. An example of this type of language argues that this decision was reached for factors unique to the case such as regional stability. An example of this type of recognition framing was the United Kingdom in their recognition statement about Kosovo. They made a point of emphasizing how this recognition would ensure the safety of the Kosovars moving forward (Brown 2008c). They had to carefully toe a line given their domestic secessionist concerns in Scotland.

Finally, if the major power does not have a domestic separatist movement but they opt not to recognize a foreign domestic secessionist movement then they are behaving as *sympathetic status quo* states. In these instances, while they may be amenable to the claims of the secessionist entity within an allied or neutral host state, they still opt to protect the status quo of the international system. Given their lack of domestic concerns, they have a significant amount of leeway with their rhetoric and may seek to appease all parties. For this reason, we would expect to see some more situational justifications. An example of this sort is an appeal to avoiding regional economic instability through the fracturing a state. One example of this behavior has been France's rhetoric with regards to Palestine. While their actions of not recognizing the entity are consistent with their alignment, their rhetoric has been very appealing towards the Palestinians (Sarkozy 2011).

This framework, in total, offers an understanding of the decision, form, and framing of a major powers' recognition (or non-recognition) of a secessionist entity. In the subsequent chapters, this theory is tested through three qualitative studies. In the first and second chapters, I study the recognizing behavior of one major power, France, over the course of twenty years to observe

variation in their responses towards two secessionist entities, as their domestic and international conditions change over time. In the third chapter, I study the responses of five major powers towards the contemporary case of secession of Kosovo to observe the variation in responses given their different conditions.

Chapter 3 – Eventual Self-Determination: France’s Recognition of Angola and Mozambique

Recognition of statehood is never straightforward. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the decision, form, and framing of recognition can look a multitude of way; even the denial of recognition is a complicated affair. Different decisions taken at different steps can lead a recognizer to behave any one of six ways: If they validate a secessionist’s claim to statehood, they can behave as either reserved, reluctant, or revisionist recognizers. If they do not recognize a separatist claim, they might behave as either silent, sympathetic, or strong status quo states.

What determines the choices to be taken at each step in the decision tree depends on two key determinants: whether a recognizing state has its own domestic secessionist problem and what its geopolitical relations are with the host state of the separatist movement under consideration. To begin with, the domestic situation will determine whether the third-party state chooses to recognize the sovereignty of a secessionist entity or not. Given possible concerns about setting unwanted precedents for their own internal problems, the local situation will be a key factor in this decision.

Once the decision is taken, the recognizing state must consider how it will act on the new foreign policy. If the host state of the secessionist entity is an ally, they will most likely not recognize, but if they do, they will do so carefully. If the host state is an enemy, the rhetorical behavior will depend on whether the enemy is also a geopolitical rival. If they are considered a rival, the recognizing state must be careful about military backlash, and thus will likely take its actions silently. This means a practical establishment of diplomatic relations without an explicit statement of recognition. On the other hand, if the host state is an enemy that the recognizing state does not consider a rival, or the relation is at best neutral, the third-party recognizer can be explicit in its rhetorical justification with the use of rule-based qualifiers backing its decision.

This chapter will consider the mechanisms that support this thesis by reviewing the evidence and language used by a recognizing state towards a secessionist entity and its host state over the course of twenty years and across changing domestic and international conditions. Through this study, we can better glean the motivations and concerns that undergirded the decision taken, and the form and framing adopted. To this effect, I review the declassified diplomatic documents from the French foreign ministry from 1954 to 1974 with regards to recognition of Portugal's African colonial territories: Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau.

In the pages that follow, I begin by briefly laying out motivations behind the selected case, the historical context, and the background to this snapshot in time. The second section explains the methods and sources used in this study. The third section outlines France's complicated geopolitical relations during the Cold War. The fourth section comprises the analysis of the evidence gathered, subdivided into three sections that broadly encompass the three consecutive time periods under study. The final section concludes and sets the stage for the following chapter, probing a more complicated geopolitical situation.

Case Selection

A theory such as the one proposed in this project relies on capturing, to the closest extent possible, the intentions behind a recognition decision and the rhetorical concerns that justify said action. This motivator, or mechanism, I propose, is the concern for a setting a domestic or international precedent that could result in negative backlash for the recognizer. As noted in the previous chapter, this precedent-setting concern matters for two reasons. First, states, especially regional and major powers, prefer maintaining the existing status quo of world affairs, given the primacy of place it has given them. This status quo relies on a stable sovereign make-up within the

international community. A single variation or contestation of territorial integrity can, and usually does, open the door to other secessionist claims. At a global level, these challenges can ultimately erode the bedrock upon which the norms of sovereignty and territorial integrity depends on and thus the continued existence of this asymmetrically beneficial situation.

The second reason states are concerned with setting a potentially negative precedent is because these could adversely impact their domestic or foreign interests. For instance, if a recognizer's strong geopolitical ally is facing a local separatist threat, it would be in its interests to ensure this threat does not have the material and rhetorical ammunition to move forward. The recognition of another secessionist conflict would possibly further ignite the first conflict and weaken its alliance as the ally is forced to divert resources back to its domestic situation and away from the shared foreign policy goal. Additionally, the success of a secessionist effort in an allied nation would inevitably weaken this state and thus the alliance built in the face of a potential global threat by a rival. If this outcome was initially strengthened by an adverse precedent, that would be a direct disruption of interests.

While observing such a direct link between action and outcome is one possible avenue of research, the main goal of this chapter is to glean whether this concern for setting a precedent is in fact motivating the rhetoric used in recognition or non-recognition statements. Given this purpose, the best method available to capture this phenomenon is to conduct a thorough qualitative study of the decision-making leadership. Within this type of design, the optimal strategy is to conduct a case study of a single recognizing state and the variation in responses over a determined period. The goal of focusing on one single recognizer is to observe variation in rhetoric as both domestic and international conditions change, as well and observe whether concerns for precedent drive decisions from one case to another.

For this project I will focus on France as the single recognizing power. Using France as a case study is useful because it was leveraging power in setting foreign policy trends directly and indirectly. Directly, they can deny entry to a new member and prevent the adoption of any non-procedural resolution, as per article 27 of the U.N. Charter (United Nations 1945). As a result, they could potentially deny development or security aid to any country out of favor. Indirectly, they are an important trading partner, a source of aid, and a security guarantor for many countries. France can put pressure on any one of these areas to guarantee compliance and punish disagreement on issues they consider important.

Having selected France as the source actor in the triadic relationship, I opted to review the variation in response during the contentious period of the third wave of decolonization, which saw the end of European colonial rule after 1945. As a colonial power itself, France underwent many domestic secessionist struggles, but none as conflictive as the independence of Algeria, a struggle which lasted from 1954-1962. This fact alone allows for an interesting review of France's changing rhetoric before, during, and after the resolution of its secessionist conflicts. The expectation would thus be that France would likely avoid recognizing any other contentious separatist struggle, lest it rebound back to their own conflict. Even in the case of host-supported independence, we would still expect France to refrain from publicly recognizing, lest it still show tacit approval for independence. After the conclusion of the of their domestic struggle, the hypothesis would indicate that France is no longer bound by its internal troubles, and thus the concern for setting a precedent would shift to other possible interests. As per this project, the following great interest would be related to its geopolitical relations, whereby states would seek to protect their allies and disrupt their enemies. A further review of French rhetoric after the independence of Algeria would thus

offer further evidentiary support for the existence of a precedent-setting concern, albeit a concern now transposed from domestic interests to foreign interests.

To this effect, the best evidence to support a longitudinal study of this nature would be the declassified notes, memos, telegrams, and other documented foreign policy material. I expand below on the direct sources used and the methodology followed to best diagnose the evidence within the case and discern whether it supports or rejects the hypotheses laid out the previous chapter. Through this thorough use of process-tracing within an extensive archival review of a single source, I can better approximate the proposed mechanism of this study (Bennett 2010).

Given the labor-intensive nature of process tracing through decades of archival material, for the sake of this project, I narrowed down the focus towards two different independence struggles with different host states. The advantage of this focus is to allow for granularity of evidence and across-time observation of the changing rhetoric and the motivations behind it. Furthermore, by evaluating France's reactions toward two different recognition struggles during the same period, we can hopefully observe a variation that might support the second hypotheses proffered by this project. In this and the following chapter, I review the responses, statements, and private observations by French foreign-policy leadership towards the colonial struggles of two different host states, Portugal, and South Africa.

In this chapter, I focus on the relations between France and Portugal and the former's views on the independence of Portugal's African colonies. As I expand on below, while not considered a peer by the French, Portugal was considered a nominal European ally and a fellow colonial state. The nature of this relationship would thus lead the French to seek to support their ally rhetorically. However, if the relationship were to devolve, we would potentially see a variation in French rhetoric in their justifications towards the African colonies.

The following chapter will, in turn, cover France's complicated relationship with South Africa from 1954 to 1974 and latter's unsupported annexation of South West Africa, present day Namibia. While the French politically condemned the Afrikaners for their Apartheid policy, the Southern African nation was also an important economic market for the French, which made their relationship a difficult one to navigate. By this token, we would expect the Europeans to carefully maneuver their rhetoric of recognition to both condemn and appease the host state.

These two different cases allow for a study of within case variation over an extended period of time, providing us with material for evidentiary analysis at a micro level (Bennett 2010). While this methodology is not enough to necessarily confirm a hypothesis, it does offer valuable insight on the role of precedent as a motivator for actions and justification (Brady 2010). In the pages that follow, I first offer some context to period of study, and some background on the cases selected.

Colonial legacy and decolonization

Decolonization, understood as the process by which major western states grant sovereignty and recognition to their former territories, is the least coherent and well-defined phenomenon. The timing and patterns have varied significantly, and the goals have not always been consistent (Prasenjit 2004). Indeed, decolonization can be divided into waves, and each one had vastly different characteristics in their movements, motivations, and methods. Given the scope of the unit of analysis and the nature of this study circumscribed to the UN-bound international community, this chapter delves into the recognition processes of the post-1945 wave of decolonization. Arguably amongst the most significant waves, this era saw a boom of new nations being granted, at least in principle, the right to rule themselves. With the collapse of explicit empires, Western nations fought against but eventually accepted the sovereignty of most of their colonies, primarily in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. Even within this scope, there was significant variation from

country to country, and even within the same entity, making generalizations risky (Prasenjit 2004). This was no less true for the empire under study in this chapter.

The French colonial empire comprised two waves. The first spanned from the mid-16th century to the sale of Louisiana in 1803 and comprised territories in North America, the Caribbean, and India, which it subsequently either lost or sold to the British. The second colonial wave began in 1830 with the conquest of Algiers and was concentrated in Africa and South-East Asia (in the territories then known as Indochina). This period was marked by complex international relations with rival colonial powers as well as the differing interests of the many French institutions working in overseas territories (Marsh 2013; Daughton 2006). What shaped French imperialism, however, was the zeal and confidence to create, from disparate populations and lands, something cohesive (Daughton 2006). Two concurrent themes dominated this time, the “civilizing” missions of the catholic Jesuit priests, and the resource extraction by the government. At its height after the First World War, the French Empire was second only to the British empire in size and reach. However, following the Vichy government of the Second World War and the post-war decolonizing sentiment around the world, the great empires, the French included, were forced to reckon with their power.

As with most of the other decolonization processes, there was nothing consistent or easily generalizable about the French unraveling of their colonial rule. The social movements behind these independentist efforts were often steered by very different groups, and these often clashed in their core grievances (F. Cooper 2004). On the Empire’s side however, the situation was no simpler. The acceptance of decolonization by the French was by no means uniform. While the Constitution of 1946 technically ended the colonial empire, the state still had complete control, with the colonies being granted some minimal power for local rule. The rulers embraced

independence more easily for those territories that did not provide the preferred resources, where there was a minimal French settlement, and those that would still crave France's influence afterwards (Pearson 2020). Other territories had more economic value, a significant French population, and entirely different statuses in the empire. Arguably the most important of these, was Algeria.

The colonization of Algeria was exceptional even from the onset. Originally an expedition to divert attention and prevent an ouster, French King Charles X took the North African port city of Algiers in 1830 with minimal opposition. Removal from power was unavoidable however, and the new liberal French government was left with a territory it did not initially want. Notwithstanding, they expanded south, and through a mixture of negotiation and force, they consolidated power and defeated the resistance powers by 1844 (Adamson 2002).

From its inception, French Algeria was considered an administrative part of France, with a significant European settlement following the conquest of Algiers and where rule happened through local tribes. This system would endure until the 1880s, when the actual carving of Africa occurred amongst European empires and colonization intensified (Bulhan 2015). By the end of the century, European settlers (known as the *pied noirs*) accounted for almost 10% of the entire population of Algeria and held almost 40% of all arable land. While this minority held a tenuous relationship to the mainland at best, they were the driving force behind France's reticence to release Algeria from colonial rule and the subsequent war from 1954-1961. This significant settler population and the special status as an administrative unit, made Algeria a unique case in the battle for decolonization and a metric on which to judge all other secessionist movements for the years prior to Algerian independence.

As this work shows, this unique circumstance, as well as the violent conflict that preceded independence, set the stage for how France responded to other post-war decolonization and separatist efforts. Prior recognitions of sovereignty depended largely on the geopolitical relations with the host state, such as was the recognition of the United States, as a weapon in France's rivalry with the United Kingdom and the refusal of recognition of Mexico and other former Spanish colonies in 1821 because of its alliance with Spain (Maldonado Garcia 2010). Another influential factor in French 19th century recognition of statehood was the overeager motivations to dominate land and resources vis-à-vis other European rivals (Mark-Thiesen and Mihatsch 2019). Such was the motivation behind France's attempts to conquer lands in sovereign Liberia and Mexico. It is with this antecedent that we can best explore and understand France's post 1945 recognition motivations and behaviors. Based on this background review of French history and recognition, the following section will detail the scope of France's geopolitical rivalry and enmity.

Studying French Recognition

To capture the nuances and complexities of recognition and the mechanisms that undergird it, I conduct an in-depth archival case study of a single recognizer over a twenty-year period. I specifically focus on the changing decisions and rhetorical maneuvers used by a great power recognizer towards two different secessionist projects. The benefit of observing a single recognizer over time is the ability to discern the variation in justifications used as both domestic and international conditions change, as well as observe whether concerns over setting a precedent drive the changes in decisions and subsequent justifications. The benefits of conducting a longitudinal case study include a facilitated handling of data sources and deepened review of material. Similarly, the ability to observe the dynamics of a phenomenon over time allows for a clearer exposition of the mechanisms at play (Snyder 2001; Brady and Collier 2004). Notwithstanding,

there are limitations to single case studies, namely, the inability to make generalizable inferences and the problems with selection biases of the materials of study. However, as the purpose of this project is to tease out the mechanisms and explore nuanced justifications, these limitations can potentially be a strength (Goertz and Mahoney 2012).

For this longitudinal study, I focus on France as the single recognizing power. France serves as a useful case because while it was not a superpower like the United States or the Soviet Union during the Cold War, it was and is still a major power with significant leveraging power and influence. France's sphere of influence, especially during the early to mid-Cold War, was particularly robust with the cultivation of the French Community in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean. Comprised of France's former colonies, the nation has not only provided financial, political, and material support, but also cultivated a legacy of remaining a major regional power in Europe. France has the capacity to influence foreign policy trends both directly and indirectly. Directly, as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, they can deny entry to a new member and prevent the adoption of any non-procedural resolution, as per article 27 of the U.N. Charter (United Nations 1945). As a result, they could potentially deny development or security aid to any country out of favor. Indirectly, they are an important trading partner, a source of aid, and a security guarantor for many countries. France can put pressure on any one of these areas to guarantee compliance and punish disagreement on issues they consider important.

I conduct this longitudinal study from 1954 to 1974. This time frame encompasses three French administrations: From 1954 to 1959, the presidency of René Coty (and the end of the 4th republic); from 1959 -1969, the presidency of Charles de Gaulle; and from 1969-1974, with the presidency of Georges Pompidou. Each of these presidencies also encompassed the three different trends of French relations with colonies and recognition of statehood. René Coty dealt with the

brunt of the Algerian War of independence. Charles de Gaulle oversaw the independence of most the French colonies and the end of the French Empire, while maintaining the country at a distance from other western states. Finally, Georges Pompidou saw the warming of relations with the United States and Europe and renewed relations with former colonies without the overtly paternalistic approach of his predecessor. In this vein, this twenty-year time frame offers an ideal background to review how changing domestic and international conditions impacted French foreign policy on the creation and recognition of new sovereign states.

Given this background, conducting a longitudinal qualitative analysis of France's recognition strategies over the course of changing international and domestic conditions is a worthwhile test of this project's theoretical mechanism. As previously established, in the time frame of study, France was considered a major power, albeit not a superpower given the Cold War context of this decolonization wave. Notwithstanding, as a colonizing state, especially in Africa, French influence was significant, and they had a considerable interest in remaining dominant on that continent. This dominance aspiration made France vulnerable to potential precedent setting concerns.

From 1954-1961, France was engaged in a complex decolonization war with the Algerian National Liberation Front, whose aim was Algerian independence from the major power. Given France's contention that Algeria was not a colony like all its other territories, but rather an integral part of France, Algerian secession was considered a major domestic threat. This gave France reason to be concerned about setting a potential domestic precedent if they granted recognition to a foreign entity that did not have the backing of the host state.

From 1961-1969, France was adjusting to changing conditions after the independence of Algeria. While there were still some colonies left, France was mostly committed to recognizing

the independence of all of them. With the major domestic threat to a possible precedent alleviated for the first time, the foreign policy apparatus took some time to adjust and establish its interests moving forward. France was still committed to remaining an influence in Africa, while also continuing to respect the still-existing colonial empires of its European allies. This put France in the uncomfortable position of having to still consider the geopolitical implications of its recognition decisions, especially for those entities seceding from its allies.

From 1969-1974, following the political transition from the French president that oversaw the fragmentation of the colonial empire, the country had found its foreign policy footing with regards to decolonization, as well as entrenched its priorities and values in the diplomatic arena. Similarly, most of its allies had concluded, for the most part, their decolonization processes and the few colonial holdouts with resistances did not impact important allies. Especially in Africa, few colonies remained, and their host states were becoming increasingly less allied by France. Additionally, the leadership stopped defending colonial holdouts and went as far as to openly debate their continued existence.

To conduct this longitudinal study, the most appropriate method of data collection is a systematic review of archival documents through a process tracing lens. There are several benefits to conducting an archival review. First, by referring to primary sources, we can sidestep the influence and biases of historians and their interpretations of histories (Lustick 1996). Second, it offers a hidden view of events and alternative perspectives that can complexify an event or a time. These first-person views can offer a richer story, even if there might be conflicting accounts. Through the use of process-tracing as an analytical tool we can make a stronger inference about the specific historical case in question as we test the hypothesized causal mechanism of interest, the concern for setting a precedent (Bennett and Checkel 2015). Process-tracing is thus “the

analysis of evidence on processes, sequences, and conjunctures of events within a case for the purpose of either developing or testing hypotheses about causal mechanisms that might causally explain the case” (Bennett and Checkel 2015, 7).

On the other hand, there are also limitations and possible concerns to keep in mind. First, it is important to be systematic in the selection of documents for review to avoid subjectivity that would further motivate a confirmation bias (Hansen 2006). Second, it is important to have a significant historical understanding of the events in question to understand the nuances presented in competing accounts and avoid taking arbitrary sides in an historical event. Third, it is hard to generalize from one or two cases. Process-tracing can thus not be used to confirm a theory, but rather to narrowly evaluate the mechanisms undergirded in the hypotheses (Bennett 2008)

To best study the motivations and mechanisms behind France’s variation in recognition from 1954 to 1974 I accessed memos, letters, accounts, and justifications from the French Diplomatic Archives in a series collated by archivists from the repositories that spanned several centuries past. I specifically obtained all the compendiums from 1954-1974. These documents were read in their original French to avoid translation biases. I also followed the classifications established by the collectors to avoid imposing my own selection bias. In this vein, I read every document in the categories relating to French relations with either the host state or the secessionist entities.

From these documents, I took notes of full documents to gather the context of the communication. On several occasions, they allude to other documentation that is not a part of this compendium. In those instances, where they could be accessed, I referred to those documents for further context. However, if they could not be viewed, I was forced to find secondary literature alluding to it to gather the main premise. If possible, I sought direct readings and avoided

interpretations, but these efforts were caveated in text. Once I gathered the list of time and location-pertinent documents, I read the entire file and took both overall notes, and I noted specific passages with the context surrounding them.

France's Amorphous Geopolitical Relations

To understand the variation in recognition strategies in Africa, it is worth briefly explaining France's complex geopolitical relations with both Cold War superpowers, as well as with the newly independent states and their former colonial authorities. For starters, towards the end of the tumultuous and factionalist Fourth Republic with René Coty as president, French relations with the United States were warmer albeit tenuous. The French were defeated and embarrassed by their loss of place as a great power following the Second World War and their exclusion from Yalta (Lowi and Schain 1992; Bozo 2016), even though they were still granted the status of permanent member of the new United Nations Security Council (UNSC). They also participated in the Korean War on the American side, and in 1949 they were amongst the original signers of NATO (Morrisey 2014). However, much of this relationship hinged on dependence and the French people were eager to reduce this asymmetry and influence (Bozo 2016).

Relations with the USSR were even more complicated. Much of the factionalism stemmed from differences with the left favoring a closeness with the Soviets. Given disenchantment with the Americans, there was a tentative rapprochement with the Soviets on behalf of the left-leaning elites, especially in the face of the Indochina conflict and the French trying to hold on to the territory and the Americans pushing them to act as a counter to communist inclinations (Bozo 2016). The most revisionist factions even decried for Charles de Gaulle to rule since he had become the face of the left in France (2016).

However, when de Gaulle took power in 1958, he got neither closer to the Soviets nor to the Americans. In fact, Franco-American relations strained significantly with the pursuit of European autonomy; while Franco-Soviet relations did warm, it was not to the extent desired by the left. France sought to establish its own influence, not just in Europe by spearheading efforts for continental integration as a third power, but also by taking care of itself militarily. These attempts to become less reliant on the United States resulted in the development of nuclear energy and power, as well as attempts to transcend the two-bloc system of the US and the USSR (Morrissey 2014; Bozo 2016).

While most of de Gaulle foreign policy legacy would continue under Georges Pompidou's presidency from 1969 to 1974, the most significant shift would be in France's relations with the superpowers. Pompidou, generally less antagonistic than de Gaulle, understood that positive relations with the Americans could only help their Eurocentric ambitions. As a result, France emerged as the spokesperson for Europe with the United States, a success in the rank-retrieval efforts started by his predecessor (Bozo 2016). Simultaneously, there was also a tentative strengthening of relations with the USSR. However, the French were clear that theirs was a relationship of cooperation, and not of friendship.

While French maneuvering between the two superpowers sought to maximize their independence, their relations with the countries in Africa prioritized the consolidation of their influence. There was a clear personality to each period in the foreign relations with African territories and nations. From 1954-1959, the war with Algeria dominated French policy. Where the fight for Indochina could be framed as a 'Western' conflict, the French were never able to convince other western nations of the legitimacy of this fight in northern Africa. Quite the contrary, this forceful expression of self-determination was well in hand with the conflicts plaguing all of

the colonial empires on the continent. While other European empires tried to steer clear, the Americans were ready for these colonial conflicts to end. The French would slowly come to lose the patience of their international allies on the Algeria question, and which could threatened their status on the continent (Morrisey 2014).

Despite the main efforts by the Gaullists to preserve Algeria as part of France, amongst the first acts by de Gaulle was resolving the conflict and letting it go (Goldberg 1986). This release was not a clean one necessarily. They held on to a paternalistic hope of neocolonial influence, where they might hold on to some economic and cultural ties. Ultimately, de Gaulle sought to continue the imperial relationship by other means (Goldberg 1986). Upon independence, francophone sub-Saharan African countries found themselves roped into a multitude of political, military, and financial ‘cooperation’ agreements that ultimately treated them as trustees. To this end, France, now a middle-power country, was able to maintain a dominant position in international politics (Thomas 2013; Guy Martin 1995).

This theme would carry on through Georges Pompidou’s administration, albeit with the illusion of greater participation and the realities of a symbiotic relationship where France ultimately *needed* to maintain influence in Africa in order to reinforce its rank amongst its desired peers (Thomas 2013). By this token, the symbolic *Françafrique* or *Communauté Française* served the geopolitical goal of a continued French presence and dominance on the continent, under the guise of ‘cooperation’, as a counterweight to the influences of the superpowers during the Cold War (Guy Martin 1995). Even with revised agreements and treaties in the early 70s, the French still held significant privileges. Pompidou further fostered an illusory sense of privilege and belonging through the creation of summits for the French Community that promoted this ‘familial’ tie (Guy Martin 1995). It is through this context that we arrive at the case study in question, namely

that of France's slow progression in its recognition of Angola and Mozambique's right to independence from Portugal.

France's Politics of Recognition Towards the Portuguese Colonies

In the pages that follow, I review France's changing rhetoric towards Portugal's colonial territories of Angola and Mozambique. From 1954 to 1959, relations between the two countries were close and positive. Both had mutual appreciation and support for the other's empire, especially as a sign of Western solidarity in the Cold War context (Byrnes 2019). This geopolitical alliance, as well as France's domestic struggle would lead us to expect the French to behave as *Strong Status Quo* non-recognizers. The theoretical expectation would be to see normative reasoning to justify non-recognition and a stark respect for not meddling in what they deemed to be 'internal affairs'.

From 1960-1968, relations between the two states became more complicated. With France having recognized all its former colonies as sovereign states, their tone towards Portugal began to favor decolonization and increasing impatience for the slow progress (2019). Given this diplomatic reality, the expectation would be to observe France behave as a *Reluctant Recognizer*. While they were increasingly in favor of decolonization, Portugal was still an important ideological ally. They also emphasized the importance of Western unity, so they had a significant interest in not alienating Portugal, while also recognizing the changing international opinion. This contradiction should be reflected in French statements through material rhetoric that prevents a negative precedent.

Finally, from 1969 to 1974, the waning of the Estado Novo and French confidence in its self-determination position towards remaining colonial territories fully neutralized relations between the two states. Additionally, France turned to fully backing independence movements in both Angola and Mozambique. With this shifting position, we can expect to see France behave as

a *Revisionist Recognizer*, with strong normative statements in support of the decolonization and condemning the last vestiges of the Portuguese empire.

The Vulnerability of Domestic Secession for Recognition: 1954-1959

1954 was a time of great domestic political upheaval for France. This year saw the independence of the countries within French Indochina, which became Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. After years of secessionist conflict with France, the latter finally relinquished after military defeat by the Viet Minh, retreated from the region, and left the resulting upheaval to the Americans.¹ This event, along with the ongoing independentist conflicts in Morocco and Tunisia, and the start of the war in Algeria, showed that decolonization would not go smoothly for the French.

The persistent conflict in Tunisia and Morocco was of particular concern for France, not only for its role in the decline of their empire, but for the spillover effect it was having in Algeria given its neighboring characteristic. In a top secret note from the general staff of the armed forces from December 9th, 1954, regarding the situation in Northern Africa, there was a noted relief that the spillover from the Tunisian and Moroccan conflicts had been contained within Algeria. It was specifically noted that “[t]hus, thanks to our reaction, the threat that this armed rebellion posed over the whole of Algeria could be circumscribed. But this threat will remain as long as the destruction or the surrender of the adversary has not been obtained, while the local acts of terrorism, which have not diminished, will run the risk of multiplying at any moment.”²

This concern was not without merit, as this was the year that also saw the conflict in Algeria truly emerge, either by sheer contagion with Morocco and Tunisia or through local means. In any

¹ Note du Ministre des États associés, 30 September 1954, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1954, Vol. 2, p. 489.

² Note d’information de l’État-major des forces armées sur la situation en Afrique du Nord, Note 4786/12-G 53, 9 December 1954, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1954, Vol. 2, p. 874

case, history has deemed November 1st, 1954 as the starting point of the conflict, which many nationalists coalescing behind the FLN and launching a series of attacks against French troops as a sign that nothing less than unconditional independence would be accepted (Evans 2012). However, this conflict could not be treated like the others. As mentioned above, Algeria had a different status within the French empire (Reid 2020). The Fourth Republic was not willing to relinquish sovereignty. Algeria was deemed too important for the recovery of national self-esteem after the occupation and only a French-designed solution could be applied (Evans 2012). Hence when the sentiment in northern Africa aimed to create a united front between all the independentist movements,³ the French were forced to react, even as they were dealing with conflict across their empire.

Prior to the start of the conflict in Algeria, the greatest concern for the French in 1954 was managing the dissolution of its Indochina colony under increasing pressure from the United States and the threat of another proxy war in North and South Vietnam between the two Cold War superpowers. Following years of ardent armed conflict with the Viet Minh, a coalition of communists and Vietnamese nationalists, the French were ultimately defeated and forced to compromise on the independence of this region. The resulting Geneva Agreement included the withdrawal of French (and other foreign) forces from the Indochina peninsula, as well, as well as the relinquishment of any French claim over the territory. Under accusations that the French had bowed to Soviet and Chinese pressures, the United States and South Vietnam never signed the accords. This would be the beginning of American involvement in the region and retreat of the French from the same.

³ Seydoux to Fouchet, Télégrammes 766 - 777, 4 November 1954, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1954, Vol. 2, p. 648.

While the resulting agreement was damaging for the French, their greatest concern, and not without merit, was that of a domino effect rippling across the empire. There were already independentist movements fighting for sovereignty from the French in Morocco and Tunisia. Similarly, French Cameroon had already seen significant nationalist and communist uprisings that were a cause for concern for the empire. This interplay of decolonization and the Cold War dynamics further complicated French rhetoric towards other nascent states and former colonies. The decline of empires, as with all other colonial powers, had also struck France.

It was becoming increasingly evident to the French that they were not going to be able to dictate the terms on which their empire was going to dissolve. While up until 1954, the United States still begrudgingly supported its western allies and their territorial claims overseas, the sentiment was shifting, especially with regards to the conflicts in northern Africa. As the French noted after the Arab-Asian group formally requested the Moroccan and Tunisian issues be discussed at the UN General Assembly, “Some delegations let it be understood that their positions and attitudes could be modified if, between now and the date of the Assembly, talks were resumed between the French government and the North African nationalists. The US delegation itself indicated to some interlocuters that its position in the debate would reflect these same circumstances and would not automatically be the same as last year.”⁴

Role of Domestic Secession

France’s turbulent decolonization process, especially in Algeria, had significant effects on its reaction to other sovereignty-challenging movements in both Africa and Asia. One such example

⁴ Hoppenot to Mendès France, Télégrammes 1792 - 1793, 28 July 1954, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1954, Vol. 2, p. 49.

was the Pakistan-India conflict over the region of Kashmir. While the French privately supported the Pakistani claim, they opted to stay out of it and offer, at best, broad generalizations:

“We ourselves would be inclined to observe the same caution as in the past with regard to a question which does not directly concern us and on which, while speaking out in the Security Council for the resolutions which decreed the truce, demilitarization, a plebiscite and referred the matter either to a mediator or to direct negotiations between the parties, we limited our interventions to prudent generalities. Now as then, in fact, we are concerned not to arouse, by a clear-cut position, the active hostility of one of the two countries, each of which, through its alliances and its own influence, can exert an important influence in debates where our own interests are at stake, currently Togo and Algeria.”⁵

They offered this same statement about the UNSC only being able to, at best, give suggestions, and not impose its will (which garnered an assumed nod from India). This showed a very cautious approach to issues of territorial integrity.

“We must not lose sight of the fact that the creation of a new international force for Kashmir would run the risk, especially if we took a clear position in favor of it, of inciting the United Nations to request the dispatch of such a force to Algeria. Suggestions have, as you know, already been made in this direction. Admittedly, one cannot in any way compare the question of Kashmir, which has an obvious international character since it arises from a territorial dispute between two states and was discussed from the outset by the United Nations, to that of Algeria, which is a purely internal matter.”⁶

As the examples above show, their concern for setting a precedent that could have dangerous consequences for themselves drove much of their rhetoric. They had clear and explicit concerns about facing hypocritical backlash and drawing attention to their own conflicts, not just in Algeria, but in all their decolonizing territories. They found themselves having to contend with a growing bloc of former colonial states calling attention to French, and other empires', actions and bringing these issues to the forefront of international debate. This was particularly damning given that both Cold War superpowers were also provoking France and other Western European states to grant sovereignty to their colonies, albeit for different reasons.

⁵ Pineau to Georges-Picot, Télégrammes 521 - 526, 14 January 1957, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1957, Vol. 1, p. 84.

⁶ Pineau to Georges-Picot, Télégrammes 687 - 693, 19 January 1957, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1957, Vol. 1, p. 114.

The Soviets were eager to support all of the secessionist movements coming out of Asia and Africa. This was done to both to weaken the Western Bloc allies of the United States and to feed the growing Marxist/communist movements leading these independentist efforts. By promoting and funding these efforts, the Soviet influence in Africa and Asia would further lock out American influence.

On the other hand, the Americans were eager to have their NATO allies recognize their colonies as independent states to, first, free up their resources to focus on the US interests, and second, to prevent the communist influence from growing through these independentist movements. In their view, if these states were granted recognition sooner, then these leftist movements to take over these colonies and they could impose or promote leadership that was friendly to the NATO efforts, and thus counter the Soviets across the globe.

As noted, this concern drove not only the rhetoric the French used with regards to other secessionist movements, but also the decision and the framing of their policy. The French would only be more overt in recognition if the colony had the full support of the former colonizer. However, even in these situations, they were very cautious to showcase the difference it held with the French struggle in Algeria. This concern for setting a precedent was evident in the documents, but this fear would begin to subdue as the conflict waned.

Geopolitical Relations

During this time, relations with Portugal were positive at best and neutral at worst. While they were technically allies and members of many of the same security and economic treaties, the French viewed the Portuguese as peripheral, with an undemocratic, paternalistic government. “[F]inally, the heterogeneous group of countries which are not in a position to assume the obligations of the zone and fear that the British initiative will split the O.E.C.E. or eliminates them:

the underdeveloped or peripheral countries, Greece, Turkey and Iceland, Portugal and Ireland.”⁷ Notwithstanding, they were also fellow empires, and as such, they never commented on any of Portugal’s colonies or questioned any of its colonial practices, especially under their strident policy of treating overseas territories as internal matters.

The Portuguese usually returned the favor when it came to matters of France’s overseas territories and decolonization struggles. For the most part, the Portuguese almost always voted in lock step with the French on United Nations matters and especially on matters that pertained to survival of empires and associated influences.⁸ This further garnered them good will from the French as members of the informal alliance of empires.

It would never have been in their interest to dismiss Portugal too directly, especially since they were founding members of NATO and Portugal had a strong anti-Soviet foreign policy. For the sake of the Western Bloc of the Cold War, Portugal and France were allies. This amity was reiterated in August 1958, when Louis Joxe, Secretary General of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs recounted his visit in Lisbon with Portuguese Prime Minister, Antonio de Oliveira Salazar. During this encounter he praised Salazar on his economic acumen and keen attention to detail. He also noted, however, the confidence the Portuguese statesman had about Portuguese control over Angola and Mozambique. “At no time did President Salazar express the slightest fear that the reforms undertaken by France could have adverse repercussions in Angola and Mozambique. On the other hand, he underlined how much it would be in our interest to have a conversation on this point with the Belgian government, which had expressed to him its concerns about the Congo.”⁹

⁷ Pineau to French Diplomatic Representatives Abroad, Télégramme Circulaire 16, 20 February 1957, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1957, Vol. 1, p. 283.

⁸ Note de la Délégation Française aux Nations Unies, 13 December 1958, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1958, Vol. 2, p. 860.

⁹ Bernard de Menthon to Couve de Murville, Télégramme 117, 22 August 1958, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1958, Vol. 2, p. 285.

A similar sentiment was shared when the Portuguese Foreign Minister, M. Mathias met with General de Gaulle in 1960 and in discussing the situation in the Congo, he expressed that “[h]e has no illusions about the confusion and disorder that reigns in this country. Much has been said in this regard about the possibility of conspiracies targeting certain foreign territories, in particular Angola. However, Mr. Mathias does not express any particular concern in this respect. Admittedly, it is possible that a certain contagion will work in the long run and that the same will happen from Rhodesia towards Mozambique. However, this is not seen as a real threat.”¹⁰ Mathias did emphasize however “how his country was threatened by the development of events in Africa, but added that Portugal would not accept at any price that any parcel of Portuguese territory in Africa should cease to be Portuguese.”¹¹ To this sentiment, “General de Gaulle reaffirms France's solidarity with Portugal and strongly hopes that it can manifest itself in a concrete way, particularly at the United Nations.”¹²

Generally, French sentiment towards Portugal, albeit somewhat dismissive, was still that of strong support with a concrete defense in multilateral organizations. This position was explicitly stated, not just by President de Gaulle, as mentioned above, but also by the French Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville during his exchange as well, “Portugal will be supported by France”¹³, and “France will provide Portugal with its assistance, to the extent of its possibilities.”¹⁴ Additionally, the Portuguese often looked to the French as the most receptive to their hopes of

¹⁰ Entretiens Franco-Portugais, Compte rendu I, 5-6 October 1960, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1960, Vol. 2, p. 458.

¹¹ Entretiens Franco-Portugais, Compte rendu I, 5-6 October 1960, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1960, Vol. 2, p. 457.

¹² Entretiens Franco-Portugais, Compte rendu I, 5-6 October 1960, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1960, Vol. 2, p. 458.

¹³ Entretiens Franco-Portugais, Compte rendu II, 5-6 October 1960, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1960, Vol. 2, p. 459.

¹⁴ Entretiens Franco-Portugais, Compte rendu II, 5-6 October 1960, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1960, Vol. 2, p. 459.

extending the scope of NATO to Africa, given their insistence that European territory extends to that continent through their overseas territories. Their alliance was thus both formal through shared membership in NATO and the OEEC (Organization for European Economic Cooperation) and diplomatic through shared interests in preserving their African influence and through greater European integration.

Aftermath of Domestic Secession and Outdated Geopolitical Relations: 1960-1968

Following years of political factionalism, and an extremely divisive war in Algeria spurred on by French Algerians and other nationalists in the country, by 1959, the situation in France began to stabilize. Newly elected under a new constitution, General de Gaulle would firmly put an end to the infighting and speed up the dissolution of the French Empire. The pivotal moment for this effort would be his September 16, 1959 statement, where he effectively declared that the Algerians had the right to determine, by themselves, their representative and governing future (*The New York Times* 1959).

De Gaulle's return to French politics would prove a turning point in history both domestically and internationally. At the domestic level, de Gaulle surprised most of the self-proclaimed 'gaullists' that had called for his return to power by completely shifting his pre-presidential stance on Algeria. Prior to being elected, he had the complete support of the white, French Algerians living in that territory that wanted to remain part of France and continue to exclude the Muslim population from any leadership role. Following his ascent to the presidency, he shifted gears and firmly set in motion the end of the French Empire. While he lauded France's "civilizing mission of the past", he recognized the 20th century was a time of independence (Morrisey 2014; Evans 2012).

While fighting would continue for a couple more years, the core conflict within these efforts would culminate in the Evian agreement which granted Algeria its sovereignty; stipulated a ceasefire; a French military evacuation; option for French Algerians to decide which nationality they wanted and receive due compensation for their property; continued use of the Sahara for nuclear tests; French military bases for a set number of years; economic aid for Algeria, and continued cultural contacts (Morrisey 2014).

Notwithstanding, until this agreement was formalized, the French were adamant that Algeria was part of France and thus not subject to foreign intervention. To this effect, they often rejected any attempts to compare this situation to any other secessionist conflict. Many would attempt to draw parallels with the secessionist conflict in Katanga, the breakaway state which declared its independence from Congo-Léopoldville. However, the French argued that “the Congo became, on June 30, following a decision of the Belgian government, an independent State and its admission to the United Nations was recommended by the Security Council during its session of July 7. It was after its accession to independence that troubles arose in the Congo, prompting this sovereign State to seek the assistance of the United Nations, first in the form of technical assistance intended to restore order and to enable the Congolese government to face up to its responsibilities, both domestically and internationally.”¹⁵ However, “[n]othing similar exists in Algeria, where despite the persistence of a rebellion inspired by an organization based in a foreign country, the French government provides general security, while the administration and public services continue to operate normally.”¹⁶

¹⁵ Note de la Mission pour les Affaires Algériennes, 4 August 1960, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1960, Vol. 2, p. 194.

¹⁶ Note de la Mission pour les Affaires Algériennes, 4 August 1960, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1960, Vol. 2, p. 194.

On the other hand, at the international level, France still had to contend with the Cold War superpowers and their competing influences and pressures. While France was ultimately a US ally, its relationship with the Soviets was not as cold; de Gaulle was convinced that détente was inevitable (Morrisey 2014). Notwithstanding, de Gaulle's main foreign policy goals were to create a strong Europe that would be able to stand on its own and a strong France capable of self-defense. This independence would allow it to be an influential force within the budding non-aligned movement as a viable alternative to the ideologically driven poles (Guy Martin 1995).

One of the ways France continued its influence was through the establishment of the French Community, a voluntary association of French-speaking countries that served as the successor of the French Union.¹⁷ The initial premise involved treaties of association with common language and currency, as well as military aid and some diplomatic coordination (Morrisey 2014). Save for Guinea, most of France's former colonies and territories opted into this French partnership which continued to grant aid and diplomatic assistance, even after they were granted full independence. This move was encouraged by the Americans because it would serve to stave off the Soviets' agitations in the Third World through the support of the nationalist/communist rebellions that often undergirded decolonization (Evans 2012). This Pax Gallica would have three pillars: the monetary pillar to sustain a franc zone with 14 African states; the military pillar which sought to maintain a French presence in several permanent bases scattered across the continent, and the statecraft pillar, through which France maintained a network of experts at the state level in African countries, across all structures of government (Vallin 2015).

Domestic Secession

¹⁷ French Union was the renaming of French Empire after colonies were granted a bit more autonomy. It became a community after a referendum was given to all colonies and asked whether they preferred to remain overseas territories or self government. Most opted for the latter and after two years under this voluntary association they proclaimed their independence and became sovereign nations with the blessing of the French.

France's stance on recognition was slowly evolving. In the event of an affirmative decision, France was beginning to be more explicit with its recognition statements, however, they were still very purposeful with their justifications. For example, when they recognized Senegal's split from French Sudan (renamed the Republic of Mali), they stated that "[t]his state presents all the characteristics generally required by international law."¹⁸ On this basis, they recognized Senegal's sovereignty.

Furthermore, this narrative would become emboldened. By the mid-1960s, now that France no longer had concerns about setting a precedent for their own domestic conflicts, based on the hypothesis of this paper, it would be expected that France would begin recognizing for freely, and they did. The most controversial of these was the recognition of the People's Republic China (PRC) in January of 1964. A controversial decision, as Paris became the first major power to recognize the PRC since 1950 (Garret Martin 2008).

On the other hand, when it came to a non-recognition decision, they still advised their diplomats to avoid the subject. However, their justifications in 1960 were still supported by norm-based arguments. As noted above, their position on the secessionist attempt in Katanga was that "the recognition of Katanga's independence could not be justified either legally or politically. Recognition at this stage would lead to an immediate rupture of the Léopoldville government, which France could not countenance given the importance of its interests and its proximity to two member states of the [French] Community."¹⁹

¹⁸ Couve de Murville to French Diplomatic Representatives in Beirut, Rabat, Tunis, Tokyo, Phnom Penh, London, Washington, Bonn, Rome, Rio, Buenos Aires, Quito, New York-UN, Télégrammes 660-661; 3460-3461; 3153-3154; 697-898; 694-695; 11415-11416; 13404-13405; 5055-5056; 3429-3430; 511-512; 491-492; 90-91; 72-75, 9 September 1960, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1960, Vol. 2, p. 302.

¹⁹ Couve de Murville to Bérard, Télégrammes 4113-4114, 21 July 1960, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1960, Vol. 2, p. 131.

Their general policy of avoiding foreign interference, either militarily or diplomatically persisted. Especially as they continued their reluctant departures from their African colonies, they remained adamant that matters of all nature needed to be solved diplomatically. This was the case against Vietnamese incursions that violated Laotian independence and their reticence to intervene or support any military action, given that the goal should be “to put the Laotian people in a position to choose their policy and to freely express their will”.²⁰ This insistence on the respect of sovereign integrity served more the purpose to allow the French to direct how Algeria becomes independence given that “[i]n law, it is France, which, sovereign in Algeria, accepts self-determination: it can guide this self-determination.”²¹

Notwithstanding, even after France had resolved its own secessionist conflicts, they still adhered to this non-interventionist narrative in African cases, albeit through abstention and no longer through a direct veto. In the follow up to the Katanga secessionist conflict in Congo, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs communicated to all diplomatic posts their reasoning for continued abstention in UN Security Council votes on the matter with the following: “The reasons that led the delegation to abstain are simple. The consistent French position is that order and security can only be restored in the Congo by the Congolese themselves, without outside intervention of any kind.”²²

However, when it pertained to an ally’s interests, such as was the United Kingdom to the French, they still sought to ensure the ally’s interest was respected. When the matter of Southern Rhodesia secessionism came up at the United Nations, the French abstained from any matter that

²⁰ Couve de Murville to French Diplomatic Representative Abroad, Télégrammes 123-139; 99-115, 3 January 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 1, p. 4.

²¹ Note from Premier ministre, 15 January 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 1, p. 42.

²² Couve de Murville to French Diplomatic Representatives Abroad, Télégramme circulaire 1, 4 January 1965, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1965, Vol. 1, p. 1.

pertained to the territory on the grounds of territorial integrity; “this country is not a Non-Self-Governing Territory within the meaning of Article 73 and that, under the Charter, the United Nations does not have jurisdiction to rule on the questions raised by its political development.”²³ Furthermore, they supported their colonial ally in highlighting that “the real problem: is, in fact, that of avoiding, as the British government itself wishes, that a condemnable minority regime be confirmed in Southern Rhodesia and that, in the shortest possible time, a new African country can take its own destiny into its own hands and thus be able to make its own contribution to the community of Nations.”²⁴

When confronted on the wide variation in their foreign policy from the bold recognition of the PRC, to their caution and non-intervention in Africa, the French confidently noted that “the very diversity of the positions taken on the subject by the States concerned attested to our loyalty to the rule of discretion that we had assigned to ourselves as well as to the general principle according to which it was up to sovereign States to determine their policy freely and independently.”²⁵ Effectively, entering a time of recognition according to their interests; a vast departure from before.

Geopolitical Relations

This trend also continued in their relations with Portugal. The French were still allied and amicable with the Portuguese. They still sought to defend the Lusitanos, such as when pressed by the Americans to use their friendship and influence to nudge the Portuguese towards policy change

²³ Seydoux to Couve de Murville, Télégramme 1080, 6 May 1965, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1965, Vol. 1, p. 566.

²⁴ Seydoux to Couve de Murville, Télégramme 1080, 6 May 1965, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1965, Vol. 1, p. 567.

²⁵ Couve de Murville to de Courcel, Télégrammes 97-98, 5 January 1965, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1965, Vol. 1, p. 3.

regarding their repression in Angola, lest the conflict get worse, and it resulted in a dangerous contagion. The French pushed back that “[n]othing prevents Portugal's allies from giving them, each for their part, such friendly advice as they deem appropriate. But to go beyond that would lead to a hardening of Lisbon's intransigence.”²⁶ Additionally, the French representative noted that rushing to decolonize the Portuguese territories would lead to a similar outcome as is playing out in Congo at that time, name that of a power vacuum and anarchic violence. Ultimately, the French strongly held that “Portugal is our ally and that fact alone merits consideration.”²⁷ They posit that they will achieve better results with Portugal if they don’t force the situation and rather approach as friends.

For their part, the French still supported and saw Angola and Mozambique as territories that were fully under Portuguese control. They were even proud of their strong cultural and political relations with these overseas territories.²⁸ However, by the mid 1960s the French were growing quite concerned that the Portuguese were overestimating their military readiness in Angola, especially in the face of increasing support for the independence movements from other Afro/Asian states.²⁹ As a result, while these backroom machinations ensued, the French were still committed to protesting the Afro-Asian condemnations against the Portuguese in international forums. The often found the many recommendations and resolutions presented against Portugal to be arbitrary and illegal.³⁰ Even as the African states increased their pressure on Portugal’s western

²⁶ Entretiens Franco-Américains sur l’Afrique, Procès-verbal officiel, 28 June 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 1, p. 976.

²⁷ Entretiens Franco-Américains sur l’Afrique, Procès-verbal officiel, 28 June 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 1, p. 977.

²⁸ de Rose to Couve de Murville, Dépêche 652/DE, 9 June 1965, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1965, Vol. 1, p. 699.

²⁹ Clauzel to Couve de Murville, Dépêche 126/AL, 6 February 1963, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1963, Vol. 1, p. 176.

³⁰ Note de la Direction des Nations Unies et Organisations internationales, Note 009, 19 February 1962, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 1, p. 186.

allies, France recognized that “[i]n order to spare the chances of our African policy, we should be able to adopt, in each case, nuanced positions taking into account both our concern not to disappoint or embarrass our African friends too much and the need to preserve our various interests in the world. These two requirements will often contradict each other.”³¹

1961 saw the beginning of the decolonizing efforts in Angola and they quickly gained international attention. When the British and the French met to discuss the political situation in Africa, they touched upon their impressions and strategies regarding the rising conflicts in the Portuguese colonies. They agreed upon the need to impress upon Portugal the need to act quickly to revise their African policy, since “[i]n the absence of this revision, the French and the British have agreed in estimating that the troubles will extend to all of the Portuguese territories in Africa and risk continuing there indefinitely.”³²

This statement was directly emphasized to the Portuguese, when Foreign Minister Mathias met with General de Gaulle and entreated the Frenchman for support, given that for Portugal, “the question of Angola, for its government, is a matter of life and death.”³³ To which de Gaulle, while cautioning that the Lusitanos need a long term plan for an eventual decolonization, “[b]e that as it may, France will not condemn Portugal, and it will act thus for three reasons. Firstly, for the sake of European solidarity; secondly because it is aware that the events in Angola are not only the effect of spontaneous movements, but also that of external maneuvers; finally, because she wants Portugal to survive and subsist as a state.”³⁴

³¹ Note, 5 July 1963, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1963, Vol. 2, p. 68.

³² Note de la Direction d’Afrique-Levant, Note 21, 3 June 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 1, p. 712.

³³ Compte rendu, 19 July 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 2, p. 130.

³⁴ Compte rendu, 19 July 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 2, p. 130.

This tone, however, would begin to soften ever so slightly by late 1963, to the relief of the French, when the new Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alberto Franco Nogueira, recognized to Roger Seydoux de Claussonne, the French Permanent Representative to the United Nations, that while, “[t]he position of the Portuguese Government, he told me, remains unchanged in this respect: that there can be no question of it agreeing to make a declaration announcing, in the near future, the application of the principle of self-determination. However, Mr. Nogueira did not say that the current status of Angola and Mozambique was fixed forever, nor that Portugal definitively refused self-determination. This, observed the Minister for Foreign Affairs, can take various forms: what cannot be accepted is that it is foreseen in advance that it will automatically lead to independence.”³⁵

Notwithstanding, over time the French, and other Western allies, would also start to lose patience with the Portuguese intransigence with regards to Angola. France, along with the United Kingdom would start to face significant backlash for its support of Portugal over the matter of Angola. The discrete, allied approach was proving “completely unsuccessful”.³⁶ Western allies had tried to appeal to Portugal to at least make a public plan geared towards social and economic reforms that might hint at some moderate autonomy, but not to the extent of self-determination or independence. Without this olive branch from the government, Western allies would have a hard time defending Portugal to the wider international community.³⁷

This view was further substantiated in a French assessment on the nature of the conflicts in the Portuguese colonies. Following a review of all military forces and equipment in these

³⁵ Seydoux de Claussonne to Couve de Murville, Télégrammes 2491 - 2496, 24 October 1963, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1963, Vol. 2, p. 426.

³⁶ Réunions des Ministres des Affaires étrangères occidentaux à Paris, Compte Rendu IV, 6 August 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 2, p. 262.

³⁷ Réunions des Ministres des Affaires étrangères occidentaux à Paris, Compte Rendu IV, 6 August 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 2, p. 262.

territories, the French ambassador to Portugal concluded, in a letter to the French minister of Foreign Affairs that, “even in the most favorable hypothesis, that where the rebellion proves incapable of increasing its offensive potential, it is only at the cost of constant surveillance of the border, of an effective grid of the still sensitized regions that the Portuguese command would be able to maintain its current positions.”³⁸ This assessment would not improve over time, as noted in 1965,

“The African offensive for the total liberation of the continent is not weakening, rather it is exasperated by the Portuguese refusal of any concession and any negotiation. The result of the first round in Angola can be considered a draw. The rebellion certainly failed; but, it forced the government of Lisbon to maintain in Angola an army of more than 50,000 men. This is a very heavy burden if we note that, even before the opening of a third front in Mozambique, military expenditure already constituted 43% of the Portuguese budget.”³⁹

Overall, relations with Portugal were still strong during this time, even if there were some initial concerns behind closed doors. The reality was that Portugal was still a Western ally in the grander scheme of the Cold War, and thus maintaining this relationship was of utmost importance. This was further elucidated as West Germany and France sought to strengthen ties with the Lusitanos by bringing them in to the Western European Union. As Chancellor Adenauer expressed in a secret meeting with General de Gaulle, “Such a move would be welcomed in Europe, and we would show the Russians that Western Europe still has enough vitality.”⁴⁰, to which the Frenchman responded, “[i]f Germany proposed that we bring in Spain and Portugal, France would not oppose it, because these countries will not prevent us from carrying out a European policy.”⁴¹

³⁸ de Beauverger to Couve de Murville, Dépêche 714/AL, 9 October 1962, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1962, Vol. 2, p. 287.

³⁹ Note on Angola, 1 July 1965, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1965, Vol. 2, p. 1.

⁴⁰ Tête-à-tête du Général de Gaulle et du Chancelier Adenauer, Compte Rendu, 3 July 1964, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1964, Vol. 2, p. 15.

⁴¹ Tête-à-tête du Général de Gaulle et du Chancelier Adenauer, Compte Rendu, 3 July 1964, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1964, Vol. 2, p. 15.

The tide of Franco-Portuguese relations began to turn by 1968, when France found themselves increasingly having to deal with conflicts between the Portuguese in Africa and the African members of the French Community. Such was the case when the Senegalese requested assistance from the French to mediate with the Lusitano to protect them against the decolonization conflict in Guinea Bissau, where the Portuguese were retaliating against Guineans on Senegalese territory. Ultimately, given their stronger tie with Senegal, the French were inclined to back the African nation over their friendship with Portugal. Their sentiment at this time was thus that “[u]nder these conditions, we must hope that the authorities in Lisbon will be able to exercise caution and coolness in their relations with Senegal.”⁴²

This problem was further exacerbated by the end of 1968 when French rockets were found having been used by the Portuguese against Zambia. The tone noted, by this point, was increasingly less amicable towards Lisbon:

“[Y]ou would kindly ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs to give us the formal assurance that the war material delivered by us to Portugal will henceforth only be used under conditions which are not likely to call into question the Franco-African relations. In the absence of such a commitment, we would be forced, to our great regret, to renounce the export of these materials and to cancel the authorizations in principle which have already been given.”⁴³

This communiqué represented, up until 1968, the most direct signal sent to the Portuguese by the French that the latter have lost patience with their European ally. This also served as an omen for the decline that would ensue under a new administration.

⁴² Couve de Murville to de Rose, Dépêche 3/DAM, 21 February 1968, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1968, Vol. 1, p. 358.

⁴³ Debré to Tricornot de Rose, Télégrammes 294 - 296, 7 December 1968, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1968, Vol. 2, p. 952.

A Reconsideration of Geopolitical Alignments: 1969-1974

1969 would mark a year of change in French politics with a decade's long reign coming to a contentious end as the presidency transitioned from Charles de Gaulle to Georges Pompidou. Many questioned at the time whether this would represent a significant shift in policy or whether a continuation of Gaullist practices would ensue. The reality would prove to be more of the latter but with a more pragmatic approach to foreign policy and a greater emphasis on improving the domestic social and economic structures that would be required to substantiate the reputational concerns of Gaullist loyalists. Pompidou's approach recognized that French strength on the global scale could not come from isolation but rather from internal strength (Bozo 2016).

This mentality would be further observed in the softening of policy towards European integration and an openness to ceding some autonomy for the sake of a strong union that could relax its reliance on the United States. The goal was to create a joint front that could work with, and not for, the Americans, against the Soviet machinations in the global south (Bozo 2016). In this vein, when it came to relations with Africa, the Pax Gallica policy not only continued under Pompidou but was strengthened, albeit under the guise of partnership and cooperation. Maintaining France's African sphere of influence was still a key policy position and would increasingly trump its prior colonial perspective on sovereignty (Vallin 2015).

Recognition Policy

With this retrenchment of policy towards the global south, and Africa in particular, there was a shift in recognition policy. The French, well past most of their own decolonization processes, were no longer constrained by domestic concerns regarding their foreign policy. With this liberation, their rhetoric also loosened in severity. Following the Six Day War where Israel seized the Old City of Jerusalem, France, now looking to maintain better relations with Arab states, imposed an

arms embargo on the Jewish nation and repeatedly critiqued the Israeli occupations of Palestinian territories for what it deemed an unlawful takeover:

“It does not seem indisputable that all the measures, legislative or otherwise, taken by the Israeli authorities with a view to facilitating and accelerating, in favor of a de facto occupation, the process of integrating part of Jerusalem, are contrary to all United Nations resolutions. They are also contrary to the rules of international law governing armed occupation such as the provisions of the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”⁴⁴

Similarly, when it came to the matter of Biafra’s secession from Nigeria, the French emphasized the importance of “the right of the Ibo people to self-determination”.⁴⁵ While this legal rhetorical strategy had already been used before in staunch instances of non-recognition, it was beginning to creep in when discussing or prefacing a hope for recognition. Even more of note, in this context, however, was the attitude taken by the French towards Nigeria’s position as a host state in this instance. When the Nigerian ambassador to France met with the French Foreign Minister, he “expressed the wish that, drawing on its African experience, France would suggest a political solution to the crisis, in the context of a united Nigeria.”⁴⁶ To which the Minister responded that “the experience on the one hand, the specific problem of Nigeria on the other, seem in this case to come together to lead him to affirm that there would be neither peace nor security without recognition of the right Ibos to choose their destiny. France has experienced these things itself.”⁴⁷

Geopolitical Relations

The end of de Gaulle’s presidency also saw an important transition in Portugal. After the nominal head of the Portuguese dictatorship, Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, fell into a coma, a new leader

⁴⁴ Berard to Schumann, Télégrammes 1728 - 1736, 28 June 1969, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 1045.

⁴⁵ Note de la Direction des Nations-Unies et Organisations internationales, Note 2, 2 January 1969, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 7.

⁴⁶ Note de la Direction d’Afrique pour de Ministre, 15 January 1969, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 88.

⁴⁷ Note de la Direction d’Afrique pour de Ministre, 15 January 1969, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 88.

was appointed; Marcelo Caetano, a politician and scholar who would ultimately be the last leader of the Estado Novo prior to the military coup which would usher in a democratic transition. This transfer of power raised some initial hopes that a change could occur, and the Portuguese would be ready to move forward with decolonization; however, this would not be the case, as Caetano would prove to be a continuation of Salazar without the same societal influence.

The French, for their part, were continuously under attack by other African nations for their implicit support of Portugal in the independentist conflicts in Angola and Mozambique. Given France's ambitions of remaining an influential power in the region, they were often forced to reckon with their policies. One such example was the construction of the Cabora Bassa dam in Mozambique, by a private consortium of French, Italian, and German constructors, which was becoming a source of contention for French political interests on the continent. Such was the argument made by the Zambian president to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, where "[h]e underlined that this enterprise will make Western countries appear to Africa as enemies and will open the door of the black continent to the influence of Eastern countries."⁴⁸ Ultimately, this, and other such warnings, would start to induce the French to reconsider their positions:

“As the Cabora Bassa affair will have repercussions and will arouse increasingly lively reactions in Africa and in the Third World, as it will most certainly be discussed at length during the conference of non-aligned countries, and that If it would give rise to a boycott proposal against us, it would obviously be appropriate for us to assess the harmful consequences for our country on the political and economic level.”⁴⁹

During a meeting between French and Portuguese leadership, President Pompidou reiterated to the Portuguese where the French stood on decolonization “We thought that colonization was a phase which could have lasted several centuries for countries like ours and yours, but this no longer

⁴⁸ Hutte to Schumann, Télégrammes 108 - 112, 20 May 1970, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1970, Vol. 1, p. 665.

⁴⁹ Hutte to Schumann, Télégrammes 108 - 112, 20 May 1970, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1970, Vol. 1, p. 666.

corresponded to the aspirations of the modern world, although I agree with you that these aspirations are expressed mainly by minorities; but the world has always evolved under the influence of minorities.”. He similarly made it clear to the Portuguese that this was coming from him and not that “it is not to spare such an African president or such a French-speaking state that we maintain this overall attitude with regard to colonization. We believe this is the attitude that corresponds to the current state of the world. The close relations we have with you do not prevent us from having a different attitude from yours.”⁵⁰

While Paris would never fully cut ties with Portugal over their colonial policies, for the first time, France voted explicitly against Portuguese interests in international forums, a departure from its previous policy of abstention. “On October 23, 1972, our representative on the Security Council joined in a resolution condemning a violation of the Senegalese border by Portuguese forces from Guinea-Bissau; a month later we voted another resolution reaffirming in particular the rights of the peoples of Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola to self-determination and asking Lisbon to put an end to the military operations undertaken in these countries.”⁵¹

The greatest concern for the French at this time, was that even under new leadership, “the complete absence of reference to a possible modification of the political and administrative structures of the Overseas Territories, the silence maintained on the reforms necessary to bring these territories out of the colonial era has caused manifest disappointment in business circles.”⁵² Despite hopes for a change in policy from President Caetano they noted that “[b]oth out of personal convictions and for reasons of internal order, including opposition from the right and the army to

⁵⁰ Entretien du président de la République avec M. Patricio, ministre des Affaires étrangères du Portugal, *Compte Rendu*, 22 January 1971, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1971, Vol. 1, p. 138.

⁵¹ Note de la Direction des Affaires africaines et malgaches, 6 July 1973, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1973, Vol. 2, p. 57.

⁵² Radiogram to the French Ambassador in Portugal, *Dépêche* 18, 29 April 1969, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 729.

any "abandonment", fear of social and economic unrest which could result from the repatriation of the Portuguese settled in Africa - Mr. Caetano is firmly hostile to the independence of the overseas provinces."⁵³ The new administration's plan was instead that Angola and Mozambique would become autonomous regions, where they would each have certain political responsibilities but where "the central government would reserve a certain number of areas of common interest, notably defense, diplomacy, the appointment of governors general and that of the heads of the regional executive."⁵⁴

The French, for their part, did not believe in Portugal's plan of creating autonomous regions out of Angola and Mozambique, based purely on their own experiences. As President Pompidou told the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1971, "I'll tell you what I think: personally, I don't really believe in autonomy. I think the slope is steep and as soon as you give a little bit, shortly after you will be completely gone. This is what happened for France. We provided for African states a system of autonomy within the framework of a community. They slipped after two years towards complete independence."⁵⁵

Outcome: Independence and Recognition of the Portuguese Colonies

1974 would mark the year that Georges Pompidou passed away during the last year of his term. The election of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in May of 1974 would prove to be a true rupture with the previous domestic and international policies. In their foreign affairs, the new government was

⁵³ Note de la sous-direction d'Europe méridionale, 19 June 1972, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1972, Vol. 1, p. 833.

⁵⁴ Note de la sous-direction d'Europe méridionale, 19 June 1972, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1972, Vol. 1, p. 833.

⁵⁵ Entretien du président de la République avec M. Patricio, ministre des Affaires étrangères du Portugal, 22 January 1971, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1971, Vol. 1, p. 138.

far more European and liberal than the previous administration, a liberalism that translated into a break from previous policy with regards to decolonization.

The Portuguese colonial wars would ultimately meet their end with the fall of the Estado Novo in April of 1974. After several years of social protests against the Caetano regime, fueled by significant anti-colonial sentiment and driven by a host student, labor, and Catholic movements. The actual Coup d'Etat was driven by officers convinced that the colonial war could only end with the fall of the regime (Accornero 2021). Following this mostly peaceful transition of power, the military immediately initiated a decolonization process that would grant independence to all of its former colonial territories. This decision was driven by the ever-feeding loop between the military crises and the social crises that upended Portugal (Varela and Robinson 2019).

At an international level, the Angolan fight for independence had come to represent a continental struggle against the neocolonialism of the West, the fears of communist rule, and the last stand of the racist minority rules in Southern Africa. Each of this represented by interventions from the United States, Cuba, and South Africa, in support of the various liberation movements fighting for independence. As Sobers notes, “The crisis over Angolan independence raised the specter of Third World nationalism, exacerbated tensions in the Western alliance, and highlighted the ambiguities and frailties of superpower détente.” (Sobers 2019, 99)

The French response to these movements were laid out by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the United Nations: “We are doubly delighted with the ongoing decolonization of the Portuguese territories in Africa: firstly because it is undertaken thanks to the return to democracy of a country that is a friend of France; secondly, because it is for the benefit of a group of courageous

populations who had for a long time had many reasons to wonder why they were deprived of the independence enjoyed by their neighbors.”⁵⁶

Conclusion: What if the Relationship is More Complicated?

Paris would ultimately recognize and establish diplomatic relations with both Angola and Mozambique by early 1976. While each new nation would face their own separate struggle with France, its neighbors, and the West, they nonetheless marked the end to a colonial struggle that had galvanized the continent and the West as they saluted the end of the European empires. The ending of this chapter in history would allow France to take a stronger stance against the remaining colonies and liberation movements within them fighting for their independence.

Table 3-1: Summary of French Recognition Behavior towards Angola and Mozambique

French Recognition of Angola and Mozambique				
Time Frame	Domestic Secession	Relations with Portugal	Concern for Precedent	Rhetorical Behavior
1954 - 1959	Yes	Ally	High	Strong Status Quo
1960 - 1968	Minor	Ally	Medium	Sympathetic Status Quo
1969 - 1974	No	Neutral	Low	Reluctant Recognizer

Over each of the periods studied, French rhetoric and behavior towards the Portuguese colonies evolved based on the shifting domestic and international conditions. From 1954 to 1959, French

⁵⁶ “Discours de M. Sauvagnargues, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, à L’assemblée Générale de l’ONU”, *Déclaration de politique étrangère*, Ministère de L’Europe et des Affaires Étrangères, https://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-php/util/documents/accede_document.php?1682125252399, Accessed: April 21, 2023

rhetoric was strongly against recognition, or any foreign interference, given its own secessionist struggle in Africa, but particularly in Algeria. While its domestic circumstances were the primary drivers of its action, it also had significant solidarity with the empires still present in Africa. Under no circumstances would France recognize a new state unless it had the complete and full backing of its colonial host state. This was just as true of its relations with Portugal and its colonies. Even if they didn't view them as peers, they certainly felt an empire-based kinship. In this sense, both the domestic secessionist situation and the geopolitical alignment with the other colonial empires strongly determined their recognition decisions and rhetoric used to justify it, behaving as *strong status quo* supporters in the events on non-recognition, and behaving as either *reluctant recognizers* in the few instances they offered a statement or *reserved recognizers* when they remained silent on their decisions.

From 1959 to 1968, under the administration of de Gaulle and with the recognition of Algeria's independence in 1962, France's recognition strategies began to change, albeit slowly. With its own domestic conflict easing and its recognition of most of its remaining overseas territories, the concern for setting a precedent had begun to soften. While France was still fiercely seeking a recovery of its status amongst the West, it also embarked on a thinly veiled neo-colonial policy of trying to be the peacekeeper in Africa. This policy, along with its arms sales and support of remaining colonial powers often put France at odds with the newly independent African and Asian nations it sought to court. Its defense of the Portuguese colonial rule would garner France some negative press. This constant pushback against their policies heavily influenced the continuation of the French policy of non-intervention in the affairs of sovereign nations. Similarly, France's alliances with the remaining colonial powers on the continent were still strong, even if they began to urge their friends, behind closed doors, to release their colonial territories. With this

background, French recognition strategy lost its intransigency, and so did its rhetoric. There was a rhetorical openness to recognition, where we observed the French behaving as *reluctant recognizers* most of the time, even if they continued behaving as *strong status quo* supporters in the event of non-recognition.

During the final significant period of study from 1969-1974, we see France's behavior towards recognition, and in the context of the Portuguese colonies, significantly evolve. With its domestic struggles, for the most part, well behind them, the concern for setting a precedent all but dissipated. Without this weight, the French were free to declare their positions without domestic reservations. Notwithstanding, they still had to be cautious in those instances where their allies still had colonial territories. However, even in these instances, even where their behavior still supported the host state, their rhetoric conveyed sympathy for the liberation movement. This was just as true in how they approached the Portuguese territories and their relations with the Lisbon. The close friendship had turned to a cold acquaintanceship which would, in many ways, allow France to defend the liberation movements in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau. In this sense, when they offered an affirmative recognition, they behaved as *revisionist recognizers*, untethered to any backlash, whereas in the instances where they still denied recognition, the rhetoric and behavior strongly reflected that of the *sympathetic status quo* adherent.

While this case clearly showed the evolution of French sentiment and the mechanisms underlying its foreign policy over twenty years, the reality is that its relations with Portugal never reached the level of neutrality, let alone enmity. In this sense it is hard to determine whether the geopolitical alignment played as much a role in its recognition policy as the domestic situation clearly did. However, what if the geopolitical relationship with a host state were more complicated? In the next chapter we will review France's stance with regards to South Africa's

occupation and annexation of South West Africa, later recognized as Namibia. South Africa was not necessarily an ally in the traditional European sense, but it wasn't entirely an enemy either. Given this nebulous bilateral relationship, I review this hard case over the same twenty-year period to observe how France's behavior and rhetoric change when the relations are not as close.

Chapter 4 - Complicated Acquaintances: France's Recognition of Namibia

A dependent territory is one that does not possess full sovereignty and is usually outside of the host state's mainland or core area. They usually have some spectrum of autonomy from the ruling state whether it be at the local political level, all the way to some aspect of economic policy. There exists a wide variety of these territories; of which, some of the most common today include states in free association, where the state might be self-governing, but almost entirely reliant on another state for foreign policy and/or defense. There are also uninhabited territories claimed by another sovereign state. These are often small islands and shoals or areas in polar regions such as the northern arctic and Antarctica. The most common however are usually overseas territories (as called in the United Kingdom) or unincorporated territories (as known in the United States). This last category of entities, despite the name change, remains the legacy of the colonial era of grand empires.

When the United Nations was created in 1945, a third of the world's total population was under the rule of an overseas or external, sovereign, state (Heiss 2020). The UN Charter offered two avenues for dealing with these. The first was the Trusteeship System, which governed the colonies of the nations that lost the First and Second World Wars. In this structure, the UN held the trustees accountable for the conditions within the territories under their supervision. The second option, while not termed as such, referred to the colonies of the victors. Without many protections or paths towards independence, they were referred to as non-self-governing territories, instead of colonies (2020). Notwithstanding, most of these dependent territories, either peacefully or through bellicose means, achieved independence and a granting of sovereignty by the end of the 20th century. The previous chapter showcased the process of recognition for two former

colonies. This chapter further complicated the picture by reviewing the longitudinal recognition process of a trusteeship from an appointed trustee gone rogue.

The case in question is that of South Africa's administration of South West Africa (present day Namibia). Pretoria was given the trusteeship of the territory in 1915 by mandate of the League of Nations following the defeat of Germany in the First World War. Following the end of the Second World War and the establishment of the United Nations, the official mandate was internationally terminated and set to become a trust territory with a path towards independence. However, the South African government refused and declared it annexed and the fifth province of the country. This effectively meant that all domestic policies extended to the annexed territory, including all Apartheid laws. Both policies pitted the nation against the international community and the subject of several International Court of Justice rulings that eventually culminated in a condemnation of South African rule of Namibia.

Although it was not granted full sovereignty until 1990, most of the international community supported the independence of Namibia for decades and condemned South Africa's policies through sanctions and estrangement. Among the major powers however, especially those of the Western Bloc, the relationship was far more complicated. They wanted to keep South Africa as an anti-communist ally, while also bowing to 3rd world pressure of condemnation for the racist policies. Among those was France, who publicly condemned the apartheid regime but also was the top arms seller and amongst the top 10 trading partners with the African nation. This complicated relationship was a product of the complex rivalries in the international system.

It is these complex relations that make this a hard case for the theory in question. Post empire France often sought to distance itself from the United States, the superpower in its geopolitical bloc. Not with an intent to be closer to the other bloc, since the Soviet Union was very clearly an

enemy and rival of the French, but rather to position itself as a third choice for the non-aligned. France always sought to keep a sphere of influence in Africa especially, thanks to its *communauté française*, and serve as the go-between and primary power with and from Europe and the West. This often resulted in France constantly appeasing different regional interests, with the sole purpose of staying relevant and being needed. This complexity of interests resulted in a quagmire of relations and fuzzy distinctions between allies, enemies, and rivals.

As will be elaborated below, France's recognition strategies and rhetoric offer significant supported for the theory presented in this project. From 1954 to 1958, the Algerian War and concerns over setting an unwelcome precedent strongly influenced their decisions and justifications, while their geopolitical relations helped them sustain their strong-willed positions. From 1959 to 1968, the ushering of a new constitution under the strong charisma of General Charles de Gaulle set the stage for a slow evolution in recognition policy. With Algeria's independence granted in 1962, and most of the remaining French colonies recognized, France was no longer personally vulnerable to a dangerous precedent, however, its allies still were. France's geopolitical relations and ambitions would thus drive much of France's recognition policy. Finally, from 1969 to 1974, with its own secessionist conflicts long resolved, France began embracing a more revisionist recognition strategy that would showcase its independence from its allies and potentially lend a blow to its enemies.

In the pages that follow, I begin by briefly laying out the historical context and background of behind Franco-South African relations. The second section offers a reminder of the methods and sources used in this study. The third section outlines the complexity of France's neutral relations. The fourth section comprises the analysis of the evidence gathered subdivided into three sections

that broadly encompass the three consecutive time periods under study. The final section concludes and offers reflections on the motivations of foreign policy decision-making.

France's Amorphous Geopolitical Relations

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Cold War era was a complicated time for geopolitical relations, especially for major and regional powers that had to navigate their respective interests along with the interests of the two superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union. Given the chillingly acrimonious nature of the Cold War, all major and regional powers had to carefully carve out their zones of influence, while also treading the perils of the current geopolitics. Some blocs were clear, like those in Western Europe versus Eastern Europe. However, the rest of world was not so easily divided, nor did it want to be. The states within the Global South still had to navigate relations with the superpowers and carefully consider treaties, cooperation, and other diplomatic protocols. The major and regional powers had to steer between being aligned to either bloc while also projecting military and economic power to the newly decolonizing states in Africa and Asia.

France, as mentioned previously, had to consider its role as a fluctuating major power projector in the world, its role as a dissolving empire, and its rapid post-war recovery and status. While they were officially aligned with the United States through NATO, the French often tested having some semblance of cooperation and relations with the USSR. The main foreign policy goal was to improve their international status and power, as well as move beyond their dependence on the United States. One of the keyways they sought to achieve this was to strengthen their influence in Africa amongst their former colonies, especially following the conclusion of the Algerian War. Through the establishment of the French Community, they often had an observer and advisory role to African politics writ large. Notwithstanding, these relations were also complicated, just by the

sheer nature of the unstable politics in each of these nascent states. There was also significant overlap between these instabilities and the strong arming of the Cold War superpowers. Given this international imbroglio, in addition to domestic political turnover, French relations were complicated and often overly centralized to the office of the president, especially following the election of Charles de Gaulle. One of the more complicated relations in Africa, was their ever-delicate dealings with South Africa.

To best grasp the complexity of France's relationship with South Africa, it is worth understanding the role the latter played in the world following both World Wars and in the advent of the Cold War. South Africa achieved full sovereign independence from the United Kingdom in 1931 following two decades of nominal independence as the Union of South Africa. Whilst still a loose dominion of the British, the League of Nations granted the Union the mandate over the former German colony of South West Africa (SWA) in 1920. This mandate would continue through South Africa's independence until the creation of the United Nations, which came to supplant the League of Nations and its functions. Amongst the new tasks, the United Nations sought to designate all former mandates into trusteeships under direct supervision by the organization, however, not only did the South Africans refuse to relinquish their mandate of the territory, but they *de facto* annexed it and extended apartheid rule into the territory (McCullers 2019).

The extension of apartheid into SWA was complicated and controversial, not only on the continent but for all states with any stake in the area. This effort was as much embroiled in the geopolitics of the Cold War as it was in the decline of empires and the struggles of nascent states on the African continent. With decolonization as the set path, South Africa's *de facto* annexation of SWA was wrought with neocolonialism under the guise of development. The international

political landmines navigated by the Afrikaners to justify their actions and stave off the worst of the condemnation was directly tied to their role as bastions of the West on the continent. This often led the other Western states to forgive most of their atrocities in order to keep South Africa on their side against the Soviet's efforts to politically imbue the new states with communist governments (McCullers 2017). Similarly, as a White minority-ruled state, relations with the former empires came easier than between most of their former colonies. This was just as true for the Americans, the British, and the French.

Franco-South African relations were economically close but diplomatically complicated. France was South Africa's top military and weapons provider in the 1960s and 1970s. However, this fact also brought France incredible condemnation given South Africa's pariah status for its apartheid regime. Despite its diplomatic rejection of apartheid, France disregarded international sanctions and moratoria against the Afrikaners as an important trade partner and weapons seller. While France would ultimately halt diplomatic relations and trade in the early 1980s, their tacit support of apartheid through trade would significantly affect their recognition process of South West Africa as Namibia. This provides the context to best understand the decisions taken during the Cold War and the framing of much of the rhetoric.

Research Design

As in the previous chapter, the main source used to understand and analyze the motivations behind French rhetoric with regards to South West Africa, and later Namibia, is the collected series from the French Diplomatic Archives. This collection was compiled and sorted by the archivists from the repositories in France in made available to partnering institutions, such as the University of Chicago Library. This series is comprised of memos, notes, letters, minutes, telegrams, and other written correspondence and documentation between diplomats and foreign policy leadership. This

includes notes from the corresponding French President and Foreign Ministers. I specifically focus on the diplomatic material from 1954 through 1974, in its original French. As with the previous chapter, I focus on the classification system provided by the original archivists that compiled each tome to sort through the abundant material. For this chapter, I focus on the categories that might have related to French relations with either South Africa, Namibia, multilateral organizations discussing the topic, or other bilateral relations where they discuss the Southern Africa problem.

To best review the documents mentioned above, the entire document was read in French, along with annexed or referenced notes, to collect the context of each note and avoid imposing my own biases. All notes taken and analyses aimed to show the full picture of each note, and that is how they are presented in the analysis below. In addition to these sources, wherever I was unable to locate some referenced material within the collection, I searched through the French National Archives and the French diplomatic archives websites for a digitized version of the document. Should they be unavailable, only then did I refer to secondary sources that reference said document or note. The latter case was rare however, since most material could be found within the series.

The methodology used also concurred with the previous chapter. Through the careful use of process tracing, I was able to review the extensive archival material and make a stronger inference about the diplomatic processes and series of events that could test the hypothesized causal mechanism of interest, the concern for setting a precedent (Bennett and Checkel 2015). Additionally, while this methodology serves best for testing the intervening steps in a theory, I was also able to observe the changing domestic and international conditions as they pertained to France from 1954 to 1974. In this vein, I was able to evaluate at a granular level, the hypotheses on the role of domestic secession and geopolitical relations on the evolving rhetoric of recognition as specific to France.

Neutrality and Geopolitical Relations

As with the previous chapter, we would expect different behaviors as conditions changed over time. When it came to France's recognition behavior with regards to Namibia's independence from South Africa, we would expect different types of recognition statements as circumstances changed. France's relations with South Africa from 1954-1961 were generally positive. International opinion towards Pretoria and the apartheid regime was still developing in this period. With a lack of significant international pressure, France had no incentive to recognize what was then called South West Africa (SWA), the land given to South Africa to oversee as a trusteeship by the League of Nations. Under these conditions, we would expect France to behave as a *Strong Status Quo* state and not recognize through normatively backed statements.

From 1961-1969, France enjoyed very positive economic relations with South Africa. They were the number one supplier of weapons and within the top ten trading partners. Notwithstanding, international opinion towards South Africa significantly soured, with many new African states protesting France's arms sales to the Apartheid regime. These conditions would allow us to expect France would shift behavior to one of *Sympathetic Status Quo*, showing increasing warmth to the secessionist movement in SWA, while also wanting to appease South Africa. With this increasing inconsistency, their non-recognition statements took on a material bent to manage conflicting interests.

Finally, from 1969 to 1974 France recognized that international opinion was beginning to turn on them for their continued financial support of South Africa. This pushed France to pare back its sales and embrace the imposition of sanctions against the Apartheid regime. Simultaneously, the French were becoming progressively anti-colonial and thus began encouraging the independence of the entity now named Namibia. With their own allies and domestic public opinion

turning against South Africa, we could expect France to behave as a *Reluctant Recognizer*. While they did not have significant concerns about setting a precedent that could harm them down the line, they were trying to maintain some semblance of an economic and arms primacy with South Africa, despite significant international condemnation. We would ergo expect to see statements that offer a normative justification for sovereignty.

Domestic Secessionism and Support for all Host States: 1954-1959

In addition to the political upheaval that was resulting from decolonization, France was also experiencing significant political factionalism that permeated into many areas of policy, not least of which included the conflicts in Northern Africa. Much of this political factionalism did not aid their international reputation, which caused them great concern. In a note¹ from the French Ambassador to the United Kingdom to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, he noted that “[t]he recent ministerial crisis has almost ruined our credit”² and of even greater concern, that “[m]ore serious is the growing tendency to discuss and decide on important questions without us, even if it means admitting us, out of kindness, to participate in the execution.”³

In addition to this reputational concern, the French also had to contend with Cold War interests playing their part on the African continent. The greatest issue the French faced with the Americans was the agitation that without greater Western control, the nationalist/communist movements undergirding the decolonization process would inevitably give the Soviet Union a greater influence on the continent. This was a sentiment constantly reiterated to the French by the

¹ Chauvel to Pinay, Télégrammes 990 – 994, 25 February 1955, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1955, Vol. 1, p. 208.

² “La récente crise ministérielle a quasiment ruiné notre crédit”

³ “Plus grave est la tendance que s'affirme à discuter et décider sans nous les questions importantes, quitte à nous admettre, par gentillesse, à participer à l'exécution.”

Americans over the course of the 1950s and especially as the conflicts in Northern Africa heightened.

The French, in many ways, shared the same interest for greater control of the area, albeit less out of concerns for Soviet control, but rather to ensure they could maintain some influence over their existing and former colonies. Save for Algeria, the French acquiesced to independence for their overseas territories, but with significant paternalistic measures in place that would make the new countries heavily reliant on their former colonizer. Ultimately, the French wanted first dibs on resource extraction, trade, and foreign policy influence in the region and thus, an informal continuation of its empire (Guy Martin 1995). Notwithstanding these intentions, the reality was far more complicated.

There were two overarching themes that would occur both during the decolonization process and after they had been granted statehood. First, in those territories that saw a decolonization struggle, the rebellion was usually characterized by a strong nationalist, communist bent set on forcefully kicking out their colonizer. In these instances, the imperial state would fight back and repress to the extent possible, and then when they acquiesced to independence, they would delay to try to achieve an agreement that still left them with influence and access to resources. This would, in turn, lead to the second trend, where even if the colonizer achieved their goals in the final agreement, once the colonized was granted sovereignty, they would amend their imposed constitution and ultimately box out the European colonizer. The degree to which this happened varied, but this trend generally held.

Knowing these trends, the Europeans tended to support each other's claims, constraints, delays, and conditions, because they, in turn, needed their allies' support against their own decolonization struggles. Given these conditions, most of these colonizers were reticent to

recognize former colonies unless they had the complete approval from the colonizer. Even then, there was little enthusiasm in recognizing at all. To achieve this, there was usually some private meeting between foreign ministers to make sure they could present a united front about respective issues. An example of this was when the British and the French met to agree on how they would cooperate at the United Nations when it came to the issues of Cyprus and Algeria respectively.

Recognition Strategy and Perspective

How the French responded to other secessionist movements during this time was significantly clouded by their own domestic concerns and their relationships with the other empires. Their justifications always centered around the protection of territorial integrity and a rejection of foreign interference in the internal affairs of the empires and other sovereign nations. On the other hand, the ever-growing international grouping of newly established states made it a goal to advocate for full decolonization, complete autonomy, and true sovereignty from European influence. This led to an increase in pressure placed on the French by their allies, enemies, and collaborators alike. As a result, their relationships with smaller cross-border, territory-claiming nations were not a priority or they were dismissive of their importance, except during those times when it benefitted them.

Within the context laid out above, the relationship between the French and the South Africans was one of cautious amity. Specifically, the latter seemed much keener to guard a positive status with the former. For the most part, the South Africans hoped to be closer to the European nations than to the other Africans. This sentiment was expressed both by rejecting invitations to Pan-African conferences, and by caucusing with Western states on UN votes, especially around issues of decolonization that were disadvantageous to the colonizers. This occurred on multiple occasions when it came to votes about the “Algeria problem” where the South Africans, without fail, always voted in ways that favored the French position, especially on matters that pertained to

territorial integrity and foreign intervention on domestic issues.⁴ Similarly, when it came to recognition of former French territories, the South Africans were cautious to not act in a way that would upset the French, “[w]e perceive in general, including among African states (South Africa, Ethiopia), the concern not to do anything that would be embarrassing for France and hesitations to recognize a state that does not yet have all the required skills by international practice.”⁵

The Europeans, for their part, had an interest in maintaining cordial relations with the South Africans. Considering the ever-growing Soviet inroads on the continent, South Africa could serve as a regional power to fight these incursions and guard Western interests.⁶ They could not, however, engage in outright alliance however, because the Apartheid regime was heavily condemned by most other African countries the Europeans were also courting. This would lead to a delicate dance of cordiality and opportunity, without outright friendship, lest other regional interests be affected.

With regards to how the French approached South Africa’s own colonial territory in South West Africa and their apartheid regime, they were vocal in their rejection of foreign interference of internal matters, and they very much considered the governance of South West Africa a domestic issue that could not, and should not, be subject to UN overreach, despite the Afro-Asian caucus’ best efforts to force the UN mandate. The French explicitly lay out the similarity of views between both nations with regards to the United Nations and its limitations.⁷

⁴ Note de la Délégation Française aux Nations Unies, 13 December 1958, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1958, Vol. 2, p. 860.

⁵ Couve de Murville to French Diplomatic Representatives Abroad, Télégramme circulaire 136, 11 October 1958, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1958, Vol. 2, p. 496.

⁶ Directives du Département, Note, 31 March 1959, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1959, Vol. 1, p. 439.

⁷ Pineau to French Diplomatic Representatives Abroad, Télégramme circulaire 6, 20 January 1957, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1957, Vol. 1, p. 120.

French relations with South Africa in this time can best be described as cordial for sharing similar interests, but private given the complicated politics of Apartheid, which France did not agree with. However, given their similar domestic circumstances, in addition to ensuring South Africa's continued commitment to the Western Bloc against Soviet incursions, the French were ardently opposed to the independence of South West Africa through any means other than through host state recognition. In this sense, because of France's own domestic struggles with nationalist, secessionist movements, they were further inclined to reject any interferences into South African domestic affairs, especially when it came to matters regarding South Africa. This behavior follows along the path of concerns for interferences into its own domestic affairs, especially over Algeria. Geopolitical relations, however, can best be described as warmly neutral. Not quite allies, but certainly not enemies either.

Domestic Struggle Resolved and Complexified Geopolitical Relations: 1960-1969

French circumstances would change by 1958. once having assumed the presidency on a platform of radical reform, resolution of factionalism, and political gridlock, on September 16, General de Gaulle, declared that it was time to resolve the problem of Algeria, "choosing the only path worthy of being followed. I mean the free choice which the Algerians themselves will make for their future."⁸ (*The New York Times* 1959). This admission of the Algerian's right to self-determination was a pivotal moment for France and its decolonization process. Henceforth, de Gaulle would speed up the process of seceding the rest of France's colonies and privately encourage all the other empires to also give up their overseas territories in the name of self-determination.

⁸ Bénard to Couve de Murville, Télégrammes 4282 – 4287, 17 September 1959, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1959, Vol. 2, p. 348.

The massive political overhaul from 1958 continued to be felt over the years as de Gaulle dismantled the empire and worked towards European unification. While I have already discussed the former in the previous chapter, it is worth noting the efforts put in to create an independent and balanced Europe. This undertaking had the dual aim of lessening the dependency on the United States and blocking the USSR from further agitating European interests (Morrisey 2014). The underlying motivation, however, furthered the efforts to improve France's reputation in the world stage and continue its post-war recovery of great power status. Charles de Gaulle had always been preoccupied, since the collapse of the Third Republic in World War II, with restoring the grandeur of France (Bozo 2016). This ultra-patriotism would have led many to expect de Gaulle to veto transnationalism, however, the international circumstances of the time necessitated this rapprochement (Segers 2012).

This effort was further helped by the resolution of the "Algeria Problem" through the granting of sovereignty in 1962 through the Évian Accords. This result was a hard fought end to the conflict where the French Algerian nationalists threw everything at both the French state and the Muslim Algerians to halt this transition of power (Evans 2012). The resolution culminated in a short declaration on July 3rd where de Gaulle proclaimed Algeria's independence.

As noted in the previous chapter, this period in international politics was one of culmination for the major colonial states. France recognized all remaining African colonies; the United Kingdom was on its way, and Belgium contentiously released Congo. Through all these instances, France often conferred with their respective western ally on how to best respond in a way that was respectful of their position. However, when a territory unilaterally declared their independence, as occurred in Southern Rhodesia against the United Kingdom, the French, for the most part, also deferred to their ally. Such was the case in the lead up to the Rhodesian declaration, when the

British informed the French of how they would react in the event of a declaration from its colony, and the request they made of their allies in this regard:

“At the same time, the British government, while seizing the United Nations, will affirm that the matter remains within its internal competence, but will ask the members of the United Nations to take the following three measures: 1) non-recognition of the Independent Rhodesian State; 2) to recall the consul general for the countries which are represented in Salisbury, but not the closure of the consulate(s) themselves, and 3) a cessation of imports of Rhodesian tobacco.”⁹

Given no greater interest against these measures, the French responded as requested when the French Minister of Foreign Affairs informed the French Ambassador to London that “the Department informed the British Ambassador that the French government condemned the behavior of the authorities in Salisbury, could not recognize the situation created by the unilateral declaration of independence, had decided to immediately recall Mr. Desparmet, Consul General in Salisbury and had no intention of buying tobacco from Southern Rhodesia.”¹⁰

Relations with South Africa

Following the resolution of most of their post-colonial struggles, the French, having previously explicitly supported South Africa against foreign condemnation for its apartheid regime and its continued hold on South West Africa, on the basis of it being an internal matter, began to distance themselves from the Afrikaners. “As regards the manner in which South Africa exercises its mandate over South West Africa, we had, until last year [1960], sided with the South African delegate. This year, such a position became perilous for our African policy as a whole. Based on the existence of the action already initiated on this point with the Court of The Hague, our representative at the U.N. was therefore content to abstain.”¹¹

⁹ Couve de Murville to Chaudron de Courcel, Télégrammes 12542 - 12546, 16 October 1965, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1965, Vol. 2, p. 455.

¹⁰ Couve de Murville to Chaudron de Courcel, Télégrammes 12773 - 12775, 12 November 1965, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1965, Vol. 2, p. 584.

¹¹ Note de la Direction des Affaires Politiques, 15 March 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 1, p. 351.

Notwithstanding, this distancing was still done behind closed doors, as they still opted out of commenting on internal matters in a public forum or condone any foreign interference on domestic issues, even those they disagreed with. That is why, in 1961, de Gaulle let the South Africans know, privately, why western powers could not publicly support apartheid. Given the recent independence of former colonies, they hoped to be a source of influence in the region. As a result, they could not publicly support a regime that was oppressive to its black population. For this reason, they argued that South Africa needed to allow some autonomy of South West Africa and reduce the suppression of its black population, otherwise they would continue to be isolated from international community.¹² This would inevitably begin to sour their relations, as noted by the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs,

“It struck me as extremely disappointing, if not depressing, that a number of Western delegates at the latest session of the U.N. attacked South Africa, and some with great vigor, including the French delegate. The latter's attack surprised me greatly, given that three weeks earlier I had had a long meeting with President de Gaulle, a meeting which had been most friendly and cordial. He said nothing to me that would have given me the impression that his delegate was going to attack South Africa at the U.N. three weeks later. I would also add that the attack by the French delegate was all the more surprising since South Africa has always given France unreserved support on the subject of the Algerian question when this was raised in the United Nations. I remember a certain occasion when I was the only delegate to vote with France on this question.”¹³

France's position on the self-determination of South West Africa, as with the Portuguese colonies, was that the South Africans needed to think about a long term horizon where they would increasingly grant the black population control over their own fate. As de Gaulle emphasized to the South African Foreign Minister Louw, “France will not take a position against South Africa, because the interest of civilization does not lie in the withdrawal of the [white population]. France,

¹² Entretien entre le général de Gaulle et M. Louw, Compte rendu, 11 September 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 2, p. 379.

¹³ Balaÿ to Couve de Murville, Dépêche 185, 2 May 1962, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1962, Vol. 1, p. 450.

however, wants the government to accept this evolution of the black population towards structures that will allow it to no longer depend on white leaders.”¹⁴

By 1964 the mounting discontent from newly independent African states towards South Africa over their policy of Apartheid and their hold over South West Africa escalated to international organizations. The French noted that as long as the African bloc remained focused on their own internal rivalries and unrealistic expectations of influence, the danger towards South Africa would not be cohesive, and thus attempts to force South Africa out would be unrealized.¹⁵ Notwithstanding, when attempts to formally excise the Afrikaners from major international organizations like the United Nations and impose sanctions and an embargo against South Africa, the French, along with other western countries, made it very clear to the South Africans that they would not support these efforts: “Mr. Joxe told his interlocutor that our position on these issues had been fixed once and for all and that we did not plan to change them.”¹⁶ In fact, they emphasized that bilateral relations between both countries were not only strong, but “underlined how desirable it seemed to us that Franco-South African relations, which were developing favorably on the economic and technical levels, should include cultural extensions.”¹⁷

By 1966, while facing their own diplomatic backlash for their close relations with South Africa, the French continued to abstain when it came to calls for foreign intervention to secure South West Africa from the Afrikaners. “With regard to South West Africa, and without prejudging the forthcoming verdict of the International Court of Justice, our position is no less

¹⁴ Entretien entre le général de Gaulle et M. Louw, Compte rendu, 11 September 1961, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1961, Vol. 2, p. 379.

¹⁵ Note de la Sous-Direction des Affaires Africaines et Malgaches, Note, 26 November 1964, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1964, Vol. 2, p. 502.

¹⁶ Couve de Murville to Balaÿ, Télégrammes 176 - 181, 2 October 1964, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1964, Vol. 2, p. 286.

¹⁷ Couve de Murville to Balaÿ, Télégrammes 176 - 181, 2 October 1964, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1964, Vol. 2, p. 286.

nanced and leads us, while recognizing a certain right of scrutiny by the United Nations over the administration of the League's former mandate from Pretoria, to oppose in the present circumstances any intervention on the basis of Chapter VII.”¹⁸ They clarified that their top policy position on the matter has been one of neutrality, which should not be read as indifference, but rather objectivity of review: “Our independence only finds its limits in strict compliance with the Charter, the primacy of which we proclaim at all times.”¹⁹

This transition to a policy of abstention from one of outright support, clearly shows how, following recognition of Algeria and the resolution of their “secessionist problem”, the French were no longer bound by their domestic problems, and now it was up to their international interests to determine their foreign policy behavior. As it pertained to South West Africa, their policy point by 1966 was that,

“the way in which the government in Pretoria administers South West Africa seems open to criticism insofar as we reject any policy based on racial discrimination. However, since this policy does not constitute, in the present circumstances, a threat to international peace and security, the United Nations does not have the right to take sanctions against the South African government with a view to compelling it to renounce apartheid in the territory in question. Moreover, it should be noted that only the Security Council - and not the Assembly - would be empowered, if necessary, within the framework of Chapter VII of the Charter, to take such sanctions against Pretoria.”²⁰

Given this policy position, they stayed out of the committee created to formally evaluate South West Africa,²¹ which in turn heavily critiqued France for being South Africa’s largest arms provider and thus its top ally. This scathing review blamed the United Kingdom, the United States, and France for stalling any action to hold South Africa accountable in the interest of furthering

¹⁸ Note, 28 April 1966, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1966, Vol. 1, p. 705.

¹⁹ Seydoux de Claussonne to Couve de Murville, Télégrammes 4338 - 4363, 30 December 1966, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1966, Vol. 2, p. 1073.

²⁰ Note Sur de Sud-Ouest africain, 15 June 1966, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1966, Vol. 2, p. 79.

²¹ Couve de Murville to Seydoux de Claussonne, Télégramme 937, 2 November 1966, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1966, Vol. 2, p. 818.

economic interests against the greater good and keeping South Africa as a regional force for the West against the USSR in its Cold War machinations.²²

With increasing pressure from the Global South for holding its policy positions and trade relations with South Africa, rather than pare back its exchanges and positions towards South Africa, de Gaulle increased the distance with the United Nations as an ineffective institution that could do nothing, nor credibly enforce anything.²³ When it came to the UNGA resolution calling for the cancellation of the League of Nations trusteeship of South West Africa held by South Africa (and the condemnation of Portugal for its strict resistance to decolonization) the French opined that “[t]he measures on Africa are very problematic in their application, no one imagines that South Africa and Portugal will follow up on them, which will only reinforce the bitterness of Africans - who have by this point found their unity - and their desire to bring the Western powers to the fore again to stigmatize their attitude.”²⁴

By 1968, the pressure mounted to such a level against France’s continued arms sales to South Africa despite the increasingly observed voluntary arms embargo established in 1964.²⁵ As a result, French rhetoric began taking on a more placating tone: “in accordance with the commitments we made to the Security Council in 1964, we have always taken care to prohibit the sale of weapons ‘that could be used for internal repression’. Our deliveries were limited to equipment intended exclusively for external defense.”²⁶ They thus put a pause on this policy while

²² Seydoux de Claussone to Couve de Murville, Télégrammes 3675 - 3678, 2 December 1966, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1966, Vol. 2, p. 956.

²³ Bérard to Couve de Murville, Télégrammes 4435 - 4455, 22 December 1967, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1967, Vol. 2, p. 838.

²⁴ Seydoux de Claussone to Couve de Murville, Télégrammes 4287 - 4303, 23 December 1966, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1966, Vol. 2, p. 1059.

²⁵ Note de la sous-direction d’Afrique sur les réactions africaines à la campagne contre nos ventes d’armes à l’Afrique du Sud, 30 January 1968, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1968, Vol. 1, p. 179.

²⁶ Note de la sous-direction d’Afrique, 5 June 1968, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1968, Vol. 1, p. 878.

the debates were on-going: “given the emotion aroused in Africa - an emotion that tends to win over French-speaking countries themselves - and the consequences likely to result from this for our economic presence and our political influence on the African continent, the services of the Quai d'Orsay have, on the instructions of Mr. Couve de Murville, decided in the very recent past to restrict our arms transfers to South Africa until further notice.”²⁷

This change in public tone was further noted in 1969 directing all diplomatic staff to emphasize the small scope of Franco-South African relations in light of pressure from African nations to use its moral weight to condemn South Africa with regards to its occupation of South West Africa, “the Africans, in whose hearts our country held a special place, hoped that we [France] would fully exercise our moral magistracy in the world to induce the Lisbon and Pretoria authorities to reconsider their intransigence”²⁸. Finally, they also began employing the name Namibia as part of their official communication following the UN resolution formalizing the new name in June 1968.²⁹

Geopolitical Pressures and Waning Relations with the Host State: 1969-1974

Following mounting opposition to his prioritization of foreign policy, as well as large scale political and social unrest that led to significant monetary and financial crises, the domestic situation in France was no longer open to de Gaulle’s ideas and ambitions of French grandeur (Bozo 2016). Similarly, de Gaulle’s foreign policy goal of transcending the bloc-by-bloc nature of the Cold War and become the primary mediator between both camps was also at risk of crumbling.

²⁷ Note de la sous-direction d’Afrique, 5 June 1968, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1968, Vol. 1, p. 878.

²⁸ Benard to Debré, Dépêche 260/AL, 26 February 1969, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 383.

²⁹ Berard to Debré, Télégrammes 4369 - 4382, 22 December 1968, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1968, Vol. 2, p. 1014.

The Western allies had come around to the idea of a *détente*, but one that reinforced the bipolar nature of the international system (2016). Both these domestic and international setbacks set the stage for de Gaulle's resignation in the spring of 1969, which saw the formal end of Charles de Gaulle's presidency, albeit with a broad continuation of its politics under Georges Pompidou. The new president, while similar in substance, was far more pragmatic than his predecessor. He understood that to strengthen France's foreign policy position, it was vital to fortify the social and economic structures domestically (Bozo 2016).

The arrival of the new administration also saw the continuation of de Gaulle's policy goals albeit under a new font. Far more appealing of centrists that sought progress on Europeanization, Pompidou heralded a new era of French diplomacy that not only welcomed relations with its Western European neighbors but positioned itself as the champion of European integration and placed itself on par with the economically prospering West Germany. Pompidou strengthened Franco-American relations and set Paris as the negotiating representative of the Six³⁰. With regards to the other superpower, Franco-Soviet relations were also intensified, albeit with a strong caveat of cooperation and not friendship (Bozo 2016).

Geopolitical Neutrality

Beyond its Cold War relations, France was having to contend with the ever-growing condemnation from the Global South for their continued arms trade to South Africa. While they tried not to export weapons that could be used against the local people for repression, they realized they could not control this outcome, especially as “[t]he most committed (which are also the most geographically concerned) of the black African states strongly reproach us for being the architects of the military

³⁰ Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and France – founding members of European Communities

power reinforcement of their main adversary, observing that where there is a conflict they [South Africa] would not fail to back the conduct of operations in Rhodesia, Botswana, Mozambique or Angola.”³¹

However, the French were not willing to necessarily give up the arms trade yet, rather concluding that “[i]n practice, we will no doubt have to moderate the pace of our arms deliveries to South Africa if we want to preserve the future of our relations of cooperation with black African countries or at the very least find formulas that make it possible to be less conspicuous with our sales.”³²

By 1971, relations with South Africa, albeit economically attractive, were proving increasingly difficult to sustain. While the French had initially refrained from condemning the government for its actions because they did not want to interfere in another country’s internal affairs, they started to realize that “[t]he esteem in which these States [Other African countries] hold the other aspects of our policy in Africa and in the world has made it possible in recent years to avoid being taken to task on this precise point in too vehement a manner. But it is doubtful that we can stay on the razor's edge for long.”³³

Given the complicated nature of their policy and the perception it was having internationally, the opted to start occluding their relations with the Afrikaners. The French seemed keen to keep the press at arm’s length when it came to their relations with South Africa. They began downplaying events such as the South African Prime Minister’s visit to France or vocally condemning apartheid, despite their continued abstentions at the United Nations. “Any public

³¹ Note de la Direction d’Afrique-Levant sous-direction d’Afrique, 6 June 1970, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1970, Vol. 1, p. 790.

³² Note de la Direction d’Afrique-Levant sous-direction d’Afrique, 6 June 1970, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1970, Vol. 1, p. 790.

³³ Note de la Direction des Affaires économiques et Financières, 19 March 1970, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1970, Vol. 1, p. 352.

manifestation of military cooperation with South Africa should be avoided in the future. In this respect, the visit to Paris of Mr. Botha', South African Defense Minister, on the occasion of the Bourget and Satory shows would be particularly inopportune."³⁴ They let this be known to the South African Foreign Minister on his visit to Paris:

“Our political line is well known: despite our abstention on votes, justified by legal considerations, we declared ourselves against apartheid and we maintain this position. We deliver weapons to South Africa solely for use in its external defense and not for the fight against internal subversion. We will continue this policy, but we are nevertheless obliged to consider the many African states who are our friends. It is therefore useless to emphasize, especially in public, our good relations.”³⁵

Recognition Strategies

In this decade, the French also started feeling the pressure from their own African allies and members of the French Community, condemning their and other Western countries' support of South Africa for their illegal occupation of Namibia. In particular, the Senegalese, who were also having to deal with the liberation movements in Guinea-Bissau, along with other francophone countries like Tunisia and Madagascar, were urging the French government to halt their weapons supply to Portugal and their continued support of the Cabora Bassa dam.³⁶ Ultimately, the French were noting the difficulties they faced:

“The French-speaking countries which usually act as a moderating element in the OAU, when there is a risk of exercising at our expense the anti-colonialist demagoguery of the most advanced governments, did not have the advantage under these conditions. Whether they considered action against the tide to be hopeless, or whether the arguments of the English-speaking states leading the offensive found a deeper echo with them than might have been expected, they showed themselves very discreet.”³⁷

³⁴ Note de la direction des Affaires économiques et financières pour de ministre, 17 March 1971, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1971, Vol. 1, p. 415.

³⁵ Note de la Direction d'Afrique-Levant sous-direction d'Afrique, 11 June 1970, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1970, Vol. 1, p. 823.

³⁶ Note de la Direction des Affaires africaines et malgaches, 29 July 1970, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1970, Vol. 2, p. 188.

³⁷ Note de la sous-direction d'Afrique, 13 September 1970, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1970, Vol. 2, p. 295.

This backlash and potential loss of local allies was forcing the French to reckon with their policies. By this point they recognized internally that South Africa's occupation of Namibia was illegal, and that their continued support for the sake of a lucrative financial market, could prove damning.

“In reality, the real aggressor is the South African government, which provides military support to the Salisbury and Lisbon regimes, illegally occupies Namibia and whose forces are stationed in the Caprivi Strip and on the northern border of Rhodesia. Such a situation creates a real threat to peace and must be treated as such. Westerners must now choose between the whole of Africa and the market offered by three million whites.”³⁸

In 1971, at the United Nations, we began seeing France carefully circumnavigate the issue of Namibia by neither explicitly reproaching nor applauding South Africa, a deviation from prior policies.³⁹ They knew international opinion was turning against them for their lack of condemnation and continued trade with South Africa and they knew they had to be prepared for that eventuality. “The debates revealed a growing awareness of African countries, including French-speaking African countries, on this issue. Our distinction between defensive weapons and offensive weapons is no longer understood or accepted. We must therefore expect, from the next session, debates of the same kind, but in which we will be more directly implicated.”⁴⁰

Overall, the problems in southern Africa were weighing on France as they were being increasingly isolated and criticized for their policies. They very candidly reflected on the shortcomings of their positions up until late 1971, recognizing the precedent-setting concerns that had guided their diplomacy in previous years:

"Our positions concerning the Portuguese colonies, Rhodesia, Southern Africa are increasingly openly criticized, even by our closest friends. Even if we leave aside the sale of arms to South Africa, which strikes a chord with African sensitivities, our reluctance, when it comes to Portugal or South Africa, to associate ourselves with the condemnations leveled against governments which persist in ignoring human rights and the principle of self-determination, passing for a solidarity that

³⁸ Chayet to Schumann, Télégrammes 1620 - 1624, 19 July 1970, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1970, Vol. 2, p. 143.

³⁹ Kosciusko-Morizet to Schumann, Télégrammes 4486 - 4496, 2 October 1971, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1971, Vol. 2, p. 434.

⁴⁰ Note de la Direction des Nations Unies et Organisation internationales pour la Direction des Affaires économiques et Financières, 6 January 1972, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1972, Vol. 1, p. 20.

is close to complicity. We misunderstand our legalism when it comes to the 1514 declaration. While we claim to have completed our decolonization, the fear of precedents makes us designate our own TOMs [Overseas Territories] and DOMs [Overseas Departments] for the vigilance of professional decolonizers. Our embarrassment, which is badly concealed by our legal arguments which constitute no protection for the future, tarnishes our 'brand image' and paralyzes in many respects our action in other areas."⁴¹

As for how the French viewed South Africa's stubborn hold on Namibia, it was best explained by the French Ambassador to Pretoria, the Boers cannot allow the loss of that territory, for it is an integral part of the security chain that protects its northern border from any liberation support from the majority Black African nations.

"This is why the South African government regards the Zambezi as its security border and maintains police forces there. They are closely following the situation in Rhodesia and Mozambique and are not sparing their help. They stubbornly oppose any interference by the United Nations in South West Africa. They reinforce their police and their army; the defense budget was increased from 370 to 481 million rand for the new year. But what would South Africa do if the white minority in Rhodesia lost power or if the rebellion prevailed in Mozambique? It is certain that on that day all the elements of the situation in South Africa would be quickly and profoundly transformed."⁴²

Towards Self-Determination

Pompidou's presidency saw a truncated end with his passing during the last year of his term. The election of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in May of 1974 ushered in a new kind of foreign policy, one far more diplomatic, liberal, and European, than the two previous presidents had espoused, where the primary directive was to come to solutions with less intransigence and more partnership. In the seven years he governed, the west was mired by global crises of leadership, economic upheaval, and the further cooling between the Cold War superpowers (Bozo 2016).

Following the Carnation Revolution in Portugal and the collapse of white rule in both Angola and Mozambique opened a door for African nationalist guerrillas to increase their

⁴¹ Kosciusko-Morizet to Schumann, Télégrammes 8316 - 8343, 2 October 1971, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1971, Vol. 2, p. 770

⁴² Tricornot de Rose to Jobert, Télégrammes 861 - 870, 26 April 1973, in *Documents diplomatiques Français (DDF)*, 1973, Vol. 1, p. 619.

operations against South Africa and Rhodesia, the last of the white minority rules. Without the buffer of the Portuguese territories, these regimes were vulnerable to further pressures by the rest of the continent, and many of the European allies (Sobers 2019).

Expectedly, the distance between France and South Africa would continue to grow as the Afrikaners increased their military incursions across southern Africa. With the independence of Angola and Mozambique, the white-led protective barrier Pretoria once benefitted from collapsed. As a result, South Africa was desperate to maintain what remained of it and destabilize the black-led governments in the former Portuguese colonies lest they keep lending liberation support to the majority populations in both the Cape and Namibia (Dale 2014).

The French, for their part, would finally cease their direct arms trade with South Africa in 1977 under Valery Giscard d'Estaing. This would instead be circumvented through the establishment of licensing deals which would allow Pretoria to produce its own weapons (Guy Martin 1985). Furthermore, France would reduce diplomatic relations by 1981 with the arrival of the left-wing François Mitterrand to the presidency. His administration would usher in a harsher tone against Pretoria, not only for its reticence to allow for Namibian elections, but also for its continued Apartheid policy. Notwithstanding, regular and nuclear trade relations, even if conducted indirectly, would remain a constant within the bilateral relation (Marchand 1983).

With regards to Namibia's final independence, this would not come until 1990, despite the International Court of Justice opinion recognizing the illegality of South Africa's occupation in 1971 and the 1976 United Nations resolution recognizing the Namibian liberation movement of South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) as the sole representative of the Namibian people (Dale 2014). The delay in independence, some scholars have argued, was largely a consequence of the same Cold War dynamics. Given SWAPO's communist bent and support from

the USSR, Angola, and Cuba, Western states hesitated in deploying a UN transition group to the entity by trying to force through liberal principles in their proposed constitution (Zongwe 2019; Melber and Saunders 2007). Fortunately, by 1989, with the immanent decline of the Soviet Union, free and fair elections were held in Namibia, and it gained formal political independence in March of 1990.

Table 4-1: Summary of French Recognition Behavior Towards Namibia

French Recognition of Namibia				
Time Frame	Domestic Secession	Relations with South Africa	Expected Concern for Precedent	Rhetorical Behavior
1954 - 1959	Yes	Ally	High	Strong Status Quo
1960 - 1968	Minor	Neutral	Medium	Sympathetic Status Quo
1969 - 1974	No	Enemy	Low	Revisionist Recognizer

Changing Conditions Over Time

As with the previous chapter, France’s early recognition strategy towards South West Africa (later Namibia) was largely guided by its own domestic struggles with decolonization. From 1954-1962, France was locked into a war with Algerian liberation movements to prevent their decolonization. Given the different status it held within the Empire and the significant French population living in the North African territory, the French were very concerned with analogous claims that compared other decolonizing movements to theirs. As a result, until the full conclusion of the war, the French behaved as *strong status quo* supporters of South Africa’s claim over South West Africa and made an explicit point to support Pretoria in all international forums. As for their relations with South Africa however, they were not necessarily allies. However, they did view the Afrikaners as

Western partners on the continent that could stave off Soviet incursions, as well as colonial voting allies in international forums.

Following the independence of Algeria, and the alleviation of concerns on that front, the French were no longer invested in maintaining close political relations with South Africa. With a growing number of new states on the continent, and in international organizations, France was keen to be a counterbalancing influence with that of the Cold War superpowers amongst all African states. This geopolitical goal required Paris to renounce all ties with South Africa, given its racist Apartheid policy against the Black and Brown populations and its, equally racially discriminatory, occupation of South West Africa. To this effect, France would begin backing away from Pretoria on a political level and abstaining on any votes that went against the Afrikaners.

No longer the staunch defenders of South Africa in public, they were however important trading partners with South Africa and the number one arms merchant from 1966-1974. This contradictory geopolitical behavior would significantly influence their recognition strategies towards other secessionist entities. This contradiction would additionally play out in communications between diplomats in both countries, as they each became increasingly frustrated with the other's public behavior. This complex relationship would thus lead the French to oscillate between *strong status quo* behavior and *sympathetic status quo* behavior towards South West Africa.

Relations would further neutralize towards the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the French began embracing the rhetoric of self-determination towards all remaining African colonies. With their own colonial conflicts behind them, the French began to fully embrace being the gendarme of Africa for the West, against Cuban and Soviet communist influences on the continent. With France's Western allies concerned with the leftist-liberation movements in the remaining colonies,

the new neo-colonial strategy was to encourage the independence of these territories under their guiding transition, in order to counter the political landscape of the Soviet Union. This directly necessitated a positive French association with African nations and to protect the members of *Françafrique*.

As in preceding years, this directly contradicted France's economic interest in South Africa, in particular its military investments, which despite best intentions, were directly used for repression of the Black majority population in Namibia. With global condemnation a near constant by this period, relations between both countries were fragile at best. While still economically prosperous, the early 1970s saw the beginnings of France's curtailment of military support for the Afrikaners. Similarly, Paris began voting in favor of resolutions that directly harmed South African interests. In this sense, France was explicitly distancing itself from South Africa, even if in trade and nuclear exchange that was not the case. Along this trend, France embraced a rhetorical policy of *revisionist recognizer* with regards to Namibia. While Namibia would not be recognized until 1990 by the French, they were involved in UN strategies to secure this secession since the 1970s.

This rapid rhetorical escalation can serve as a benchmark to show, first, how the importance of domestic secessionist concerns can impact recognition policy towards other separatist claims. However, once these clear up, geopolitical relations step in to serve as key deciders for rhetorical justifications, and to a certain extent, recognition decision-making. In two cases which share context and concerns, the recognizer was forced to evaluate competing interests and ended up responding with rhetorical difference in both cases. In the case of Portugal, France had to contend with a close European ally, to whom it held historical ties and a shared interest in regional integration. In the case of South Africa, the French had to contend with an attractive economic investment and a lucrative trade partnership with a liberally minded country in the context of the

Cold War. In both cases, France had to balance its interest of establishing close African partnerships, with its support and permissiveness towards this remaining colonial structures.

By evaluating France's recognition strategies over twenty years through an archival, qualitative, analysis towards two colonies, we can scope the phenomenon to the context of decolonization in Africa and thus evaluate how different geopolitical relations and interests might impact the justification strategy. While through this evaluation we were unable to consider a case of true enmity, the complexity of relations with South Africa and Portugal still offered compelling evidence for the theory this project advances.

Chapter 5 - Exceptions to the Rules: Great Power Recognition of Kosovo

As noted in the introduction of this project, Great Power recognition, or non-recognition, of statehood can take many forms depending on a multitude of factors. The previous two chapters explored some of these variations with regards to a single recognizer over the course of twenty years. Furthermore, the French cases helped underscore the importance given to potentially setting precedents with recognition decisions. By reviewing declassified private diplomatic communication, we were able to glean the motivations that undergirded foreign policy decisions.

However, to further consider the rhetorical variation available, it is worth reviewing the public communication provided by countries before and after they have emitted their official decision. Through this study of statements intended for public consumption, we can evaluate the construction of their justifications and thus ascertain how domestic and international pressures manifest in their rhetoric strategies. In this sense, this chapter takes as a given the concern for setting precedent, the mechanism behind the theory, and directly assess the relation between the domestic and international pressures, the independent variables, and the recognition decision and rhetoric expressed by third party states, the dependent variable.

As a brief reminder, the thrust of this project has been to further understand how and why states make the foreign policy decisions that they do with regards to recognition of statehood. I posit that policy makers are influenced by domestic pressures, namely the existence of an internal secessionist movement, when determining whether to recognize or not. Subsequently, state officials will consider their geopolitical relations and their interests to craft the justifications they will share publicly. The mechanism behind this link is a fear of setting a precedent that could negatively affect them domestically, internationally, or both.

To best capture the rhetorical variation available, I study a rare instance in international recognition of statehood, the event of a contentious and split granting of statehood that broke from previous norms. I specifically look at the controversial recognition of Kosovo's sovereignty following their unilateral declaration of independence in 2008. To give context to this event it is worth first noting an example of the standard.

On September 25, 2017, the semi-autonomous Kurdish Regional Government held a non-binding referendum in which 92% of approximately 3 million people that went to the polls voted in favor of independence from Iraq (Salim, DeYoung, and El-Ghobashy 2017). Three days later, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson denounced the vote and the results as illegitimate, and remarked that the aspirations of the Kurdish people could not be advanced through unilateral measures (Tillerson 2017). Under similar circumstances, on February 18, 2008, both President Bush and Secretary Rice recognized Kosovo's statehood following their unilateral declaration independence, along with several key European nations like France and the United Kingdom. They asserted that it stood as a special case that could not be used as a precedent for any other situation (Rice 2008; Bush 2008).

Since the foreign policy decisions by major states have important ripple effects around the world, when a state breaks from the norm, it impacts the status quo by changing how other states will react to similar situations. This action not only puts into doubt the norm of coordinated recognition among the major powers, but it also questions the criteria by which states could recognize other seceding entities. What can be seen empirically, however, is that states that have broken this norm do not in fact want it to erode. This has been observed in the recognizing actions of the major states after they broke from the norm. For example, since recognizing Kosovo, the United States, United Kingdom, and France have not recognized any other entity without

agreement from China and Russia. Furthermore, the norm was seen working in the united rejection of recognition of the Kurdish and the Catalanian declarations of independence in 2017, and yet, in the case of Kosovo, recognition remains split, especially amongst the influential G20 states.¹

Notwithstanding, after the events where they violated the norms, they faced considerable backlash for violating in the first place. The main thrust of these critiques stemmed from the potential precedent this set for future secessionist movements. Other entities with similar aspirations, such as the Basque independence movement, upheld the recognition of Kosovo as a hope for their movement (Rivas 2008). Likewise, Russia directly equated their recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia to the precedent set by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France in Kosovo (Medvedev 2008).

In the first section I lay out the justification for the type of case under study and the significance of Kosovo in redesigning norms of recognition. I follow this section with a reminder of the project theory and the expected outcomes based on this theory. The third section unveils the research design, the methodology behind the data collection and analysis, and a brief background of the case. The rest of this chapter will comprise the analysis and results for the United States, France, and the United Kingdom. The final section will conclude with a summary of the results and the implications for future research.

Case selection

While the previous chapters explored the behavior over time of a single recognizer as international and domestic conditions changed, this chapter explores the decisions and rhetoric of three major

¹ G20 states that have recognized: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
G20 states that have NOT recognized: Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, and South Africa.

third party recognizers towards a single secessionist movement within a short time span. Since the previous chapters helped understand the variation in behavior as conditions changed, this chapter explores how, holding conditions as stable as possible, the existing international and domestic realities of major powers influences their behavior towards the same conflict.

This exercise serves a fruitful research purpose by showcasing the geopolitical and domestic dynamics at play in real time as they pertain to a single case. Similarly, this focus on multiple responses to a single secessionist entity allows us to focus on the near-static differences in their local and international conditions, such that would influence their decisions in that precise time. As a result, while the French cases allowed us to understand and ascertain the overall recognition trends in concert with broader domestic and international changes in history, the goal of this chapter is to observe more specific and current concerns in a context of informational advances and globalization. To this effect, it is worth considering first who are the recognizing actors that most influence the current situation.

Whether it's been made explicit or not, a norm has operated for over 70 years where when an entity declares its independence without the consent of the host state, the major powers will either agree to recognize together despite the host state or hold off until the host state has recognized the seceding entity. It is for this reason that we rarely see cases where the major powers in the international system are actionably split with regards to recognition, meaning a scenario where they go ahead and recognize without the consensus of the others.

This consensus is important because there is a certain group of states that must agree for a new entity to gain access to the international community as a peer. These are the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council: France, China, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Either one of these five countries can use their veto power and deny entry to a

new member as per article 27 of the U.N. Charter (United Nations 1945). While the United Nations is not an infallible institution, it currently houses all sovereign nations recognized by the five permanent members. For many states, the U.N. serves as a platform to request aid, condemn atrocious governments, and muster support either for or against any event of an international caliber, whether it is drug trafficking, the refugee crisis, climate change, among many others. Given the intangible credibility of this institution, the role played by the permanent members in accepting new states into this international forum cannot be understated.

The major powers, by acting in concert, have raised the bar for entry into the international system in two ways. First, they have, for the most part, sided with the host state when it comes to secessionist movements, and second, in the event that they do not, they have all at least agreed that the exigent circumstances do not set a precedent (Coggins 2014). Given this high bar, the status quo has been mostly maintained. While the potential precedent set by states is highly discussed with each policy decision, given the rarity of the event in current day politics, it's worthwhile to consider how states have resolved the major power split decision conundrum and the resulting rhetorical strategies employed.

Why Kosovo?

For this case study, I focus on the recognition of Kosovo's independence in February 2008 by the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. I chose these three countries to observe if there was variation in their responses to similar questions based on the same action. All three countries broke with their traditional behavior of coordinated recognition with Russia and China. However, they each have different national and international circumstances, so they offer an opportunity to review the different trends and similarities in their responses.

This case is important for two reasons. First, as Coggins laid out in her book, states rarely contest the territorial integrity of another sovereign state without the support of the international community. Specifically, up until this case, these countries had coordinated whether or not a new entity's independence would be recognized (Coggins 2014). Following The US, UK, and France's recognition of Kosovo's statehood, these countries received strong criticism from several sources, highlighting the potential precedent with would set for other separatist movements, as well as the erosion of this norm of coordinated recognition.

Many secessionist and irridentist movements, as well as host states with contested territories, responded to this potential precedent. The movements in Catalonia, Scotland, the Basque Country, and others cited the Kosovo case as a justification for their independence (Rivas 2008; Vasovic 2017; Tisdall 2007). Likewise, some irredentist movements cited this precedent as a reason to redraw borders, as in Crimea, Transnistria, or Nagorno-Karabakh (Driest 2015; Bilefsky 2014). On the other hand, Spaniards were adamant that they would not recognize Kosovo because they considered it would set a precedent for both Catalonia and the Basque Country. India reiterated its support for Serbia's territorial integrity because it feared it would otherwise set a precedent for many other cases (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs 2008; González and Martínez de Rituerto 2009).

Second, studying the behavior of these three states is important because they all have leveraging power in setting foreign policy trends directly and indirectly. Directly, they can deny entry to a new member and prevent the adoption of any non-procedural resolution, as per article 27 of the U.N. Charter (United Nations 1945). As a result, they could potentially deny development or security aid to any country out of favor. Indirectly, these states are important trading partners, principal sources of aid, or security guarantors for most countries. These states can put pressure

on any one of these areas to guarantee compliance and punish disagreement on issues they consider important.

The rare nature of this event (the first violation of this norm of coordinated recognition) classifies it as a deviant, or anomalous, case study and it is useful for exploring how the two independent variables act upon the rhetorical strategies employed (Seawright and Gerring 2008). Since this is a qualitative analysis of five actors towards a single event, the uniqueness of this deviant case falls within Lieberman's conception of an off-the-line case from the large-N on international recognition patterns (Lieberman 2005). It is the one off-the-line case directly cited by some authors as unexpected behavior (Coggins 2014; Caspersen and Stansfield 2011; Fawn 2008; Ker-Lindsay 2009). By focusing the study on these three countries, we can better compare their different responses and debates based on each of their differing conditions. This does, however, open the door for cultural and historical differences as potential confounding variables (Snyder 2001).

The time frame of study was from 2007 to 2008. I chose to begin on March 26, 2007 because that was the day the UN Special Envoy to Kosovo, Maarti Ahtisaari, released his recommendation for the future status of Kosovo. The main takeaway from this document was a proposal for supervised independence. While there was discussion about Kosovo's status beforehand, state officials from the three Western countries maintained a statement that they would not emit a judgment while negotiations between Serbia and Kosovo were ongoing. All three countries opted to wait for the UN Special Envoy to Kosovo recommendations before taking any concerted action.

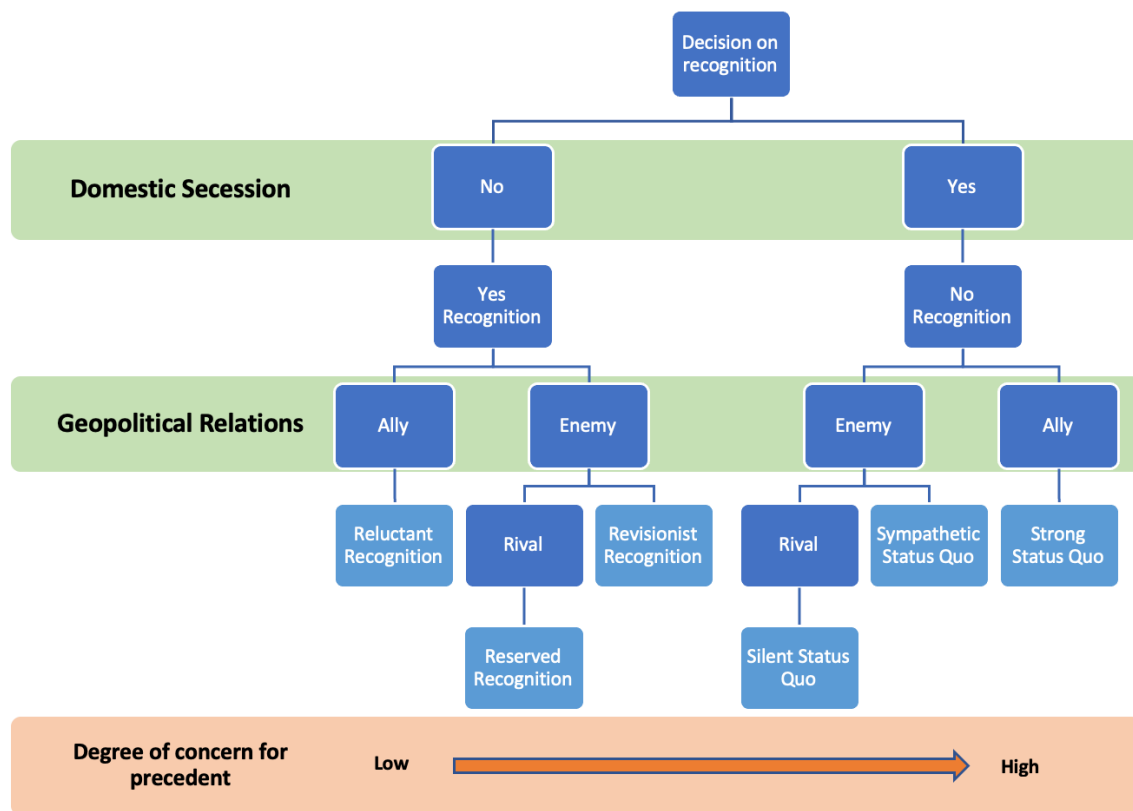
On the other end, I chose the end of 2008 to conclude the study because it coincides with Serbia submitting a request for opinion on the legality of Kosovo's declaration of independence to

the International Court of Justice. Following this event, the discourse turned to how their decision had set a precedent for other events. While I would also like to look at the longer-term consequences of their decision, I chose to narrow the project for this iteration to prevent significant changes to the international and domestic conditions each of these countries was facing.

Theoretical Expectations

With this understanding of the motives behind the case selection, in the paragraphs that follow I consider what the hypothetical expectations are based on the argument presented in the first chapter. To grasp the application of the previously presented theory to this case, it is worth offering a brief reminder of the thesis.

Figure 5-1: Rhetorical Strategies of Recognition of Statehood



Why and how states recognize or not a secessionist movement follows a certain sequence of events and is largely determined by the domestic and international conditions the recognizing state is dealing with. Firstly, the decision to recognize or not can either be easy, because international consensus and public opinion support it, or it can be complicated because opinions are split, or consensus is lacking. It is this latter situation when the Kosovo case lies. Prior to the Kosovar declaration of independence, the international community was already divided on whether Kosovo ought to be its own independent nation from Serbia or not. This contention was just as present between the major powers in question. While the United States was a strong advocate for Kosovar sovereignty, Russia stood firm on maintaining the status quo in the Balkans. What determined this baseline reaction, I posit, is the domestic concerns each of these major recognizing powers faced. Specifically, if one of the major powers had its own domestic secessionist threat, it would likely not recognize a foreign separatist movement, lest it create a possible precedent. Ergo, maintaining the status quo would be preferred, and that would start from the policy decision. On the other hand, if a recognizing state does not have a strong secessionist movement, it will be less concerned with the domestic implications a decision such as this one could have, at which point other considerations bear greater importance.

The subsequent step, and arguably the core of this project, is the rhetorical finesse that follows the decision. I posit that the form and framing of the decision will largely depend on the geopolitical relations of the recognizing state. Namely, if the major power is an ally of the host state, it will aim to preserve the interests of the host state through their rhetoric. The nature of the language that ultimately assuages the ally will depend on the decision taken. If the recognizing state has recognized the right to statehood of secessionist entity within their ally's state, they will behave as *reluctant recognizers* and use situationally motivated language that softens any

precedent-setting concerns for their other allies. On the other hand, if the major power has chosen not to recognize the secessionist entity within the allied host state, they will behave as *strong status quo* states given they have not set any precedents, nor face any concerns for doing so.

However, if the host state is not an ally of the recognizing state, but rather an enemy, the rhetorical response will be different. If the host state is an enemy and the major power has decided to recognize the secessionist entity within that state, it will behave as a *revisionist recognizer*, with the use of rule-based language. This strategy, while not bereft of a precedent-setting concern, does not run the risk of backfiring as directly on their interests. On the contrary, their policy would ultimately help weaken the enemy host state, which works in their favor. On the other hand, if the major power does not recognize the secessionist movement within their enemy's territory, then they will behave as *sympathetic status quo* states. This use of situationally based language stems less from a concern for setting precedent but rather to signal to the rebel group that they are on their side, but that other considerations must be prioritized.

There is one scenario, however, where the recognizing state will abstain from any explicit rhetorical response regardless of the foreign policy position. Namely, if the host state is a direct rival of the major power and the concern extends beyond precedent to that of survival and security interests. The applicable behavioral type depends on the implicit action taken towards the secessionist appeal to sovereignty. If the third-party state has not implicitly recognized the independence of the entity, it can be considered *silent status quo* behavior. This results from wanting to abstain from supporting the rival lest it signal some direct validation of its repression. On the other hand, the recognizing state can also behave as a *reluctant recognizer* by silently making the political moves to validate the separatist entity without directly provoking the rival.

The application of this framework to the present case will be more closely explored in the paragraphs that follow, however as a brief overview, the table below lays out the initial expectation based on the conditions and background at the time.

Table 5-1: Theoretical Expectation

Major power	Domestic Secession	Geopolitical Relations with Serbia	Expected Rhetorical Behavior
United States	No	Enemy	Revisionist Recognition
United Kingdom	Yes	Enemy	Sympathetic Status Quo
France	No	Enemy	Revisionist Recognition

Research Design

While the previous chapters sought to observe the precedent-setting concern as a motivator for their actions, this chapter instead aims to observe the qualitative correlation between the existing domestic and international conditions and the subsequent rhetorical language used. To this effect, this case study will allow us to review the rhetorical variation across cases within near-static conditions towards a single secessionist entity. This strategy allows us to really observe, albeit for a snapshot, the role the determinants of recognition play on the subsequent justifications of their actions. Thus, following a similar strategy to the previous chapters, the most appropriate approach is to review the public statements emitted by decision-makers and diplomatic officials to capture the exact language used. Once gathered, I offer evidence of the language used in statements leading up to the declaration of independence, as well as directly after the declaration of the decision. While this methodology does not offer the evidentiary purchase of a large-N study, it still provides an understanding of the dynamics behind this phenomenon in an instance the deviates from the norm.

To conduct this study, I specifically chose to review the press briefings offered by each country’s foreign ministry. This serves three purposes. First, the benefit of this primary source

archival work is to prevent possible selection biases with regards to secondary sources. By sidestepping the interpreter, this method can better grasp the dynamics of the phenomenon that directly answer the question (Lustick 1996). Second, I selected the foreign ministries, as opposed to other government institutions, because they are the agency of the Executive Branch in charge of foreign policy and thus have direct input on decisions of statehood. Finally, because the case is still recent, there is not enough information on the state policy variation that is unclassified, ergo this option is a proxy attempt to reach the same objective.

To better grasp the types of justification, I focused my archival searches on interviews and press briefings where Kosovo was mentioned. These documents show government agents having to justify on demand questions regarding policy decisions. By reviewing these responses, I can indirectly look behind the well-crafted statements and press releases. The main problem with this approach, however, is that in some interactions it is possible to observe both situational and rule-based justifications. Regardless, I present and review the complete statement to capture the overriding sentiment.

For the United States documents, I went through every archived Department of State page and located all the documents between 2007 and 2008 that had any mention of Kosovo with regards to its statehood. In total, I reviewed approximately 150 U.S. press briefings. For the French documents, I was able to use their search function for any document that referenced Kosovo and found 339 press briefings. Not all of these concerned the independence of Kosovo and the corresponding justification, so I only review the 107 documents that did. Finally, for the United Kingdom documents, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) makes only their official statements available, not the full transcripts of press briefings. For this reason, I utilize the questions posed to foreign ministry officials by members of Parliament. While this does pose a

risk for comparability, I found the questions were also made to an FCO representative on the spot with regards to the decision to recognize. Of these, I accessed 76 documents of this nature.

Before I proceed to the analysis of these documents, I first offer a brief background on the lead up to Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence.

Case Background

In 1989, after almost eighty years of being a part of Serbia and over forty years as an autonomous region in Yugoslavia, Kosovo was stripped of its autonomy and integrated into direct rule by Belgrade. While there had historically been conflict between the Serbs and the Albanians in the region, the loss of autonomy has been marked as the turning point in hostilities between both groups. This was the result of growing resentment from the Kosovar Serbs who appealed to the new Yugoslav President, Slobodan Milosevic. In line with the successful secessions of Slovenia and Croatia, and the peace negotiations in Bosnia to also secede, Albanian Kosovars declared their independence in 1992 but went unrecognized. There was a need within many Western countries to keep Milosevic, who had insisted that Kosovo was an internal matter for Serbia, focused and engaged in the Bosnian peace process (Ker-Lindsay 2009).

After years of passive resistance to Serbian political repression, in 1996, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) initiated aggressions that would gradually intensify, on both sides, to further casualties. The international community's reaction was to demand negotiations between Belgrade and Kosovo Albanian leadership. This occurred simultaneously with the start of the war in 1998. As mass casualties occurred on both sides, but to a greater extent towards Albanians, apparent negotiations appeased Western pressures until it became evident in 1999 that they were

failing, and the war crimes were too great. In March 1999, NATO forces intervened with strategic targeted attacks in Serbia (Ker-Lindsay 2009).

In 1999, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1244, where they brought the province under international control and launching the interim administration mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The goal was a temporary administration while the final status of Kosovo was resolved. However, the initial rhetoric in this time was that Kosovo's status would not be considered until it reached certain standards.² This would be known as the "Standards before Status" doctrine. Regardless, there were still skirmishes with Serbians. This would further stroke the flames of independence and make mere autonomy more unsatisfying. Finally in 2006 it was deemed necessary to consider Kosovo's status (Ker-Lindsay 2009).

Former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari was appointed in 2006 to present the best strategy. In February 2007, he presented his recommendations for Kosovo's status settlement in which he endorsed a supervised independence. One year later, on February 17, 2008, after no agreement among major states and nine years of UN administration, Kosovars unilaterally declared their independence from Serbia. In the days that followed, many major Western countries recognized their independence and statehood. Key among these were the United States, France, and the United Kingdom. On the other hand, Russia and China firmly opposed it (Economides, Ker-Lindsay, and Papadimitriou 2010).

² The eight benchmarks of this approach were explained in a State Department testimony: Functioning democratic institutions, rule of law, freedom of movement, returns and integration, economy: legislation, balanced budget, privatization, respect for property rights, dialogue with Belgrade, Kosovo protection corps. Regardless of final status outcomes, Kosovo needed to meet the benchmarks if it was to become a "functioning, multi-ethnic democracy with an operating economy" (Bogue 2003).

United States

Theoretical placement

To consider what kind of justification the United States likely employed based on the theory, I briefly consider whether they have domestic or international pressures. First, with regards to a potential domestic pressure, I considered whether there is a secessionist movement. While there have been movements for greater autonomy and even independence in Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico, they have either been suppressed, offered some symbolic concession, or maintained small enough to not pose a problem (Files 2006; Navarro 1998; Magin 2008). As a result, I argue the United States does not have a significant secessionist movement that would pressure the government with regards to Kosovo, and thus the United States would be more inclined to recognize.

Following down the decision tree, since they do not face domestic pressures and are thus expected to recognize, I consider the United States' geopolitical relations with regards to Kosovo. Relations with the host state, Serbia, were not quite positive. In fact, the United States was heavily involved, through NATO, in the bombing campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999, as well as having imposed important sanctions against Yugoslavian leadership. While relations somewhat normalized in the early 2000s, Serbia was closer to an enemy, than an ally. By this token, the theoretical expectation favors the United States behaving like a *revisionist recognizer* through the use of rule-based language to justify their decisions.

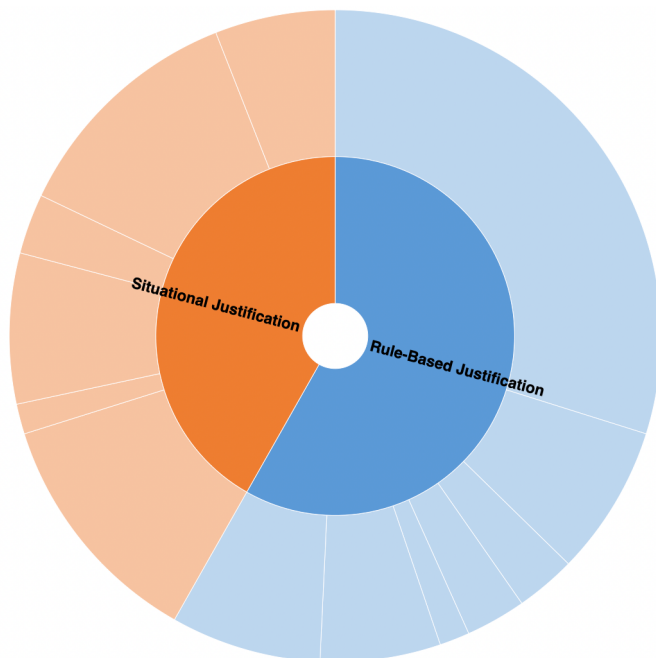
I also review whether the United States faced direct and significant pressure from other states to either recognize or not. The United States did face significant criticism for the lead they were taking in supporting the Ahtisaari Plan and Kosovo's Independence, particularly from Russia (H. Cooper 2007). Additionally, many other European countries stood firmly against the

independence of Kosovo due to the potential precedent it could set for movements in their countries, among these are Spain, Cyprus, Slovenia, and Romania (Bilefsky 2008). Finally, when polled, many Russians were growing increasingly worried about U.S. leadership (Guadalupe 2007). Notwithstanding, while these may be a source of pause, these pressures would not necessarily detract from the expectation. In the next section I conduct the analysis of rhetoric and present the results for the United States.

After reviewing the potential influences faced, I argue the United States government is expected to engage in primarily optimistic justifications given the lack of significant domestic or international pressure. In the next section I review the results from the preliminary coding process from a sample of the Department of State press briefings.

Results

Figure 5-2: Distribution of coding references for the United States



Source: Results of NVIVO coding of press briefings from: Daily Press Briefings, U.S. Department of State Archive, <https://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/index.htm>

We can observe from this broadly descriptive coding³ that, for the most part, the United States employed rule-based rhetoric in its justifications regarding independence of Kosovo. The main categories they used in their justifications were through the promotion of the Ahtissari Plan and the defense of Kosovar human rights, as noted here:

“I think what we said was we support the plan that Mr. Ahtisaari has put forward and that he's ably come up with after more than a year of consultation and work with the parties. Our calls and our statement of support for it echo those by the UN Secretary General, the Government of Germany on behalf of the EU and any number of other states and international actors, all of whom believe that the time has now come for a final resolution to the issues that arose with the Kosovo conflict back in 1999. Certainly we believe that the plan Mr. Ahtisaari has put forward is one that helps serve the interests of all communities. It provides for extensive protections for the Serbian and other minority groups in Kosovo; it certainly provides for a managed and monitored sovereignty as well so that the international community will remain engaged. And it is an effort that I think has, generally speaking, broad and wide support in the international community.”(Wood 2008)

What this response also notes is the allusion to a wide consensus, to give it a further legitimizing value, a theme that carried on throughout that time. “President Bush outlined what our position is and I think we are getting to the point now where we, as well as others, are looking at how do you get from where we are now to implementation of the Ahtisaari plan” (McCormack 2007b). Similarly: “as it is agreed upon by the United States and many of our European friends and allies; that is, independence for Kosovo based on the Ahtisaari plan. President Bush laid that out as the policy objective that we, the United States, have. And that policy objective is shared by many of our European friends and allies.” (McCormack 2007a)

Beyond this externally motivated justifications, they also wanted to emphasize the importance this would have for the Kosovars, both locally: “I believe what you'll find is that the decision by the Secretary General is fully in keeping with the agreement of the international community and is designed to represent a restructuring of the international presence in Kosovo

³ Of the 64 coded references, 36 were rule-based responses, while 28 were situationally based responses. For further detail, Table 3 in the appendix has the breakdown based on the various codes within each category.

that will – we all believe, help facilitate the development of local institutions” (Casey 2008). As well as the benefits they could receive internationally: “All those countries in the region have stated that they wish to be full participants in a number of Euro-Atlantic institutions like the EU or NATO or others. We certainly would like to help them achieve those ambitions, but to do so there has to be a settlement and a lasting settlement to these conflicts that are left over from the 1990s.”(Casey 2007c)

Notwithstanding this significant use of rules-based rhetoric, the Americans still employed some situational rhetoric, mostly to argue that the Kosovar case did not set a precedent given its unique circumstance.

“we've said repeatedly that Kosovo is not a precedent or a model for any other place around the world. Kosovo is its own unique situation. The process that we are going through now was outlined in Resolution 1244 at the beginning of the conflict. And again, this is a unique situation. It is proceeding in a unique way and I think is going to be a unique solution as well.”(Casey 2007a)

Furthermore, they emphasized the importance of stabilizing the Balkans and helping the Serbs and Kosovars look towards Europe: “We have an interest in seeing that region be more stable and having the people of that region have a horizon and an orientation towards the EU” (McCormack 2007a). A sentiment further noted after their recognition in March of 2008, “We took the steps that we did because we thought it was in the best interest of long-term stability in the Balkans. They have a long history of violence and instability.”(McCormack 2008)

One final situational category often used, which can be interpreted as situational, is that of emphasizing the inevitable nature of the independence: “it's clear to us that the end result of this process will be an independent Kosovo, supervised at first, and again done in accordance and along the outlines of the Ahtisaari plan” (Casey 2007c). Additionally, “This is an issue that's been out there since 1999. And I think everyone agrees that it's time to resolve the final status issues that

are there, particularly in accordance with what was called for way back under UN Security Council Resolution 1244.”(Casey 2007b)

As can be concluded from the evidence provided, the US behaved as expected. Its justifications were in line with that of a revisionist recognizer through the use of rule-based rhetoric. While its behavior generally followed the theory, public officials still made a point to highlight the uniqueness of the Kosovo case and firmly asserting that it did not set a precedent for other secessionist movements. To this effect, while not facing the direct pressures advanced by this project, it is possible there were other international pressures, just not from the host state, but rather from a major power one, such as Russia or China. Notwithstanding, I will leave further theorizing for the conclusion.

France

Theoretical placement

As with the American case, I first consider whether they have the domestic or international pressures I advance in the theory. With regards to a potential domestic pressure, the French have many regions that have sought to secede from the country in the past, as noted in the previous two chapters. However, there have not been significant movements in the last two decades. The strongest claims have been from the French Basque Country, Brittany, and Corsica (although there are others). While all three have political parties with some local power, as well as a few violent skirmishes, their message has become one of increased rights for their region and autonomy. There have not been any demands for independence in recent decades but rather demands for fair treatment of the local people (Irrintzi 2007; Parti Breton n.d.; UDB n.d.; Fourquet 2008). Overall, I categorize this as a low domestic pressure, since the demands are not comparable to that of a

secessionist movement and none of these groups have raised a strong campaign against the government for supporting Kosovo's independence.

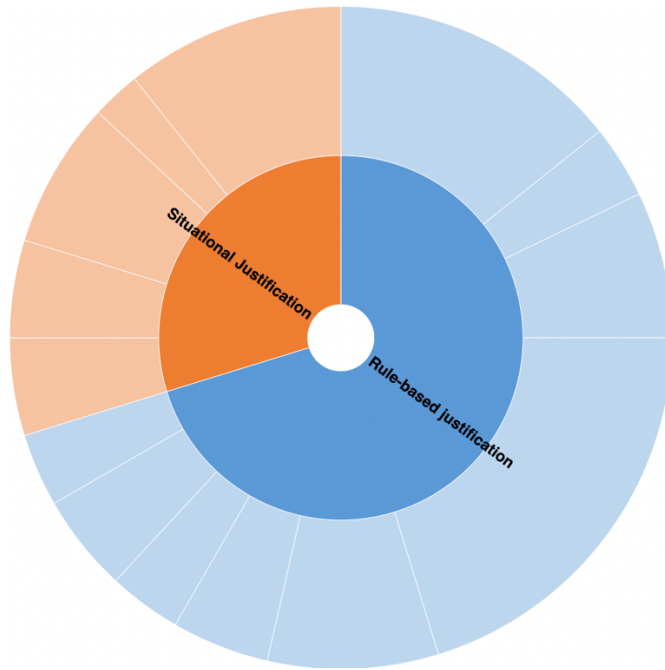
Since they do not face domestic pressures, I posit they will be more likely to recognize the secessionist claim of the Kosovars. From there, to evaluate the recognition strategy, I consider whether they face international pressure from their geopolitical relations with Serbia. While they have had generally close ties since 2011, relations were strained in the previous decades because of France's participation in the 1999 NATO bombing campaign and the subsequent Kosovar War (Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères n.d.). France has maintained that Serbia's accession into the European Union, is conditional on the latter's recognition of Kosovo's sovereignty, a fact which the Serbs continue to begrudge. In sum, relations between France and Serbia were diplomatically adversarial during the period in question, and thus can be categorized as one of enmity.

Furthermore, it does not have strong allies in the region that might be concerned with its decision. In fact, I did not find evidence amongst French media that they were facing pressure from any allied country. Notwithstanding, there is ample and clear evidence that Russia, a rival, was firmly against the secession of Kosovo from Serbia and it was widely covered by the media (Le Monde 2008; Bolopion 2007). Thus, it would be even more expected that France would operate against Russian interests.

After reviewing the potential influences France might have faced, I argue that given the lack of significant domestic or international pressure, the French government was more likely to behave as a *revisionist recognizer*. As per the theory, we would thus expect France to employ more rule-based justifications for their decision. In the next section I review the evidence from a sample of French press briefings.

Results

Figure 5-3: Distribution of coding references for France



Source: Results of NVIVO coding of press briefings from: Points de presse, Salle de Presse, Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères: <http://basedoc.diplomatie.gouv.fr/exl-php/util/Kiosque/FranceDiplomatie/kiosque.php?type=ppfr>

Even more than the Americans, as we can observe in Figure 2,⁴ the broad descriptive coding of official French responses with regards to the independence of Kosovo show a clear preference for rule-based rhetoric. This corresponds with the initial prediction that the French had minimal, if any, domestic and international pressures and could thus focus their responses on justifications based on the benefits of recognition of statehood.

Within the rule-based responses, the most repeated themes were those of support for the Ahtisaari Plan⁵, “For us, Mr. Ahtisaari's project is still very much alive and is in fact the only

⁴ Of the 84 coded references, 59 corresponded to rule-based justifications, while 25 were situationally based. For further detail, Table 2 in the appendix has the breakdown based on the various codes within each category.

⁵ The Ahtisaari Plan (also known as the Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement) what created by the UN Special Envoy to Kosovo, Former Finish President, Martti Ahtisaari. The report was formally submitted to

realistic option for achieving a lasting solution to the Kosovo question.”(France Diplomatie 2007b)

They found it had strong international validity for having been commissioned by the United Nations itself, “After 14 months of laborious negotiations between Belgrade and Pristina, Martti Ahtisaari, special envoy of the UN Secretary General, has drawn up a project that best takes into account the positions of both parties. Its proposals recognize the independence aspirations of the overwhelming majority of Kosovo's population while offering comprehensive guarantees to the Serbian community.” (Kouchner 2007)

The second most highlighted rule-based justification was the support of Kosovar human rights and how the respect of this EU principle was a requirement for admission into the community. As noted by the French in 2007, “We must also underline that it is difficult to envisage that Serbia can enter the European Union without the question of Kosovo having been resolved.”(Kouchner 2007) This position was not only reiterated, but strengthened, in 2008 after the Serbians sought to bring the matter to the International Criminal Court:

“To join the European Union you must first be a candidate and to be a candidate you have to comply with a certain number of requirements, related to human rights, to trade, which are called chapters. [...] It is certain that one cannot at the same time join the European Union and not respect its rules and its laws. I also say this because some Serbian friends claim to want to lodge a complaint with the International Criminal Court in The Hague, raising the question of the illegality of the recognition of Kosovo. [...] I find the reaction of our Serbian friends curious, especially if they want to join us within the European Union. If, by chance, the International Criminal Court ruled for the illegality of the European process of recognition of Kosovo, how would Serbia justify its wish to integrate a structure which is accused of carrying out an illegal policy? There is a contradiction, either they opt for a policy of openness, legality, linked to Human Rights, or they do not and in this specific case, they question their possible candidacy for membership.”(Kouchner 2008d)

Ultimately for the French, Kosovo’s independence would open the door for European accession for both Serbia and Kosovo. “There was nothing else we could do other than impose a solution

the UN Security Council on March 26, 2007. This report concluded, among other points, that the only way forward was supervised independence for Kosovo from Serbia, because both parties could not reach a compromise.

that, hopefully, with the European mission in place, will lead to and encourage, maybe, the Balkan countries to look towards Europe” (Kouchner 2008c).

While France’s rhetorical strategy was mostly rule-based, they did employ a few situational strategies. They did highlight that the resolution of Kosovo’s international status could and would ultimately lead to stability in the region and on the continent, “This desire to ensure the stability of the continent and the future of the Balkans must guide our approach to Kosovo today.”(Kouchner 2008d) This sentiment was also noted in 2008: “We must not lose sight of our common goal, which is to ensure the stability of the region and reassure the Serbs of our common friendship” (Kouchner 2008a).

While they never seemed concerned about a potential negative precedent, they also posited that Kosovar independence was inevitable and the only real solution. “We are convinced that this project can provide Kosovo with the stability and clarity it needs for its future. We believe that after nine years of interim rule and administration by the United Nations, Kosovo needs a clear perspective for the future.”(France Diplomatie 2007a) Ultimately, it came down to the fact that “There were no other possibilities. This is a situation that has been going on since 1999. We are settling the accounts for the break-up of the former Yugoslavia.”(Jouyet 2008a) Furthermore, “This is not the best solution I would have dreamed of, but given the current state of things, it is a necessary and provisional solution.” (Kouchner 2008b).

Overall, the French were very candid with their responses and were not generally concerned with whether others considered this recognition as a precedent. On a few occasions, they even indirectly compared the Kosovo case to other secessionist movements in Europe, like Northern Cyprus: “It is certainly not very satisfying to have to impose a solution, but would you

want us to have it like in Cyprus? Thirty years later, there are still United Nations forces deployed” (Kouchner 2008c).

They also often directly compared Kosovo to the problems in Georgia with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, despite protestations from other EU members that were against Kosovo’s independence,

“It’s true, the member states were divided on Kosovo’s independence, with some being unfavorable due to regional situations: think of Spain. As for Romania’s attitude, it is linked to the problems of Moldova and Transnistria. I also went to Moldova to try to see how to move forward on these subjects. In the case of Kosovo, there was an agreement made within the framework of the UN, mediation had been carried out, which did not exist within the framework of Georgia - even if it is clear that the Georgian initiatives would have should be better controlled. All possible processes at the multilateral level, used for Kosovo, were missing in the case of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. It is this situation that the international conference in Geneva aims to remedy. It’s about trying to create the same process as for Kosovo. At the end of the year, we are reaching a certain stabilization.”(Jouyet 2008b)

In sum, while there were a few situational justifications, they were often in the service of their rule-based approach. As a result, this case confidently conforms to the theoretical expectations and evidence supports that France behaved as a *revisionist recognizer*. Not only was France not concerned with setting a precedent, but they were also not troubled by strong domestic and international pressures. The remaining three cases, however, faced different conditions.

United Kingdom

Theoretical placement

As with the previous two cases, I first consider what the United Kingdom’s international and domestic conditions were to provide an expected theoretical behavior. Domestically, the UK had several secessionist movements. In particular, there was Scotland’s active claim to independence from the Union, and Northern Ireland, which had been not only politically salient in its desire to secede from the UK, but also violently demonstrative (Tisdall 2007). In the case of Scotland’s

secessionist claim, there have been multiple attempts to become independence from the UK or at least become far more autonomous through the use of referendums. The 1979 vote narrowly turned out in favor of secession, but per parliamentary conditions, the low turnout invalidated the results (Mathias 2021). Similarly, in the 1997 referendum, 74.3% of Scots voted in favor of a Scottish Parliament (Dewdney 1997). While this movement has gotten stronger in the years following Kosovo's independence, the Scottish National Party has been an important force in the region for some time with clear secessionist ambitions (Scottish National Party n.d.).

On the other hand, in the case of Northern Ireland, since the Partition of Ireland at the end of the First World War in 1921, Irish nationalist have engaged in both political and guerrilla warfare in protest of the separation from the rest of the island (Gibney 2021). While the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 ushered in a tentative peace, the Irish Republican Army did not officially put an end to its armed campaign until 2005 (Fusco 2022). Regardless, the Northern Irish irridentist claim has continued to influence British policy, especially with regards to foreign recognition of statehood.

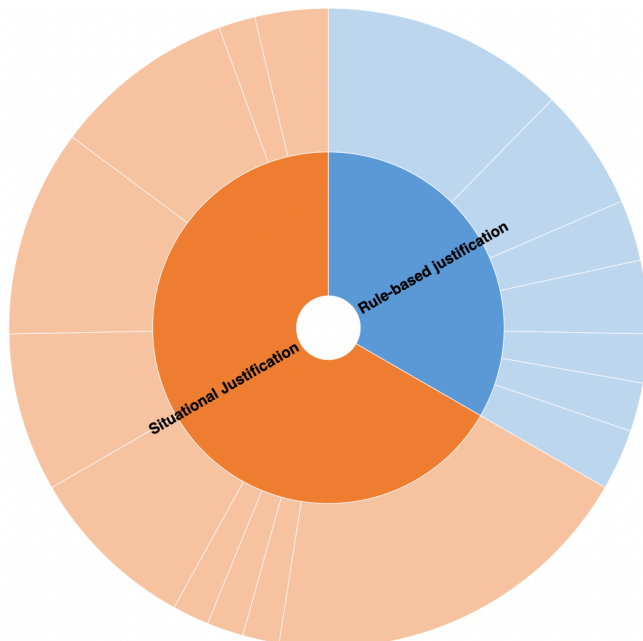
In sum, the United Kingdom faced significant pressure from its secessionist movements. The theory would thus predict that it would be completely counter to their domestic interests to recognize Kosovo's independence. To determine the expected rhetoric however we must understand the United Kingdom's relations with Serbia. As with the previous two countries, the UK was an active participant during the 1999 NATO bombing and a proponent of deploying ground troops in Kosovo to get Milosevic to capitulate (P. Dixon 2003). While Serbian-British relations were not as adverse as those between France or the United States with the Balkan nation by the mid-2000s, the United Kingdom's commitment to the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo was stronger. By this token, the theoretical expectation would be that the UK would behave as a

sympathetic status quo state with their use of situational rhetoric that seeks to assuage the secessionist entity and signal its support for the group whilst not granting recognition.

The reality however is that the United Kingdom did, in fact, recognize Kosovo's independence from Serbia in what can best be understood as a wide break with the theory. Given the clear risk of setting a precedent for its own domestic secessionist movements, this behavior is runs counter to its interests. As a result, while the expectation of non-recognition was not met, the expectation of situationally based justifications is even greater. Since its recognizing behavior threatens its interests, I posit that they will employ a rhetorical strategy that emphasized the unprecedented and singular nature of the situation, to stave off domestic and international critiques for its counterintuitive actions. The expected rhetorical behavior is that the United Kingdom will behave as a *reluctant recognizer*.

Results

Figure 5-4: Distribution of coding references for the United Kingdom



Source: Results of NVIVO coding of press briefings from: UK Parliament, Publications and Records, www.parliament.uk

Even though the theoretical prediction regarding the decision proved incorrect, the United Kingdom's rhetoric leaned heavily towards situationally based justifications. As noted in the figure above, approximately two thirds of the coded statements emphasized situationally specific conditions about their decision.⁶ Their main arguments considered the importance of stabilizing the Balkans and the unsustainability of the current status quo. As noted by the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, in December of 2007, "The principles of our approach are, first, that Europe take seriously its special responsibility for the stability and security of the Balkans region. Indeed, it is also thanks to the sustained efforts of NATO troops and the diplomacy of the United Nations and the European Union that a safe and secure environment has been maintained."(Brown 2007) This sentiment was similarly noted by the Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Lord Malloch-Brown, "We see an early resolution of Kosovo's status as crucial to the stability and security of the Balkans and Europe as a whole"(Malloch Brown 2007b)

It was very important for the British to note the unsustainable status of a UN administered Kosovo: "The current situation—an unresolved status while Kosovo is administered by the United Nations—is fundamentally unsustainable, failing to provide the clarity needed for sustained economic investment or to fulfill the aspirations of the vast majority of Kosovo's population" (Hoon 2007)." Other important arguments include the perils of delaying any more with negotiations that did not work, and the concerted effort between allies to resolve the dispute: "We have to be realistic and accept that you cannot talk forever. People must put proposals on the table or one must assume that talk has become a substitute for finding a solution" (Malloch Brown 2007c).

⁶ Of the 162 coded references, 108 were situational justifications, while 54 were rule-based justifications. For further detail, Table 4 in the appendix provides more detail based on the various codes within each category.

Furthermore, their emphasis on the unsustainability of the status quo and continued delays also caveated the uniqueness of this event, “The UK fully supports the work of the EU-Russia-US troika aimed at bridging the divide between Pristina and Belgrade on Kosovo’s view that the status quo in Kosovo, which is unique by virtue of its tragic history, is unsustainable.”(Miliband 2007) To seal in this justification, they often made the point to group their position as that of a larger group, so as to avoid the precedent-setting concerns that accompany lone action: “My statement of 11 December noted that, against this backdrop of inconclusive negotiations, almost all in the international community were agreed that the status quo in Kosovo was unsustainable. This is a point that had been underlined by the European Union, the UN Secretary General and the Contact Group.”(Miliband 2008)

This situationally based justification was reiterated at every pass, of which the following quote perfectly exemplified the British position succinctly:

“Bringing all these elements together—the unsustainable status quo; Kosovo’s commitment to the stringent safeguards in the UN Special Envoy’s Comprehensive Proposal; and the international support for settlement implementation and, increasingly, recognition—the Government considers that UK recognition of Kosovo is fully justified. Our firm view is that it is the best way of resolving Kosovo’s status, ensuring regional stability and solving this last remaining issue from the break-up of the Former Yugoslavia” (Miliband 2008).

It should, however, be noted that the British did still use some rule-based justifiers. As with the previous two cases, the most important of these was the support for recognition based on the Ahtisaari Plan and its proposed supervised independence of Kosovo. As noted by Prime Minister Gordon Brown, “we have always been clear that the comprehensive proposal put forward by the UN special envoy, based on supervised independence for Kosovo, represents the best way forward.”(Brown 2007) They touted the rigor that went into this UN commissioned plan, “Her Majesty’s Government support the UN special envoy Ahtisaari’s proposals, which took 14 months of intense negotiations and involved Serbs and Kosovo Albanians. He carried out his negotiations

professionally and with integrity and we believe that that formed the basis of the subsequent UN resolution.”(Murphy 2007)

The second most noted rule-based justifier was the promotion of a pathway to European Union membership for Serbia. This could only be achieved through the settlement of the Kosovo issue. In the review of a meeting of the Council of Europe, the Prime Minister noted in 2007 that “The Council encouraged Serbia to meet the necessary conditions to allow signature of its stabilisation and association agreement with the EU and we expressed our confidence that Serbia has the capacity to make rapid progress subsequently towards candidate status.”(Brown 2007) This point was reiterated in 2008, stating that “Serbia is guaranteed a European future if, of course, it continues to observe democratic rights, which it is doing. I understand its frustrations about what has happened in Kosovo, but it is important that it recognises its responsibilities to the rest of Europe.” (Brown 2008b) Ultimately, he had the “hope that Serbia, where there are tension and understandable anxieties, will see that it has a European future, and we will support it in that.”(Brown 2008a) Their fewer rule-based justifications can thus be summed in the following:

The UK has been fully engaged in the UN status process for Kosovo. As part of the Contact Group (France, Germany, Italy, Russia, UK and US), we worked closely with UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari during the 15 months of intensive negotiations he held between Belgrade and Pristina. The UK fully supports the UN Special Envoy. His proposals, which provide for independence for Kosovo, supervised by the international community, hold out the prospect of a better future for all the peoples of Kosovo and for enhanced stability in the region. They are well judged and represent compromises for both sides. They contain generous and far-reaching guarantees protecting the rights of Kosovo's Serb and other non-Albanian communities. These would be monitored and upheld by the international community through its continued presence in Kosovo. The Special Envoy's proposals would finally give Kosovo clarity over its future, enabling the Balkan region to draw a line under the conflicts of the recent past and look forward to a future with a European and Euro-Atlantic perspective.”(Malloch Brown 2007a)

As a note, in their exchange within the House of Commons, they had to directly contend with the Scottish reminder that, for them, this did set a precedent, as noted by a member of the Scottish National Party, “On Kosovo, I am very glad that the Prime Minister has recognised that the best

future is independence in Europe. That is something that the Scottish National party wholeheartedly supports. Independence is the appropriate status for all normal countries within the European Union (Robertson 2007). Furthermore, in this exchange, which forced the Foreign Minister to highlight the uniqueness of the situation:

“Sir Peter Tapsell (Louth and Horncastle) (Con): Will the Foreign Secretary bear in mind that any appearance of a permanent separation of Kosovo from Serbia will lead to endless tension and instability throughout the Balkans, heightened by Russia.

Angus Robertson (Moray) (SNP): *indicated assent*.

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (David Miliband): I see that the Scottish National party representative is nodding his head. Every single person who has studied this issue emphasises that the situation in Kosovo is unique and results from the tragic circumstances of the 1990ss citizens.”(Miliband 2007)

In conclusion, the United Kingdom did behave as a *reluctant recognizer*, through an outsized use of situational markers in their justifications. While they did use some rule-based strategies, they sought to either use them as collective notions to associate with a European or global position, or in support of their main argument in support of Balkan stability. This rhetorical behavior certainly highlights the British concern for setting a precedent both domestically and internationally. While their behavior was counter to their interests, their rhetorical strategy sought to create a buffer for them in the face of these critiques.

Conclusion

Table 5-2: Theoretical Expectation and Outcome

Major power	Domestic Secession	Geopolitical Relations with Serbia	Expected Rhetorical Behavior	Results
United States	No	Enemy	Revisionist Recognition	<i>Revisionist Recognition</i>
United Kingdom	Yes	Enemy	Sympathetic Status Quo	<i>Reluctant Recognition</i>
France	No	Enemy	Revisionist Recognition	<i>Revisionist Recognition</i>

In conclusion, I posited that third party states will determine whether to recognize a secessionist's claim to statehood depending on whether they have their own domestic secessionist movement. If they do face this domestic pressure, they are less likely to recognize foreign separatist claim. If they did, it could set a dangerous precedent and ultimately run counter to their own interests. However, if they do not have these domestic pressures, they will not have the same reluctance to recognize. Furthermore, I argue that their geopolitical relations with the host state will, in turn, shape the discursive strategy they use to justify their policy behavior. If the host state is their ally, they will likely seek to affirm or protect their partner's interests. Conversely, if the host is an enemy, they will likely seek to affirm or support the seceding entity's claim in an effort to weaken their adversary.

I test this theory by observing the behavior of three major countries and their recognition decisions and discursive justifications with regards to Kosovo's secessionism from Serbia. Namely, I review the actions and rhetorical strategies employed by France, the United States, and the United Kingdom. I first considered the potential pressures they faced, both domestically and internationally and posited that both France and the United States had no domestic or international pressures, while the United Kingdom had significant domestic pressures. As noted in Table X above, the theoretical expectation was that France and the United States would not only recognize Kosovo, use a higher proportion of rule-based rhetoric given their enmity with Serbia and a lack of domestic constraints. Meanwhile, the anticipated outcome from the United Kingdom was that they would not recognize Kosovo but use situational rhetoric to still convey support for the secessionists.

The results from the qualitative study of press briefings found that both France and the United States conformed to the theory as expected, while the United Kingdom did not. The French

were far more likely to use rule-based rhetoric than situational descriptors. Furthermore, they were not concerned with dispelling claims of precedent setting or with the concerns of the host state or other regional players. In this sense, they strongly adhered to the behavior of a *revisionist recognizer*.

In the US case, the Americans used a slightly higher proportion of rule-based arguments to justify their decision to recognize Kosovo's claim to statehood. While based on its international and domestic conditions I expected a higher proportion of these rule-based qualifiers, the sizeable minority of situationally based descriptors offers reason to pause. One possible explanation for this variation could be the unaccounted-for pressure from other major powers, namely Russia and China. As these two states were strongly against the granting of Kosovo's sovereignty, and both are rivals of the United States, their pushback could have forced the Americans to be more conditional with their justifications. Notwithstanding this speculation, the United States still displayed the behavior of a *revisionist recognizer*.

Finally, when it came to the United Kingdom, their recognizing behavior did not conform to the theory with regards to the decision taken. Given the significant domestic pressure they were under by their own secessionist and irridentist movements, a denial of recognition would have been expected. However, they did recognize Kosovo's sovereignty, in a move that arguably went deeply against their interests. While their relations with Serbia were not entirely adversarial, their bond with the Kosovars was well entrenched, which would explain their recognition decision even if it ran counter to their concerns. In this consideration, it makes sense that they employed a significantly higher proportion of situational descriptors in their justification. However, this was likely not in response to their neutral relations with the Serbians, but rather as protection against

the domestic precedent set by their action. By this token their behavior more closely aligned with that of a *reluctant recognizer*.

In sum, this chapter sought to capture the rhetorical variation in a more modern case and through a greater diversity of actors. While the British case did not conform to the theory, it was still possible to observe the variation in rhetoric between the three cases and showcase one important part of the rhetorical spectrum. In future work, it would be worth undergoing a closer study of the United Kingdom's decision to behave counter to its interests. While other EU and NATO members with secessionist movements denied Kosovo's claim to statehood, the UK did not. This alone is a worthy question.

Furthermore, this chapter offers many avenues for future research. Through an increase in the number of third-party states studied beyond the three here documented, we could not only review whether the British case was an anomaly, but also expand the gamut of responses within the spectrum of this theory. While there is an observed variation in the rhetorical strategies used by the Western cases here studied, all three represented justifications of recognizing behavior. To explore the other side of the spectrum, it would be worthwhile to review the behavior of those non-recognizing states. Moreover, an expansion of the documentation studied to interviews and declassified material could offer further insight into the motivations behind the decision taken and the rhetoric chosen.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion: Reflection on Recognition and Precedent

This dissertation asked the question, why do states recognize other states the way they do? The objective was to understand state behavior with regards to recognizing statehood. While some scholarship has begun to unpack the complexities of sovereignty, few have delved into the external validation, or recognition, of this status. So far, the limited focus has been on why states recognize. As important as that question is, it leaves many other queries unanswered. With this holistic perspective, this manuscript sought to unpack not just the decision itself, but the form and framing of a recognition.

Not limited to positive decisions, this project offers a theory for both recognition and non-recognition, with a resulting typology of rhetorical behavior. Along a sequence of decisions, I argue that if a recognizing state has its domestic secessionist conflict, they will be less likely to recognize a sovereign claim abroad. Once the policy decision has been made, the next step to consider is how it will be delivered. I posit that the form and framing of recognition will be determined by the geopolitical relations between the recognizing state and the host state. Namely, if the two states are allies, the recognizer will make sure that the justification of their decision ultimately supports or defends the host state. If they did recognize the secessionist entity within the host state, their behavior as *reluctant recognizers* will see their rhetoric be situational to show that it was not meant to go against the interests of their ally and that this does not set a precedent for their other allied states. However, if they opted not to recognize the rebel group, then they will use rule-based rhetoric that upholds the status quo and behave as *strong status quo* states.

On the other hand, if the host state is an enemy of the recognizing state, there is a greater incentive to weaken their enemy, whether through the dissolution of their territory or by supporting

the rebel group. If the recognizer did grant the secessionist its statehood, then they would likely behave as *revisionist recognizers*, with rule-based rhetoric that offers legal or normative reasons to weaken the host state. On the other hand, if the recognizer denied the rebel group's claim, but still support this separatist entity, they will behave as *sympathetic status quo* states, using situational rhetoric to assuage the secessionists that the circumstances were more complicated. As a final category however lies the extreme, whereby the host state is not only an enemy of the recognizer, but also a rival. In these cases, the third-party state must be cautious in its behavior, lest any possible retaliation were to threaten their security. In these instances, the recognizer will most likely omit a statement all together and behave as either a *reserved recognizer*, if they did recognize, or as a *silent status quo* defender, if they did not recognize.

The underlying mechanism that motivated these behaviors depending on the different domestic and international conditions is the concern for setting a precedent with their foreign policy choices and the resulting rhetorical strategies to support these decisions. With a backbone aimed at evaluating how states consider their circumstances, their interests, and the consequences of their behavior, this project took the study of recognition a step further to create a more holistic approach for this scholarship.

Through three qualitative case studies of recognition, I first observed how a single recognizer evolved its recognition strategies and policies as their domestic and international conditions changed. The goal of these chapters was to understand if and how states grappled with concerns about setting precedents through the sovereign recognition of a new entity. In both French case chapters of recognition of over time, we observed how the recognizing behavior conformed to the theoretical expectation in the first and third periods of study, with a notable lag in the second period. On the other hand, the third empirical chapter of this project utilized the previous lessons

and unpacked the rhetorical variation within recognition statements emitted by state officials to glean how the precedent setting concern translated in practice today. Through the qualitative coding of US, French, and UK public statements on Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence, we were able to observe a clear variation in the rhetoric used by each country to justify their decisions. While the British recognition policy did not conform with the theoretical expectation, across the board, the rhetorical behaviors did follow the expected path.

In the concluding pages that follow I first offer a chapter-by-chapter summary and reflection on the research and results of each case, along with a project wide consideration on the theory that account for some of the unexpected results. The second section underscores the many contributions of this dissertation along various scholarly axes. The third section offers several recommendations for future research based on the research and results of this theory-testing project. Finally, I reflect on the state of recognition of statehood and recall the initial example of President Carter's recognition of the People's Republic of China.

Summary of the Research and Results

The first half of chapter 2 offered an in-depth conceptual and literary review of recognition and explained the construction my typology of recognition behavior. The second half offered a structure of determinants based on an overall concern for setting a complicated precedent. With this dedicated theory, chapter 3 offered a twenty-year review of France's recognition behavior towards the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique. From 1954 to 1961, whilst dealing with their own secessionist conflict with the independence struggle in Algeria, France was firmly in support of Portugal's claim over its colonies and staunchly opposed any attempts to force their independence. After their domestic conflicts ended with the arrival of General de Gaulle to the

presidency and the independence of Algeria, the expectation had been that France would no longer be held back in their recognition behavior by their own internal problems. The hypothesis had been that from this second period, France would be more willing to recognize other colonial states, especially given its interest in maintaining a strong presence on the African continent. However, they still were reticent to recognize without the host state's approval. Furthermore, France's relationship with Portugal was still quite amicable in this second period, which likely contributed to their delay. Notwithstanding, by 1968, relations with Portugal begun to sour and their stance towards the colonies shifted significantly. Now in strong support of their independence, on the grounds of self-determination, the French no longer had any concerns about potential precedents.

In sum, of the three theoretical predictions in this chapter, two were met, namely France's behavior as a *strong status quo* supporter from 1954 to 1960, and their *revisionist recognizing* behavior from 1969-1974. Between 1961 and 1968, France was expected to behave as more of a *reluctant recognizer* given their still close ties with Portugal, but no longer encumbered by their own domestic secessionist struggle. They instead behaved as *sympathetic status quo* supporters, showcasing their support for the decolonization of the two territories, but still not willing to go against the Portuguese Empire's interests. Given the two extreme behaviors across the first and third period, there was still a shift along the spectrum, however, it was not as pronounced as anticipated. The expectation was based on the resolution of their domestic secessionist issue, however, there seemed to have been a time-lag in adaptation.

This same trend would be observed in Chapter 4. Following a similar pattern as in the previous chapter, this longitudinal analysis instead covered France's shift in behavior towards South Africa's claim over South West Africa, later Namibia. From 1954 to 1961, France was firmly against recognition of South West Africa on the basis that it was an internal matter within

South Africa. As previously noted, France itself was undergoing a very contentious dissolution of its colonial empire, with the independence of Algeria being the most resisted. As a result, France's behavior as a *strong status quo* supporter was both expected and confirmed, especially given France's neutral to positive relations with South Africa. However, from 1962-1968, after the resolution of the Algerian War and the increasing complexities of France's relations with South Africa, the theoretical expectation was that France would behave as a *reluctant recognizer*. The reality was instead, *sympathetic status quo* behavior. As with the Portuguese colonies, the French were supportive of South West Africa's pursuit of statehood, however their policy decisions did not reflect this support, despite no longer dealing with their own secessionist struggle. It was notable however, that albeit France's rejection of South Africa's apartheid policies and forced annexation of South West Africa, they were still Pretoria's top suppliers of weaponry. This economic interest could have contributed to their delayed behavioral evolution. Nevertheless, between 1969 and 1974, France had fully moved past their recognition reticence and embraced Namibia's right to self-determination. Furthermore, Franco-South African relations also took a negative turn with the former finally cutting arms sales to the Afrikaners. Conforming to expectations, this third period saw France behave as a *revisionist recognizer*.

Within both cases, there was an observed lag in France's recognition behavior as it shifted along the spectrum. Two possible explanations can account for this delay. The first is path dependence, with the core of this argument stating that historical legacies are hard to change (Collier and Collier 2002). States are slow to change, and behaviors become embedded as domestic and international stakeholders further institutionalize the status quo (Ikenberry 2001). A theory best adapted to institutionalism (L. L. Martin and Simmons 1998), path dependency could explain why France was slow to adapt its recognition behavior after the resolution of its domestic conflicts.

Furthermore, peer colonial states like the United Kingdom, Portugal, Belgium, Spain, and the Netherlands, all faced similar time-lags in the evolution of their recognition behavior after the dissolution of their respective overseas empires.

The second possible explanation that can account for this time-lag is the complexity and stiffness of bureaucratic politics. While the most contentious of France's territories achieved independence by 1961, there were still some smaller territories under French administration, most notably French Somaliland, present day Djibouti. While all other French colonies either engaged in violent independentist struggles and voted by referendum to become independence, plebiscite outcomes in French Somaliland, Comoros, and several other island territories all favored a continuation of French rule (Reid 2020). The lack of major conflict in these dependencies made them less salient to the public, and were thus deprioritized by the state, despite African protestation that these needed to be granted independence (Thomas 2013). When domestic issue causes major public unrest, as was the case with France's North African territories, leaders can force a bureaucratic change in the name of public interest. However, in the event of relatively minor disturbances, stakeholders, interests groups, and other state structures are less likely to move as speedily, given the rigidness of their formality and utilitarianism (Weber 1968; Schmitter 1974). While there was still a technical domestic disturbance, it was not sufficient to force a behavioral shift at the bureaucratic level, which in turn might explain the time-lag in behavioral adjustment of recognition.

With proof of mechanism well entrenched by the previous two chapters, chapter 5 showcased the rhetorical variation present following the recognition of a secessionist entity without the support of the host state. With a specific focus on how the United States, the United Kingdom, and France justified their recognition of Kosovo in 2007 and 2008, this chapter similarly

had mixed results in terms of conformation to the theory. Given their lack of strong secessionist movements and their lukewarm relations with Serbia, both the United States and France were expected to behave as *revisionist recognizers* towards Kosovo's claim to statehood. This prediction was fully confirmed in the French case, as they fully embraced Kosovo's right to self-determination with an emphasis on rule-based rhetoric. They displayed little concern for precedents, focused their decision on resolving the conflicts in the Balkans to grow the European Union. While the United States also behaved as expected, they also utilized some situational justifiers, most notably highlighting the untransferable uniqueness of the Kosovar case. Similarly, they did display some concern for precedent setting, however it was less entrenched in their relations with Serbia directly, but rather in their overall relations with Russia, the main supporter of the Serbs.

On the other hand, the United Kingdom did not conform to theoretical expectations. Given the saliency of their two most significant secessionist movements, Scotland and Northern Ireland, the prediction was that recognizing Kosovo without the support of its host state would be against their interests. However, given their affinity for the Kosovar population, their rhetoric would reflect that support through situational rhetoric meant to appease the separatists. By this token, the expectation was that the British would behave as *sympathetic status quo* states towards Kosovo. Contrary to expectations, they did recognize Kosovo's sovereignty, which forced their use of situational rhetoric, albeit with a different purpose. Of the three recognizing states, the British had the slightly closer relations with the Serbs, which necessitated special consideration in their justifications.

The mixed results in both the Kosovo case and both French cases does force an evaluation of the theory, specifically with regards to the prediction about their decision making. In each

chapter, the specific missed predictions centered around the policy decision, which the theory posits is based on the existence of a strong secessionist struggle. In the French cases, the period after resolving their struggle, their behavior did not update as directly as anticipated. Their geopolitical relations seemed to have had a greater impact on their recognizing behavior, with the weakening of their relations with both Portugal and South Africa finally allowing them to embrace the separatist claims of their colonies. On the other hand, in the Kosovar case, the United Kingdom, with very significant, albeit non-violent, secessionist conflicts, they still recognized Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence. This clear inconformity to the theory along the decision stage further begs the need to reconsider the role that a domestic secessionist movement plays in recognition behavior.

Scholarly Contributions

Notwithstanding the partially mixed results in the policy choices, this dissertation still offers an important contribution to the recognition scholarship and the study of International Relations broadly. With regards to recognition, the holistic approach taken by this project helped complexify state behavior in two ways. First, through the acknowledgment that recognition behavior goes beyond just the policy choice to include the form and framing of these decisions. Given the importance states grant to the maintenance of the international status quo, every recognition decision must be accompanied by an evaluation of the most optimal delivery. The ideal outcome is thus one that creates the least waves and does not interfere with their foreign interests.

By embracing this framework and giving primacy of study to the rhetoric of recognition, this project contributed a new standard of study where scholars are forced to consider how states reconcile the consequences of their policies outside of a vacuum. Every recognition decision has

domestic and international implications, which states know and must prepare for. These preparations are an integral part of the foreign policy-making process and yet scholars limit their studies and dismiss the importance of language.

The second contribution to the study of state recognition behavior is the innovation and insights offered on the role of precedent as a driver of conduct. The International Relations scholarship has given some consideration to the role that consequences of action have on states through the study of hypocrisy, reputation, and contagion. However, these fail to account for how future actions will be limited based on present decisions, and how the choices taken today may erode the norms they benefit from for future use. In sum, precedent offers insight into how states attempt future-proof their foreign policy.

Beyond these contributions of precedent and rhetoric to the study of recognition and IR broadly, this dissertation adds to the works that have sought to unpack the black box of sovereignty. The mere study of recognition and its impacts on statehood and order challenge the scholarly standard in International Relations. By deconstructing sovereignty, we further our understanding of the deviations from the norm of the self-sustaining nation-state that has the monopoly over the use of force within a circumscribed territory. As the internationalization and expansion of the system continues, this academic standard will further erode, rendering many IR theories obsolete. This project can hopefully encourage future scholars to challenge existing theories with new evidence that accurately reflects the changes to the system.

Recommendations for Future Work

While this project has offered many significant contributions to the scholarship, it has also opened possible avenues for future work. Below I consider just four possible scholarly expansions. The

first ideal extension would be a review of Russia and China's recognition behavior. As the other two permanent members of the UN Security Council, they possess the same veto powers as the other three permanent members. However, while France, the US, the UK are all economic and security allies, the Russians and Chinese have often been at odds with the West. Furthermore, their political and ideological differences could give the theory here proposed greater validity if their decisions and rhetoric aligned with their domestic and international conditions. The greatest difficulty with this extension, however, is not only overcoming the language barrier, but accessing the internal diplomatic and governmental notes and memos that discuss the motives behind the behavior. While access to their public statements might not pose the same difficulty, these state documents are not as readily available as in the other three countries. Nonetheless, this would be a valuable endeavor.

The second extension that would likely benefit this theory and project would be to conduct interviews with key stakeholders and decision-makers. As the driving actors behind recognition behavior, understanding the perspective and process from their diplomatic point of view could add further credence to the hypothesized intuition in this dissertation. The most important insights would be determining whether there is in fact a concern for setting a negative precedent or not with their foreign policy behavior. Of particular value would be learning from the speech and briefing writers, as well as the spokespersons who engage the press and the public with specific talking points in hand. If they validated the importance of rhetorical care when it came to major policy choices, such as recognition of statehood, it would hopefully encourage future research in discourse analysis of foreign policy framing.

A third avenue for increasing research in this field would include creating a database of recognition statements to develop a more fine-grained understanding of the typology developed

here. Specifically, an in-depth qualitative upload of full statements, in their original language or translated, which can either be hand coded or statistically analyzed. The main goal, however, should be to grasp both the overall sentiment of the statement, as well as the specific keywords used most often. Each of these approaches could allow for a large-scale study of recognition statements with global trends, as well as country-by-country approaches to precedent-setting concerns. Furthermore, an undertaking of this scale would also allow scholars to see how major power influence trickles down to middle and low power countries in their recognition behavior. If it were found that there is an alignment even between the statements, this could elucidate how states take cues from their benefactors.

The final proposed research inquiry would be to test this theory on recognition behavior in a pre-United Nations context. Without the community and status validation given by admission into this global forum, the idea of a peer state meant something different prior to the UN's inception. While the premise of recognition has existed for a long time, as noted in previous chapters, a clearer picture or study of this 1945 phenomenon would also allow us to see if the introduction of the UN altered behavior or not. A project of this nature would be valuable regardless of whether it was conducted as a qualitative case study or a larger-N database.

While these four suggested extensions would be significant contributions, there are also countless other avenues that scholars could take to further the study of recognition of statehood. The research paths expanded expand even more if one were to look at other types of recognitions, such as recognition of government, territorial boundary, or seat of government. All of which to say, this pioneering effort should be accompanied by redoubled efforts down the line, by future scholars of sovereignty and recognition.

Reflections on Recognition

These past six chapters have introduced not only innovated concepts and theories, but in-depth qualitative case studies of iconic instances of recognition of statehood. This dissertation similarly collected disparate fields of study to cohesively survey all possible conceptions of recognition and put them in conversation. This undertaking allowed us to reach a holistic approach that can inform not just recognition decision-making, but the entire behavioral process, thus far taken for granted by the International Relations discipline. Through the theory here developed, this project sought to take the first steps towards answering the all-encompassing question of *why states recognize the way they do*. While this manuscript offers one possible answer, with mostly positive results, there are multiple approaches future scholars can take.

When the United States President, Jimmy Carter, formally recognized the People's Republic of China as the only legal China, the administration used a rule-based rhetorical strategy, signaling not only that they were not concerned with setting a precedent, but also highlighting the nature of their relations at the time. This 1979 demotion of Taiwan to an autonomous territory that is *a part of* China was the ultimate concession at the time, with the hope that "Neither should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region or in any other region of the world and each is opposed to efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony." (Office of the Historian 1978) As the present is showing, relations between the two nations are no longer the same. With China's growing forced presence in the South China Sea and increased security, economic, and diplomatic competition between the two major powers, perhaps the US in 1979 could have had a bit more of concern for setting a dangerous precedent.

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Appendix 1

Address by President Carter to the Nation

Washington, December 15, 1978

Diplomatic Relations Between the United States and the People's Republic of China

Good evening,

I would like to read a joint communique which is being simultaneously issued in Peking at this very moment by the leaders of the People's Republic of China:

[At this point, the President read the text of the joint communique, which reads as follows:]

JOINT COMMUNIQUE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

JANUARY 1, 1979

The United States of America and the People's Republic of China have agreed to recognize each other and to establish diplomatic relations as of January 1, 1979.

The United States of America recognizes the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China. Within this context, the people of the United States will maintain cultural, commercial, and other unofficial relations with the people of Taiwan.

The United States of America and the People's Republic of China reaffirm the principles agreed on by the two sides in the Shanghai Communique² and emphasize once again that:

—Both wish to reduce the danger of international military conflict.

—Neither should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region or in any other region of the world and each is opposed to efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony.

—Neither is prepared to negotiate on behalf of any third party or to enter into agreements or understandings with the other directed at other states.

—The Government of the United States of America acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China.

—Both believe that normalization of Sino-American relations is not only in the interest of the Chinese and American peoples but also contributes to the cause of peace in Asia and the world.

The United States of America and the People's Republic of China will exchange Ambassadors and establish Embassies on March 1, 1979.

Yesterday, our country and the People's Republic of China reached this final historic agreement. On January 1, 1979, a little more than 2 weeks from now, our two Governments will implement full normalization of diplomatic relations.

As a nation of gifted people who comprise about one-fourth of the total population of the Earth, China plays, already, an important role in world affairs, a role that can only grow more important in the years ahead.

We do not undertake this important step for transient tactical or expedient reasons. In recognizing the People's Republic of China, that it is the single Government of China, we are recognizing simple reality. But far more is involved in this decision than just the recognition of a fact.

Before the estrangement of recent decades, the American and the Chinese people had a long history of friendship. We've already begun to rebuild some of those previous ties. Now our rapidly expanding relationship requires the kind of structure that only full diplomatic relations will make possible.

The change that I'm announcing tonight will be of great long-term benefit to the peoples of both our country and China—and, I believe, to all the peoples of the world. Normalization—and the expanded commercial and cultural relations that it will bring—will contribute to the well-being of our own Nation, to our own national interest, and it will also enhance the stability of Asia. These more positive relations with China can beneficially affect the world in which we live and the world in which our children will live.

We have already begun to inform our allies and other nations and the Members of the Congress of the details of our intended action. But I wish also tonight to convey a special message to the people of Taiwan—I have already communicated with the leaders in Taiwan—with whom the American people have had and will have extensive, close, and friendly relations. This is important between our two peoples.

As the United States asserted in the Shanghai Communique of 1972, issued on President Nixon's historic visit, we will continue to have an interest in the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue. I have paid special attention to ensuring that normalization of relations between our country and the People's Republic will not jeopardize the well-being of the people of Taiwan. The people of our country will maintain our current commercial, cultural, trade, and other relations with Taiwan through nongovernmental means. Many other countries in the world are already successfully doing this.

These decisions and these actions open a new and important chapter in our country's history and also in world affairs.

To strengthen and to expedite the benefits of this new relationship between China and the United States, I am pleased to announce that Vice Premier Teng has accepted my invitation and will visit Washington at the end of January.³ His visit will give our Governments the opportunity to consult with each other on global issues and to begin working together to enhance the cause of world peace.

These events are the final result of long and serious negotiations begun by President Nixon in 1972, and continued under the leadership of President Ford. The results bear witness to the steady, determined, bipartisan effort of our own country to build a world in which peace will be the goal and the responsibility of all nations.

The normalization of relations between the United States and China has no other purpose than this: the advancement of peace. It is in this spirit, at this season of peace, that I take special pride in sharing this good news with you tonight.

Thank you very much.

Appendix 2

Table 0-1: Codebook

Code	Title	Description
Situational Justification		Justification of decision based on context specific qualifiers
Sit_Just_Balkans	Balkans	Recognition will bring stability to the Balkans/to the region
Sit_Just_allies	Allies	Recognized either because allies did to, or in concert with allies
Sit_Just_delay	Delay	Argues that delaying recognition would only make the situation more unstable
Sit_Just_inevitable	Inevitable	Argues that the independence of Kosovo is inevitable and they will never be part of Serbia again
Sit_Just_NOprecedent	No Precedent	Defends that recognition of Kosovo does not set a precedent
Sit_Just_Other	Other recognizer	Recognized because another country recognized first
Sit_Just_Pressure	Pressure	Recognized because of general external pressures to do so
Sit_Just_Status	Status determination	Argues the status of Kosovo as a UN administered territory is unsustainable/must be resolved
Sit_Just_unique	Unique case	Argues the case is unique and thus has different criteria that permit recognition
Rule-based justification		Justification of decision based on norms and rules
RB_Just_Ahtisaari	Ahtisaari Plan	Recognized based on support for the UN-Commissioned Ahtisaari Plan
RB_Just_democracy	Democracy	Recognition will be in the service of democracy or bring democratic institutions to the region
RB_Just_Europe	Europe	Recognition will pave the way for both or either Kosovo or Serbia to join the EU
RB_Just_Host	Host State	Recognition will occur because of Serbia/in spite of Serbia
RB_Just_HR	Human Rights	Recognition will help minorities or will be a reparation for those affected by the Human Rights abuses from the war
RB_Just_institutions	Institutions	Recognition is done in concert with/or in the auspices of International Institutions.
RB_Just_legal	Legal	Recognition has a legal basis
RB_Just_SD	Self Determination	Recognition is in service of the self determination of a population

Table 0-2: Code distribution for France

Codes	Number of coding references	Aggregate number of coding references	Number of items coded	Aggregate number of items coded
Nodes\\Rule-based justification	0	59	0	23
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_Ahtisaari	12	12	11	11
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_democracy	3	3	3	3
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_Europe	17	17	11	11
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_Host	6	6	6	6
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_HR	7	7	7	7
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_institutions	4	4	4	4
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_legal	3	3	2	2
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_SD	4	4	3	3
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_YesPrecedent	3	3	3	3
Nodes\\Situational Justification	0	25	0	16
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_allies	4	4	4	4
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_Balkans	9	9	8	8
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_delay	4	4	4	4
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_inevitable	6	6	6	6
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_NOprecedent	0	0	0	0
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_Pressure	0	0	0	0
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_unique	2	2	2	2

Table 0-3: Code distribution for the United States

Codes	Number of coding references	Aggregate number of coding references	Number of items coded	Aggregate number of items coded
Nodes\\Rule-Based Justification	0	36	0	28
Nodes\\Rule-Based Justification\\RB_Just_Ahtisaari	20	20	17	17
Nodes\\Rule-Based Justification\\RB_Just_democracy	1	1	1	1
Nodes\\Rule-Based Justification\\RB_Just_Europe	5	5	4	4
Nodes\\Rule-Based Justification\\RB_Just_Host	2	2	2	2
Nodes\\Rule-Based Justification\\RB_Just_HR	2	2	2	2
Nodes\\Rule-Based Justification\\RB_Just_institutions	5	5	5	5
Nodes\\Rule-Based Justification\\RB_Just_SD	1	1	1	1
Nodes\\Situational Justification	0	28	0	18
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Ex_just_allies	2	2	2	2
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Ex_Just_Balkans	8	8	8	8
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Ex_just_inevitable	8	8	8	8
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Ex_just_NOprecedent	5	5	5	5
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Ex_just_Other	0	0	0	0
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Ex_just_Pressure	0	0	0	0
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Ex_Just_Status	1	1	1	1
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Ex_just_unique	4	4	3	3

Table 0-4: Code distribution for the United Kingdom

Codes	Number of coding references	Aggregate number of coding references	Number of items coded	Aggregate number of items coded
Nodes\\Rule-based justification	0	54	0	11
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_Ahtisaari	20	20	7	7
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_democracy	4	4	3	3
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_Europe	10	10	7	7
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_Host	6	6	4	4
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_HR	5	5	4	4
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_institutions	5	5	2	2
Nodes\\Rule-based justification\\RB_Just_SD	4	4	1	1
Nodes\\Situational Justification	0	108	0	14
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_allies	13	13	6	6
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_Balkans	31	31	12	12
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_delay	17	17	8	8
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_inevitable	15	15	9	9
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_lobby	3	3	2	2
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_NOprecedent	3	3	3	3
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_Other	3	3	2	2
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_Pressure	3	3	1	1
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_Status	14	14	4	4
Nodes\\Situational Justification\\Sit_Just_unique	6	6	4	4