Marya Mannes

Borders are scratched across the hearts of men,
By strangers with a calm, judicial pen,
And when the borders bleed we watch with dread
The lines of ink along the map turn read

Rhymes for Our Times (1959)
1. Wording Matters: Parsing Partition

States engage in “right-sizing” and “right-peopling”.
Modes of right-sizing: (i) up-sizing (take-overs); (ii) stabilization of boundaries; (iii) down-sizing; (iv) alliances and mergers.
Partitions occur through (I) - (iii), and through “right-peopling”.

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Definition

- A political partition is a fresh border cut through at least one community’s national homeland, creating at least two separate political units under different sovereigns or authorities. Its purpose is to regulate or resolve a national, ethnic or communal conflict.
  - This definition distinguishes partition from secession, and from decolonization.
  - It leaves open agency, methods and results.
Metaphors

- Opponents’ story of fresh cut:
  - tear, rip, dismemberment, vivisection

  vs.

- Proponents’ story:
  - ‘surgical cut’; “triage”; promise of separating the Siamese twins

- Partition as “tearing”; secession as “unfastening”
Partition is not

an agreed “border adjustment”, e.g. the negotiation of maritime boundaries - here people are not at stake;

a secession;

a decolonization
## Partition, Secession, Decolonisation

All involve re-structuring sovereign territorial borders and the “down-sizing” of at least one polity; and in NECR analysis they normally involve attempts to eliminate n & e conflict.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partition is usually carried out from outside and above</th>
<th>Decolonisation is carried out from within and above</th>
<th>Secession is executed from within and below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A national homeland is partitioned</td>
<td>A colony is decolonised by a retiring empire</td>
<td>A region, province or member-state secedes (from a state, a union state, a federation or a confederation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partition is imposed on at least some (though there may be agreements and commissions)</td>
<td>Decolonisation accompanies the emancipation of a previous inferior. A nation liberates itself from an empire</td>
<td>Secession is the departure of an equal. A region, province, or member-state breaks from a state, a union or federation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why and how the definition matters

- Avoids conflation of partition and secession, unlike others.
  - Sambanis: World Politics article
  - Horowitz: Ambiguous
  - Heraclides: Blur, but partition involves mutual consent, secession is abrupt unilateral
  - Kaufmann: Partitions jointly decided or imposed; but secessions are unilateral

- Numbers of (implemented) partitions of multi-national polities is much smaller than the number of secessions.
  - Large N analysis inappropriate
  - Policy implications if generalizations hold across all of small N
  - Falsifies notion of an upward trend

- Secessions and partitions can occur together, are different phenomena.

- These definitions to not have a normative bias in favor of secessionists; liberationists have to establish territories.

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2. Examples Of Getting Fresh with Others’ Homelands

- Executed fresh cuts:
  - Partition of Ireland and Ulster (1920)
  - Partition of Hungary (1920)
  - Partition of Kurdistan (1920-23)
  - Partition Plans for Palestine (1937; 1948)
  - Partition of Bengal (1947)
  - Partition of Cyprus (1974)
The Partition of Ireland and Ulster
A “forgotten” case

Ottoman “Kurdistan”, intended to be a state, partitioned between Turkey, Syria & Iraq

( Persia controlled part of historic Kurdistan)
Partition of Hungary

1920
The Partition of Palestine

Proposals (1937 & 1947)
The Partition of India

(especially of Punjab, Bengal)
The Partition of Cyprus

1974
Proposed Partitions

Iraq: The “Three State Solution”

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Figure 4.1. A "three regions" model. Khaled Salih. This is just one possible three regions model in which an expanded Kurdistan would be recognized, along with Sunnistan and Shi'astan, names that are meant to be illustrative (they have no present legal or formal significance). It bears emphasis that any borders between these putative regions would be disputed.
Proposed Partitions (2)

Quebec:
Anglophone models for partitioning Quebec
Map-Based Partition

RUPERT’S LAND
Land added to Quebec in 1898 and 1912

A CANADIAN CORRIDOR
East-west connecting corridor containing the St. Lawrence Seaway, Trans-Canada Highway, and Canadian National Railway

FEDERALIST QUEBEC
Traditionally federalist regions

THE FINAL RESULT
Source: The Preparatory Committee for the Partition of Quebec

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Vote-Based Partition (by Riding)

Quebec

 Montreal Region

Quebec City Region

- Partition based upon the 1995 referendum results
- Further partition based on the CROP prediction that "yes" votes would drop by 3% if voters were told some partitioning was inevitable

Map Source: Commission de la représentation électorale du Québec, 1992
Results Source: Directeur général des élections du Québec, 1995
Proposed Partitions (3 & 4)

(a) Sri Lanka: Where is Tamil Elam?
(b) Rwanda and Burundi: could they be restructured?
3. Types of Partition

1. National vs. Pluri-national
2. External vs. Internal
   - Internal: for control, integration OR autonomy
3. Agents: Outsiders, Insiders & Both
4. Status of entity:
   - empire, state, colony & status of its peoples

- Focus on pluri-national & external
4. Justifications

• Rhetoric For ("Triage", "Surgery")
  – 1. HISTORICISM: it’s happening; steer the flow
  – 2. TRIAGE: A regrettable option of last resort, to prevent even worse outcomes; addresses ‘security dilemmas’
  – 3. CBA: balance a better prospect of conflict-reduction – a desirable preventative strategy with intermixed peoples;
  – 4. BETTER TOMORROW: Post-partition there will be a reduction in violence & conflict recurrence;
  – 5. THE 5th ARGUMENT (REALIST RIGOR): Any difficulties will flow from imperfect design or implementation not the idea.
5. Methodologies

• **Proceduralists** --- involve the affected parties, use rules, deploy commissions, try to obtain consent.
  – Academic examples: -
  – Lijphart: negotiated not imposed; fair division; reduces heterogeneity
    • PROBLEMS
  – Tullbergs: equal number wrongly placed; natural borders; transfer rules.
    • PROBLEMS

• **Paternalists** --- the locals are incapable of effective resolution; “two peoples fanatically at odds, with their different diets and incompatible gods”, robust intervention is required; rough justice better than none
6. Criticisms: The surgeons are (mad) butchers

1. NATIONALISTS: Rupturing of National Unity in the interests of privileged minorities;

2. PLURI-NATIONALISTS: Bi-nationalism & multi-nationalism are difficult but not impossible

3. IMPOSSIBILITIES: of just partitions, Solomon’s incredible agenda
Solomon’s incredible agenda contd.

- (a) On the threat of partition
- (b) Territory alone can be resolved judicially, but not peoples
- (c) Impartial paternalists?
- (d) Choice of units; determining the units’ choices; non-preferential determinants;
- (e) Weighting of preferences vs. non-preferences
- (f) Ratification

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Example: Boundary Commission 1924

- Shift from plebiscites to commission
- Chair’s pivotality
- Feetham’s terms of reference, and his interpretation of them
CRITICISMS contd.

4. PARTITIONS CAUSE DISORDER & VIOLENCE, and contribute to post-partition wars and insecurities, and may have domino-effects, and lead to demands for re-partitions;
   – Contra Kaufmann:
     • cause more violence than before (especially during)
     • counter-factual 5th = highly problematic

5. PARTITION IS NEVER ENOUGH: to accomplish homogenization --- that requires expulsions, ‘transfers’).

6. PARTITION DAMAGES SUCCESSOR STATES.

7. PARTITIONS ARE NOT CLEAN OR AESTHETIC CUTS: worsen “compactness” of at least one successor unit [a law].
7. Explanations

- **Hypotheses:**
  - They happen under the British Empire;
  - Under conditions of initial and rapid democratic mobilization;
  - They are promoted by ruthless and ambitious political entrepreneurs;
  - They are driven from below by irreconcilable collective identity differences --- magnified by prospects of democratization and decolonization;
  - They are decisions of those who believe in (or tacitly support) irreconcilable differences c. communities;

- **Decline: end of empires?**

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8. Assessment

Not good idea: the “nays” have it.

Two key questions.

– Are partitions reversible?
  • National vs. Multi-National
  • Cyprus & Ireland vs. South Asia and Israel/Palestine
    – Demography and Geo-politics

– Should they be reversible?
Who dislikes this analysis of “partitions”, and has irreconcilable differences with it?

– Supporters of (future) partitions;
– Supporters of (past) partitions.