

**ETHNIC IDENTITY, CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS:
A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS**

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requirements for the award of the degree of*

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "ETHNIC IDENTITY, CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS", submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY of this University is my own work. The dissertation has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University.

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CERTIFICATE

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Introduction

The most serious challenge to the forging of a post-Cold War international order has come from the rise of ethno-nationalism in many states. Ethnic conflict is hardly a new phenomenon in international politics, but the spread of ethnic mobilization in recent years reflects, on the one hand, an aspiration on the part of ethnic groups to assert their right of self-determination and, on the other hand, a growing desire on the part of states to define themselves in more exclusionary terms. More than thirty of the major ongoing conflicts are ethno-political, and since most countries in the world are ethnically heterogeneous, the potential for conflict along ethnic lines is soaring.

The devastating power of ethnic conflict was not noticed until the 1990s when wars in post-Soviet colonial space and sub-Saharan Africa ripped apart several states and caused bloodletting in appalling proportions. Since the Nazi holocaust, this was first time that mass slaughter had been employed to wipe out entire communities. Even if ethnic conflict was a household affliction of certain states, war crimes like genocide and ethnic cleansing were such that shamed the conscience of whole humanity.

Ever since the world has woken up to the horrors of ethnic violence, some progress has been made to check identity conflicts or, at any rate, lessen their intensity. Much, however, remains to be done in both policy and practice. Nationalism is unravelling in the sense that the nationalist legitimacy of many existing states is under challenge from the nationalist claims of ethnic and regional minorities, thus generating new contentions. Nationalism needs unravelling analytically therefore, so that by isolating and examining its conceptual ingredients we can more clearly understand the resultant changes—the ethnic conflicts, the emergence of new nation-states, the uncertainties of national identity and the restructuring of multicultural nations.

The current shape of most identity conflicts in the world is such that they seem insurmountable by the existing conflict resolution mechanisms. This suggests that while there

is need to come up with innovative ideas for conflict management, and to look beneath the complexity of conflicts to the very first signs of fracture in societies. The aim of this research is contribute to the latter purpose. By systematically analysing group identities, ethnic conflict and collective violence, this thesis aims to account for why, how and when ethnic groups are driven from onducting politics to committing violence.

The Concept of Identity

The concept of ‘identity’ gained prominence in the 1960s. However it was not until the late 1980s and through the 1990s that identity acquired an almost hegemonic position in both academic and popular discourse. While mass media and scholarly journals and books made very sporadic references to identity or ethnic identity in the 1940s and 1950s, today it is impossible to skim through articles, news bulletins or books on cultural or political difference without noticing tens and often hundreds of references to identity.

Since its incorporation into the discourse of social science, the concept of ‘identity’ has maintained a ‘dualistic mathematico-logical meaning’ (Malesevic 2006: 15). In mathematics identity refers to several things. In algebra, identity is a unit in a set of numbers that when combined with another number in an arithmetical operation does not bring any change to that number (i.e. $a + 0 = a$). Identity also has more specific meanings such as ‘an equality that remains true regardless of the values of any variables that appear within it’ or ‘a function f from a set S to itself’ (i.e. $f(x) = x$ for all x in S) (Cori and Lascar 2000: 31-34). Goddard (1998) has summarised all these mathematico-logical relations of identity as something that essentially refers to two distinct forms of difference at the same time: absolute or zero difference, and relative or non-zero difference. Absolute definition of identity relates to ‘the unconditional nature of a thing that is not derived from external relation – the product of internal self-similarity,’ while relative definition of identity implies ‘the conditional nature of a thing, n , derived from the difference between n and *not* (n) – the product of external other-difference’ (Goddard 1998). A mathematical example would look something like this: because 2 is the same as 2 the difference between 2 and 2 is 0. This implies that 2 is simultaneously defined by its difference from *non* 2 and its similarity to itself ($2=2$; $2\neq 3$). According to Goddard (1998) the meaning from zero difference to non-zero difference defines the whole structure of identity. A corresponding logical statement would be ‘he must

be Peter since he is the same as Peter' for zero difference, and 'Peter is best since he earned more than the others' for non-zero difference.

Grounded in this mathematico-logical meaning, identity in the social sciences simultaneously refers to being identical or similar to a group and being different from another group (Malesevic 2006: 16). For example a working-class identity implies on the one hand that individuals who share this form of identity have a more or less identical class position (e.g. being manual labourers, drawing similar wages, living in the similar housing estates, sharing the same cultural values etc.) and, on the other hand that this group differs from the other classes (e.g. middle or upper classes) and their respective identities.

However, this dualistic application of identity in social science has been paradoxical from the very beginning. This is because mathematics and logics can operate with a constant (e.g. absolute zero) that cannot be reduced further to anything else, but social sciences deal with actors, whose behaviours are variable and who produce unpredicted outcomes through their interaction (Boudon 1982). Despite this obstacle, there was an over abundance of identity discourses in the social sciences in the 1950s and the 1960s. Since then the concept of identity has acquired almost undoubted significance (Malesevic 2006: 16).

The Idea of Ethnic Identity

Among the multitude of definitions of identity circulating in social sciences currently, for one thing, 'identity' has become overwhelmingly associated with cultural difference, or generically put, group-centric difference. Individuals today are socialized in a way that they consider their ethnic and national identity as a given, unproblematic feature of existence. As Gellner (1983: 6) put it, today it is commonly assumed that 'a man must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears.' The common sense notions of the terms ethnic and national identity is that 'ethnicity + identity = ethnic identity' and 'nation + identity = national identity' (Malesevic 2006: 24). This straightforward understanding, however, is greatly flawed. Within the academic debates, these concepts have acquired multiple sets of meanings which provide a framework for understanding not only identity in international relations, but also the arduous subject of ethnic conflict. Among the diverse discourses associated with group-centric cultural difference two concepts stand out in terms of their

influence on academia as well as public life – ethnic and national identity (Malesevic 2006: 21-24). The most common way of studying ethnic identity or ethnicity is by way of presenting it as a debate between the advocates of two schools – the primordialists and constructivists (versions of which are sometimes also called instrumentalism or circumstantialism). Primordialists, as their name suggests, believe that ethnic identities are a timeless phenomena; they have existed forever and will be enduring as long as the human race lasts. Members of an ‘ethnic category’ or *ethnie* may not be conscious of their ethnic traits and yet may still remain part of the group (Smith 1991: 20-21). Smith, one of the self-avowed primordialists describes six attributes that are necessary for a people to constitute an *ethnie*: a collective name, shared myth of descent, shared historical memories, one or more elements of common culture, an association with a specific territory, and a sense of ethnic solidarity i.e. recognition of each others as members of the same ethnic group (Smith 1986: 22-31). ‘Sense of solidarity’ according to Smith means a profound sense of group loyalty expressed in altruistic attitudes and actions. This includes feeling of belonging to a common ethnic group, which is conceptualised as active at all times, and as superior to other forms of collective identification, in times of crises. In other words, ethnic solidarity is indispensable to group membership and must overrides all other types of individual and collective attachments such as those based on class, religion, politics or regional affiliations (Malesevic 2006: 113).

Many of the theories in the primordial tradition are underpinned by two psychological contentions. First, *ethnies* involve a belief in common decent, some notion of distinctiveness, and a membership transcending face-to-face interactions (Williams 1994: 47). Emphasis upon descent is central to ethnicity and it is this ascriptive quality, above all, that renders ethnic cleavages so often intractably conflictual (Berghe 1981; Horowitz 1985: 52-70). Second, inter-ethnic relations involves ‘non-material struggles for ethnic symbols, which are said to evoke highly emotional responses because they either indicate the degree to which their group’s identity is under threat or connote groups’ relative status and hence become crucial sources of personal dignity and self-esteem’ (Hale 2008: 17; Horowitz 1985, Kaufman 2001, Petersen 2002, Smith 2000). This implies that the very motives behind the formation of ethnic groups are competitive and zero-sum.

Constructivists, on the other hand, say that ethnic identity is created out of ‘language, religion, culture, appearance or regionality,’ and because these features are always

undergoing change, the boundaries of ethnicity are also under continuous negotiation, revision and revitalization (Nagel 1994: 154). Barth's (1969: 15) view remains one of the most influential in this line of thought. He tells that the 'cultural stuff' of an ethnic group is highly variable: it very often shows as much overlap with neighbouring groups as it shows diversity within its own boundaries. Instead of the 'cultural stuff' what is more substantial in ethnic identity is the social process of maintaining boundaries that the people themselves recognize as ethnic. Ethnicity is therefore 'situational, contextual, and contestable' in character (Baumann 1999: 60).

In the literature on ethnicity, constructivism has essentially become an umbrella term covering all theories that do not consider ethnic identities as perennial. Even among those who have explicitly labelled themselves as primordialists, many do not completely dismiss the constructivist viewpoint. Van Evera (2001: 20-21), another self-avowed primordialist puts it: 'The constructivist claim that ethnic identities are socially constructed is clearly correct. After all, our social identities are not stamped on our genes, so they must be socially constructed.' Chandra (2001: 7-11) defines constructivism more narrowly as the dual belief that people have 'multiple, not single, ethnic identities' and that these identities can get altered. Leading primordialist theorists do write about identity evolution and cultural change and at the same time acknowledge the existence of multiple dimensions in identity that are differentially relevant or important in different situations. For example, Smith (1999: 230) acknowledges occasionally that some forms of identity are contingent, situational and instrumental. The main emphasis of primordialists is on the tendencies to group stability and constraints on situational manipulation that are prevalent in many contexts after identities are constructed. Interestingly enough, such emphasis is also laid by many theorists who are universally associated with constructivism, like Anderson and Gellner (Hale 2008: 15). Moderate constructivists recognize a certain non-negotiable element in ethnic identity wherefrom the rest of the identity is created and recreated. Roosen's in a way tries to bridge the primordialist-constructivist divide when he writes: 'Ethnic groups and their cultures are not merely a completely arbitrary construct: there is always a minimum of incontestable and non-interpretible facts necessary to win something from the opponent. ...The reality is very elastic but not totally arbitrary (Roosens 1989: 156).'

The constructivist school of ethnicity and nationalism does not ground itself on psychological

research except for the works of Brubaker and his various co-authors. They draw heavily on cognitive psychology, arguing that ethnic and national identity, and the actions that flow from them, might best be conceptualized as ‘schemas’ or other mental mechanisms that help in identifying one’s place in the world, shaping one’s views on the world, and defining one’s course of action. The degree to which a supposed group actually displays the characteristic of being a group (i.e. in-group solidarity) depends on the historical processes, institutional environments, and elite strategies that help shape ethnic schemas and prompt their activation, among other things (Brubaker 2002; Brubaker *et al.* 2004). Brubaker’s cognitive approach makes tremendous headway through its psychological underpinning, but begs two major questions. First, by reducing the notion of ethnicity to a cognitive core, ethnicity stands to lose almost all the value component that tends to drive ethnic politics (Hale 2008). If ethnicity is merely a type of cognition, such as a schema, then why are particular values attached to it? Why are schemas ethnic at all? In fact, Brubaker and his collaborators suggest that there might actually be no values inherent to ethnic cognition. Ethnicity may merely be a way of seeing the world and provides an important vocabulary for describing the cognitive mechanisms that produce this way of seeing the world (Brubaker 1996; Brubaker *et al.* 2006).

The primordialist and constructivist views of ethnicity are firmly grounded in research on human psychology (Hale 2008: 17). These psychological underpinnings have become the focus of criticism by scholars of each other’s work. To begin with the primordialists, this school assumes that ethnic status is given at birth and thus cannot be changed. Therefore, in societies that are ethnically heterogeneous, as soon as the process of uneven development fosters rivalry between regions, a struggle for group prestige automatically ensues (Horowitz 1985). This ascriptive character of ethnicity fails to explain why, of all distinctions that exist or may arise between two groups, it is only the ethnic ones that gain political significance (Banton 1994). Moreover, the view that cultural difference and ethnic conflict are somehow necessarily related (Geertz 1973) is highly ‘unsociological’ (Malesevic 2006: 159-160). As humans we indeed have an appetite for discords, competition and conflict, but this does not mean that ethnicity – defined in terms of cultural difference – contains something ‘inevitable that necessitates inter-group clashes.’ People are not prompted to kill simply because culture separates them; they kill only when cultural differences come to be equated with political and/or economic inequalities (Cohen 1969: 199). Lastly, the primordial approach treats ethnic categories static units. Many scholars reject this view. They argue that attribution to an ethnic

category does not always prohibit passing to another group, and solidification of ethnic boundaries is often not the precondition but the result of their politicization (Elwert 1989: 13-14; Wimmer 1995c: Chapter 3, 4; Baumann 1996: 18).

The long-drawn debate between the advocates of primordial and instrumental conceptions of ethnicity and nationalism, in spite of its richness, leave the most critical question unaddressed: *'Why and when do individuals think and act in terms of macro level categories, particularly in terms of ethnic groups and nations?'* (Hale 2008: 14-16) or *'What motivations underlie individual identification with groups?'* (Kreidie and Monroe 2002: 10). It is not important to establish consensus on 'how' ethnies and nations come into existence (Williams 1994: 57). What is more important is to explain why ethnicity and nationalism have such widespread appeal among masses. Terhune (1964: 258) writes that 'the most interesting and crucial issue in understanding nationalism is the question of how the national cause achieves personal relevance for the individual – that is, what binds the self to the nation? The answer to this question should reveal why nationalism sometimes reaches heights of fervour and passion.' The problem with psychology based approaches is that in order to explain why ethnic identities can be mobilized so easily for political ends, they start with an assumption of a need for ego stabilization through group identification, which is especially felt in times of rapid social change (Rothschild 1981; Scheff 1994; Brown 1994). The problem of these approaches is that although they do work out the motives or unconscious dynamics behind the devaluation of others but they cannot explain how one group becomes classified as foreign and another group as one's own. The boundaries between 'we' and 'they' can be drawn around anything from family, kinship, acquaintance to class, region, ethnic group, nation or even 'race'.

Williams (1994: 57-58) urges that the repetitive arguments between the primordialists, instrumentalists and constructivists 'can and should be superseded': ethnic identities are both primordial and circumstantial, in different ways under different conditions. Some ethnic groups have persisted for many centuries (Smith 1992), some have emerged recently, some have shifting boundaries, and others have rigid identification. In the long-run, ethnic identification undergoes considerable changes as well as gets subjected to significant boundary adjustments but in the short-run, ethnic boundaries are often strongly associated with social, economic and political status, and inequalities in this status due to categorical

discrimination and public policies makes ethnic divisions the focus of strong passions and collective conflicts (Williams 1994: 57-58; Hirschman 1986). Brubaker (2004: 167), provides perhaps the most useful and adaptable definition of ethnicity when he urges social researchers to not think about ethnies and nations as tangible, bounded and substantial groups but rather as ‘practical categories, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organisational routines, institutional forms, political projects and contingent events.’

Layout of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into four chapters. *Chapter 1* aims at recording the different types of study which have been concerned with the questions of nationalism and ethnicity, working from the simplest to the more complex i.e. from discussions of primordial relations through to debates on ethnicity as pure ideological constructions. The basic issues which are raised by the specific theories of nationalism and ethnicity are the following: whether there are two notions of nationalism, a civic and an ethnocultural; why there is an incompatibility between the two visions of nationalism; and how the contention between the two nationalisms affects international politics.

The two major camps that explain the conception of ethnicity are the primordialists and the constructivists. One of the staunchest proponents of the primordialist tradition is Smith (1986; 1991). Smith outlines six attributes that define an ethnic group. These are: a collective name; a shared myth of descent; shared historical memories; elements of common culture; an association with a specific territory; and a sense of ethnic solidarity. Smith underlines that of all the attributes, sense of solidarity is the most essential attribute that defines an ethnic group. Other scholars emphasize on the psychological underpinnings of the primordialist worldview. Horowitz (1985), Berghe (1981) and Williams (1994) write about the ethnie’s belief in a common descent, notion of distinctiveness, and group membership overriding face-to-face interactions. Kaufman (2001) and Peterson (2002) write about the importance of ethnic symbols as sources of personal dignity and self-esteem and how these symbols can be used to invoke emotional responses from masses.

The other camp comprises of scholars who have worked on the emergence, occurrence, and multiplication of ethnicity and nationalism. These works fall under the category of the social

constructivist approaches. Barth's (1969) view remains one of the most influential in this school. He rejects the significance accorded to the cultural attributes of ethnicity and instead emphasizes the significance of the social processes in determining ethnic boundaries. Nagel's (1994) forces a similar point that identities are not defined by their physical attributes such as language, religion, culture, appearance or regionality. He studies circumstances under which identities develop, changes that identities undergo over time, and the social and political objectives for which identities may be created. Nagel argues that all social constructivists – regardless of the diversity of ethnic and national movements they have studied – believe that whether ethnic divisions are built upon visible biological differences among populations or upon invisible cultural and ideational distinctions, the boundaries around and the meanings attached to ethnic groups are pure social constructions. Tilley (1997) defines identity “as an idea or discourse rather than as an empirically observable social ‘unit’ defined by features such as dress, language, or customs.”

The edifice of social constructivist thought is founded on Benedict Anderson's (1991) conception of nations as ‘imagined communities’ i.e. the nation exists in the minds – the memories and the will – of the people who make it up (Joseph 2004: 113). Anderson (1983) has revised the modernist theses of Kedourie and Gellner. Kedourie (1993) describes nationalism as a doctrine, which holds that humanity is naturally divided into nations, that nations are known by certain characteristics that can be ascertained, and that the only legitimate type of government is national self government. Gellner (2006) defines nationalism as a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Drawing from both thoughts, Anderson argues that in practice not only nations but almost all forms of community are imagined in some sense, and that national identities are, more accurately speaking, not as much imagined as they are consciously created or produced (Pecora 2001: 309).

One set of scholars argue that constructivism and primordialism go hand in hand. These comprise the moderate constructivists, who recognise a certain core element in identity that is unchangeable, and from this core the rest of the identity is created and recreated. Roosen (1989) explains that cultures are not created out of nothing; there is a certain element of incontestable and non-interpretable fact from which identity is furnished. Thus he says that the reality of identity, though very flexible is not totally arbitrary.

Similarly, the conception of nationalism has come under the purview of three schools: modified primordialists, instrumentalists, and constructivists. The modified primordialist school has two variants. One of them theorizes the emotional ties of individuals to ethnic groups. Geertz (1973), for example, tells that individuals have a primordial need for shared identity that is realized through culturally defined ethnicity. Such natural attachments have an ineffable and at times overpowering coerciveness by themselves that may be exploited in times of war. The other variant, formulated first by Shaw and Wong (1989), sees ethnicity as an extension of the naturally selected tendency to favour kin. Hale (2008) gives a detailed exposition of this view. He terms it as '*uncertainty reduction*': 'a fundamental human motivation driving near-universal tendency for humans to divide themselves into groups.' Hale explains that the need for uncertainty reduction arises because the world is too complex for human cognition. This leaves people at a loss of ways to survive the complexity. Identity comes as a tool for reorienting themselves into groups to make sense of the social reality.

The instrumentalists talk of ethnicity and nationalism as levers that trigger collective action. Hetcher (1987, 2000) offers the most concrete formulation of this approach. He argues that ethnic groups coalesce neither out of primordial attachment nor out of natural tendency for kin favouritism, but out of a desire for culturally distinctive collective goods that are valued by virtue of being common practices and ways of living, represented by the culture of the ethnic group. Thus nationalism is the drive to make the boundaries of the nation concurrent with the governance unit.

The constructivists conceive of nationalism as a matter of consciousness i.e. people belong to a nation because they believe that they do. Anderson (1982), Hobsbaum (1964), Ranger (1983), Kiss (1993) accord importance to the role of modern processes of industrialization and nation-state in generating nationalism. Marx and Engels (2003) are the first to assert this point, arguing that nationalism is a creation of capitalists aimed at diverting the working classes from their proletarian identity. Further, this diversion is made possible because of the conditions generated by the capitalist form of development. Several non-Marxists including Anderson (1993) and Black (1966) also accord importance to modernization, as being the catalyst that promotes interaction of previously segregated groups coalescing them into modern states that in turn foster nationalism by promoting domestic cohesion. Brubaker (1996) goes as far as even holding the state responsible for segregating the society into minority and majority ethnic groups. Scholars differ as to how enduring nationalism is. While

Weber (1958) sees nations as highly enduring entities, Haas (1958) sees nationalism as being contingent on the historical process that generate it.

All three schools of thought, primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism, have been criticized for their psychological underpinnings. Benton (1994) criticizes the ascriptive character that primordialists attach to ethnicity. He argues that the contention that ethnicity is given at birth and cannot be changed fails to explain why of all distinctions that are present between people, only ethnic ones gain political significance. Elwert (1989), Wimmer (1995) and Baumann (1996) reject the primordialist way of treating ethnic groups as static units. They argue that membership to an ethnic group does not constrain people from passing to another group. Kreidie and Monroe (2002) criticize the instrumentalist school for condensing ethnicity to the desire for culturally specific goods. They write that not all forms of differences get politicized; many distinct groups do get along well at most times and in most places. Therefore, it is not clear why the values attached to ethnicity supersede all other cleavages that may arise between people such cleavages emanating from class, urbanization, merit and so on. The constructivist approach does not rely heavily on psychology except for Brubaker's work (2002; 2004) which explains ethnicity as mental mechanisms or 'schemas' that help in identifying one's place in the world, shaping one's views on the world, and defining one's course of action. These ethnic schemas are shaped by historical processes, institutional environments, and elite strategies. Hale (2008) tells that Brubaker strips ethnicity of all its value by reducing it to a cognitive core. Hale explains that if ethnicity is a matter of cognition then Brubaker stands to say that ethnicity is no more than lenses for looking at the world and there are no values inherent to ethnic cognition.

Williams (1994) opines that the debate between the primordialist and the constructivist schools on ethnicity and nationalism are repetitive and overlook the fundamental question relating to ethnicity which is what motivations underlie individual's identification with ethnic groups. Williams says that ethnicity exhibits both primordial and constructivist character. Some have existed for hundreds of years, others have been recently formed; some have rigid boundaries, while others have flexible group identification.

Chapter 2 is devoted to one issue: whether there is a relationship between state-building and ethnic conflict; and if yes, under what conditions state-building leads to ethnicization of

political conflicts or in some cases to escalation of rebellions and wars. More precisely, the chapter pin-points four features of state-building that drastically increase the propensity for the politicization of ethnic differences. These include: ethnicization of the bureaucratic apparatus, national policies of ethnic exclusion and ethnofederalism; clash between notions of state sovereignty and ethnic sovereignty; attitudes of xenophobia, racism and ethnocentrism; and prevalence of modern ideas such as creation of the ideal society and establishment of popular rule, and the resultant drive towards ethnic cleansing and genocide of minorities.

In reviewing the literature on the impact of state-building on ethnic groups, a useful starting point is to ascertain what is exactly meant by nation, state, and nationalism. Connor's (1972) work is devoted to clarifying the confusion regarding the terms state and nation, which he says have been mistakenly used interchangeably by scholars. This confusion has posed a serious impediment to the study of many aspects of interstate relations, especially to the understanding of nationalism. According to Connor, equating loyalty to the nation with loyalty to the state ignores the fact that certain individuals may be more loyal to their group than to the state. Alternatively, it disregards the existence of multiple ethnic groups within a single state. For Connor therefore a nation constitutes of a self-differentiating ethnic group, while a state constitutes of a territorial unit recognized as a sovereign political entity by international law. Thus ethnic group equals nation.

Nationalism is another term commonly misused by scholars. Classical sociological literature on nationalism offers a clear definition of nationalism: it is a political principle requiring the unit of governance and the national unit to be coinciding. Van Evera (1994) points out that describing nationalism as an idea that states and nationalities should be coterminous, leaves out the many nationalist movements that would claim their own state while also denying the statehood aspirations of other nationalities. Evera suggests that this omission can at best be resolved by distinguishing between 'stateless' nationalism and 'state possessing' nationalism. Keeping this distinction in mind, he defines nationalism as a political movement in which individual members give their primary loyalty to their ethnic or national community and this loyalty supersedes their loyalty to other groups, and in which the ethnic or national community desires its own independent state.

Returning to the debate over the role of ethnicity in the political life of contemporary societies, Wimmer (1997, 2000) argues that the context in which ethnic conflict takes place is provided by the process of creation of the modern state. The conditions generated by state-building lead to ethnicization of political conflicts or in some cases to an escalation of rebellions and war. The role of the state has been studied through three approaches in the literature on ethnic conflict – neorealist approach, grievance theory, and relative deprivation tradition. The neorealist approach studies ethnic conflict as a struggle between ethnic groups in the wake of state collapse (Posen 1993); the grievance hypothesis theory argues that civil wars and insurgencies are more likely when states are too weak to suppress rebellions or where natural resources invite warlords to augment their wealth by looting (Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Kalyvas 2007); the relative deprivation tradition focuses on the conditions under which minorities mobilize against the state and also the conditions under which such mobilization turns violent (Gurr 1993a, 2002). Cederman *et al.* (2010: 90-91) argue that each of these traditions have in their own way misconceived the behaviour of the state. The security dilemma conception overlooks the important role played by state actors in conflict processes; the grievance thesis fails to trace the actual ethnopolitical orientation of power at the centre of the state, and the relative deprivation theory fall short of explaining whether or not state induced political disadvantage and discrimination increase the likelihood of ethnic rebellion. What is of concern is that most of the body of literature on ethnic conflict fails to grasp the role of the state correctly.

Wimmer's (1997, 2000) primary finding is that two policies of nationalizing states are directly responsible for transforming ethnic identity into the locus of political contention. One is assimilating ethnic groups who are seen as potential members of the nation into national communities. The other is enforcing boundaries between national majorities and ethnic minorities in cases where assimilation is not seen as an option. Further, Wimmer argues that modern state is the first political entity that links the notion of political legitimacy to ethnic solidarity turning ethnic differences into potent elements of political discourse and practices of ethnic exclusion. The most intense form of exclusionary attitude is the development of xenophobia or fear of being inundated by 'others' and racism or fear of interbreeding.

Hale (2004) finds another mechanism that produces the ethnicization of political conflicts. An ethnofederal state structure, he says, runs the greatest risk of fissuring along ethnic lines.

Nevertheless, not all ethnofederal states experience ethnic tremors. Only when ethnofederations contain an ethnic core region that challenges the central power does the prospect of clash between ethnic federations open up. Lacking a core ethnic region, ethnofederations are fairly distanced from conflict, as attempts by ethnic elites to mobilize their respective peoples are limited by serious collective action problems.

Richmond (2002) proposes that the clash between the state's exercise of sovereignty and ethnic group's claims to sovereign status also leads to violent conflict. States with multi-cultural populations have dealt with their minorities by either trying to assimilate them, or subjugate them, or promoted an ideology of multiculturalism. Minority groups have responded by either giving in to assimilation, or voicing their grievances, or organizing a movement for claiming sovereign status. The reason why many ethnic groups have mobilized to demand sovereignty is because they perceive statehood to be the most effective framework through which ethnic interests and needs can be met. Further, they hold that the Westphalian state order guarantees greater security to nation-states than it does to non-sovereign actors. Thus, ethnic groups mobilize to replicate the nation-state model in the hope that this would warrant them the same provisions in the international system as are warranted to the state.

Baumann (1989, 1991) writes that the modern state's obsession with achieving a perfect social order leads it to adopt any means to create an ethnically homogenized political entity. This has made the modern state the foundation of the worst evil of our era – genocide. Baumann explains that the systematic mass persecution of a particular ethnic community requires a rationally thought out plan and rational means of execution of the plan. The modern state not only owns the means of executing such a plan, but its obsession with creating a utopian social order prompts it to put these means to use uninhibitedly and indiscriminately.

Mann (1991; 2000; 2005) agrees with Bauman that systematic mass killings have intensified with the coming of the modern state. Mann however emphasizes the contribution of the processes of state-building and democratization in laying the foundation of genocide. Ethnic cleansing is most likely to occur when ethnic elites of two groups aspire to create sovereign states 'in the name of the people' on the same territory. Such competing state-building projects lead to the complete extermination of one by the other. Further, Mann characterizes

the modern state not as being obsessed with creating of a utopian social order, but with bringing about 'people's rule', a staunchly modernist idea that makes the project of democratization turn into one of homogenization. Hence genocide is likely where conditions of imperfect democratization and liberalization exist.

Chapter 3 seeks to answer one broad question: in what circumstances do groups that define themselves using ethnic or national criteria mobilize to defend and promote their collective interests in the political arena. In attempting to answer the question, the chapter sketches a theoretical framework for understanding the causes of ethnic conflict by comparing and contrasting some of the prominent conflict theories and integrating many of the specific factors that observers have identified as causes of ethnic conflict. The theories overviewed include: the modernization and the cultural pluralism theories (social causes); the rebel predation theory (economic causes); the elite competition theory (political causes); and the relative deprivation theory (psychocultural causes).

The modernization thesis has four variants. A first, offered by Deutsch (1953, 1961) argues that modernization stirs two parallel currents, one of social mobilization and the other of assimilation. While social mobilization brings about the transition from traditional to modern ways of life, assimilation brings about the national integration of socially mobilized people. When rate of mobilization surpasses rate of assimilation, the result is rise of regionalism. Thus ethnic conflict is caused when socially mobilized people remain unassimilated paving the way for national fragmentation.

A second variant of the modernization thesis is offered by Lerner (1967) and Huntington (1968). They argue that with modernization political participation increases while economic conditions degenerate. In transitional societies, this results in political fragmentation and decay and rise of parochial and ethno-nationalist sentiments. A third variant, proposed by Melson and Wope (1970), holds that social mobilization in a modernizing polity and economy leads more and more people to vie for the same resources. Thus conflict arises, not out of the difference among people, but sameness in their wants and pursuits.

A fourth variant of the modernization hypothesis is offered by Ragin (1987) and Smelser

(2007). They argue that conflict is a result of social strain brought about by modernization. While states fail to draw minorities into the orbit of the national economic life, the forces of political mobilization pressurize states to recognize norms of citizenship and human rights. As exclusionary states come under surveillance of transnational advocacy groups and international governmental organizations, suppressed minorities get the chance to press their claims for ethnic sovereignty.

The other prominent social theory of ethnic conflict, cultural pluralism, posits that multiethnic societies cannot remain both stable and democratic at the same time. Furnivall (1956) and Smith (1969) are the leading proponents of this view. Furnivall explains that ethnic conflict is endemic to plural societies because these societies are characterized by cultural divergence and unchecked economic competition. Smith modifies Furnivall's theory, saying cultural diversity and cultural incompatibility are not enough to characterize a society as plural. A society must display a formal hierarchy in the system of compulsory institutions to be a genuinely plural society. Thus in addition to cultural incompatibility, if a society has legalized ethnic hierarchy, then it may be vulnerable to fracture under the weight of ethno-nationalist movements.

In contrast to social theories of conflict, economic theory of ethnic conflict give compelling evidence that ethnic conflict depends not on the motivations of actors but on the financial viability of the rebel organization. Collier (2004, 2006) gives a detailed exposition on the relation between economic viability of rebel groups and the occurrence of conflict. He writes that the motivation for an ethnic group can be a whole range of considerations such as perceived grievances or hunger for power by becoming the government. But irrespective of what motivates the organization to fight, it can only fight if it can financially sustain itself throughout the conflict. This is why rebel organizations use force to extort goods or money from their legitimate owners during conflict – it is a means of financing the conflict, not any particular objective of the rebel group. Collier (2006) calls this predatory behaviour.

Brass (1991) is the one of the foremost proponents of the elite competition theory, addressing the political causes of conflict. He writes that when new elites arise to challenge the existing pattern of distribution of economic resources and political power between ethnically distinct

urban and rural groups or ethnically segregated regions then is nationalism most likely to develop in ethnic minorities.

The fourth major group of theories on ethnic conflict comes from scholars who emphasize the significance of psychological variables in igniting ethnic conflict. Gurr's relative deprivation theory is one of the most popular among these. He proposes that groups' perception of the difference between their expected condition of living and their actual material standard determines their behaviour with regard to their aspiration in the political arena. Through this theory, Gurr establishes a relation between two psychological variables – frustration and anger. Relative deprivation causes frustration in ethnic groups, a natural response to which is anger. Anger motivates aggression in the form of political mobilization or ethnic violence, which then becomes a satisfying response to the relative deprivation.

Chapter 4 concerns the origin and the dynamics of ethnic violence. It attempts to first define ethnic violence and distinguish it from other forms of collective social and political violence. It explains some of the major mechanisms taking place within groups that have a strong hand in preparing groups for resorting to violence. These include: polarization of society along ethnic lines; development of mass hostility; deflecting challengers to power and policing dissenters within the group; and outbidding of moderate elites by extremist elites. The chapter discusses how inter-group ethnic security dilemma gets activated leading to the outbreak of violence, and under what conditions such violence is mass-led and under what conditions it is elite-led. The final issue addressed is: whether ethnic groups can and should be held morally and legally responsible for ethnic conflict.

Somer (2001) offers one of the most detailed expositions of the mechanism of ethnic polarization. He conceives of ethnic polarization as a cascade process whereby if the number of or the social and political significance of the initial advocates of an action or belief reaches a critical level, the balance of incentives tips in favour of that action or belief for a great number of people who then come to alter their behaviour accordingly. Similarly, in ethnic conflict situations, ethnic entrepreneurs constantly seek to tip the balance of incentives in favour of the action or belief they happen to hold. If entrepreneurs succeed, a chain reaction of individual responses is set in motion: people who previously were indecisive about or

opposed to the action or belief join the generated bandwagon along with those who had already been advocating it.

The development of mass hostility within groups is explained by Van Evera (1990, 1991). He disaggregates mass hostility into two constituent attitudes: belief that one's group deserves dominance; and belief in the acceptability of using violence to pursue dominance over other groups. Brubaker and Laitin (1998) explain the process by which ethnic leaders try to thwart all internal challengers to their power while also adopting a system of punishment for those group members who attempt to detract from the ethnic cause. Rabushka and Shepsle (1972), and Rothschild (1981) explain how elites of a group compete with each other to formulate more and more extreme demands against other ethnic groups in what is called ethnic outbidding. Outbidding can lead to dramatic outcomes such as dismantling the very democratic institutions that provide the scope for outbidding in the first place.

Posen (1993) and Kaufman (1996) bring the concept of security dilemma – first developed in international relations for studying inter-state behaviours – to the study of ethnic conflict. In brief, their argument is that apprehension of pre-emptive attack from the other side motivates groups to decide on striking first and negotiating later. Each group's fear of extermination may then become justified, because its collective existence may actually be threatened by the goals of the other. Once this point is reached, each group adopts increasingly extreme measures, especially creating and using armed forces to protect itself and intimidate other groups. Consequently, a security dilemma takes hold: a cycle of violence seizes previously harmonious groups even as they seek nothing more than their groups' security.

Violence may be initiated by the actions of either masses or elites. Rabushka and Shepsle (1972) hypothesize how the process of mass-led violence comes about. Due to long-held chauvinistic and militaristic beliefs, masses compel the elites to take up extreme stand on ethnic problems. If elites do not succumb to populist demands, they are replaced by more fundamentalist leaders who actively engage in ethnic extremism. Finally, a security dilemma materializes leading to the outbreak of violence. In cases of elite-led violence, security dilemma is directly brought about by ethnic outbidding. Snyder (1993) explains the three steps taken by elites to incite violence. First, they gain control over organizational power bases; next, create private militia by giving incentives to group members for joining and expunging all political opponents; and finally, by eliminating all alternatives to violence and

leaving no scope for reconciliation. Once these steps are taken, outbreak of violence becomes inevitable.

A final issue debated in this dissertation is whether ethnic groups can and should be held morally and legally responsible for the violence they during conflict. The main contribution to this debate comes from the field of sociology and ethics. Held (2002) argues that ethnic groups are not highly structured organization, but they are not random collections of people either. They have a relatively clear set of decision-making procedures and hence they can be held accountable for the joint action they take. Cushman and Metrovic (1996) and Lewis (1991) argue the opposite: the notion of collective responsibility is not only erroneous but also evil. While Cushman and Metrovic believe that the idea of intergenerational guilt can be used to transfer the onus of crimes committed by predecessors to their contemporaries, Lewis says that the idea of group responsibility can be used by some individuals to escape from owning up to personal crimes by blaming it on the whole group. May (1992) shifts the perspective of group responsibility from the observer to the perpetrator. He says that groups should assume responsibility for their collects acts rather than others judging them for it. Thus both Held and May, though seeing collective responsibility from alternative perspectives, believe that this putting into practice this notion holds greater promise for reconciliation and peace than doing with the notion altogether because of some of its practical weaknesses.

Research Puzzles and Hypothesis

The dissertation explores four broad questions. First, what is meant by ethnicity and nationalism? What is the relationship between ethnicity and nationalism? Does ethnicity predate nationalism or are they coterminous? What is the relation between nationalism and nation? Which one of the two precedes the other? Is there a relation between ethnicity and nation?

Second, is there a relationship between state-building and ethnic conflict? If so, under what conditions does state-building lead to ethnicization of political conflicts and in some cases to an escalation of rebellions and war? Is it due to ethnicization of the bureaucratic apparatus, suppressive policies of the state against national minorities, creation of ethnofederal state

structures, incompatibility between the principles of Westphalian sovereignty and national self-determination of minority peoples, attitudes that glorify the self and justify dehumanizing the other, or modernist ideas such as the creation of a homogenized society or majority rule in a democracy?

Third, what factors brings about the political mobilization of ethnic groups? Are ethnic conflicts a product of unchecked modernization, cultural plurality in societies, availability of means of political and military organization, competition between elites hungry for power or grievances over inequitable distribution of resources?

Fourth, why and when does collective violence break out in ethnic conflicts? Is violence due to polarization of society along ethnic lines, espousal of militaristic and chauvinistic ideologies, outmanoeuvring of moderates by extremists, elimination of all alternatives to violence or activation of a societal security dilemma?

The research hypothesizes that of all other forms of conflict present in contemporary international relations, the most severe in intensity are those fought along ethnic lines. This is primarily because of two reasons. First, the aspiration of ethnic groups to assert their right of self-determination is set against the growing desire of states to define themselves in more exclusionary terms. The recognition of the nationhood of minorities requires the redrawing of national borders and the transfer of territory from the state to the ethno-national entity. This makes ethnic conflict long-drawn and intractable because it challenges the very integrity of the modern nation-state. Second, identity conflict centres on the recognition and cultural integrity of ethnic groups. Since identity in international politics is conceived of as mutually exclusive, ethnic conflict operates as a zero-sum game, where the victory of one is achieved at the complete defeat of another.

Conclusion

The perpetration of violence by ethnic groups is a sufficiently frequent phenomenon in international politics, such that a serious attempt to specify the major factors that influence its appearance and vicissitudes is invaluable. Despite this, collective mobilization remains to be

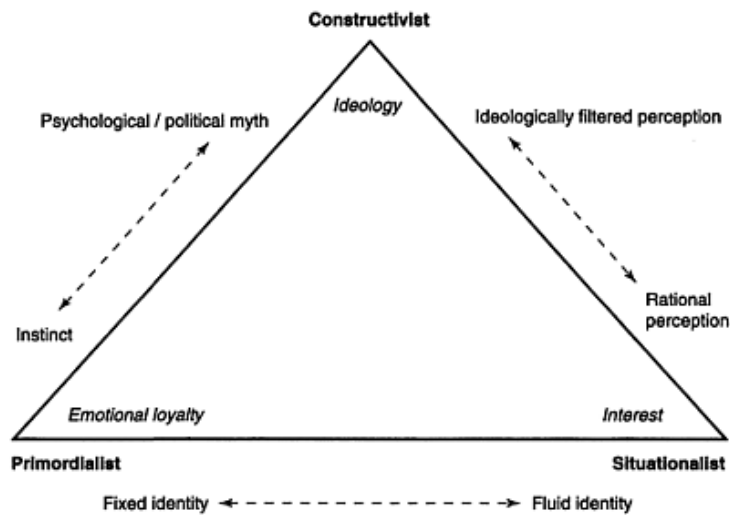
well understood at the academic level. This is because theories on ethnic violence have grown from two largely non-intersecting bodies of literature: studies of ethnicity, ethnic conflict, and nationalism; and studies of collective or political violence. This research attempts to contribute to the integration of the two bodies of literature, by examining the ways in which violence – and conditions, processes, activities, and narratives linked to violence – can take on ethnic hues. The thesis takes a critical attitude towards the adequacy of the existing explanations of group identity, ethnic conflict and collective violence and aims to provide an assessment of the conditions under which already mobilized ethnic groups resort to violence in a conflict situation.

1. Ethnicity and Nationalism in International Politics

In 1963, Geertz (1963: 107) referred to the subject of nationalism as a ‘stultifying aura of conceptual ambiguity’. Since then, remarkable progress has been made in studying nationalism, but for many influential scholars it still remains an ‘unsteady mixture [of ideas]...unsuitable for clear analytical thought’ (Dunn 1995:3). The conceptual ambiguity of nationalism is sometimes attributed to the fact that nationalism happens to be both a ‘category of practice’ and a ‘category of analysis’ (Brubaker 1996:15). This implies that precisely for the conceptual ambiguities, nationalism is so useful for mobilising or manipulating political action in a wide variety of situations, which undermine its utility for clear explanation. Nations are often defined as communities united by their ‘moral conscience’ or their consciousness of themselves as a nation. Brown (2000:4) finds that this poses analysts with a particular problem: ‘should they accept the self-definitions as the defining criterion of nationhood: should they accept the self-definitions only when they coincide with other ‘objective’ criteria (linguistic or genetic, for example); or should they depict these self-definitions as interesting symptoms in need of diagnosis?’ Given the varying responses of different scholars of nationalism on this problem, it is clear that a map of the terrain is needed.

Nationalism has three conceptual approaches: primordialism sees it an instinct; situationalism sees it as an interest; and constructivism sees it as an ideology. These three approaches provide the nodal points within which the various scholars on nationalism may be located, as illustrated by Figure 1. They are outlined here to show how they each narrates a differing story on the relationship between ethnicity and nationalism, the rise of nation-states, and the problematic character of contemporary nationalist politics. But they are also outlined in order to support the suggestion that one of these conceptual languages, the constructivist approach which portrays nationalism as an ideology, might be preferred over the other two because it seems to address some of the questions thrown up by the other two approaches.

Figure 1
Three Conceptual Approaches to National Identity



Source: Brown (2000: 5)

The Primordialist Approach

The primordial approach to nationalism is based on the assumption that members of an ethnic group claim a common ancestry displayed in distinctive attributes such as language, religion, physiognomy or homeland, believe in a natural emotional bond between the members, and hold ethnic consciousness as a central component of their individual identity. Group members may take ethnic identity for granted in some circumstances, and need not necessarily mobilize for asserting it politically. But once ethnic identity is self-consciously activated for legitimating claims to the group's right for self-determination, ethnicity becomes transformed into nationalism. Further, primordialists believe that humanity has evolved into distinct, organic communities, each with their own language and culture. In this way, what are known as nations are communities of common ancestry or, as Connor calls them, 'self-differentiating ethnic groups' (Connor 1972: 337). More precisely, the nation is 'a group of people who feel that they are ancestrally related. It is the largest group that can command a person's loyalty because of felt kinship ties' (Connor 1994: 202). By corollary, calling modern states as 'nations', is either as a mistake, or as a politically motivated trick (Connor 1994: 90–117). Moreover, using the word nationalism to refer to loyalty to the state is also erroneous because this presupposes that the state is the 'ultimate victor in any test of loyalties with these lower-form anachronisms that have been proven to be ephemeral.' This however is not so in reality.

In cases where nation approximates the state, the two loyalties combine rather than compete. But many scholars mistakenly equate the resulting emotional loyalty to the nation-state with loyalty to the state alone. This also effectively means that the only true nationalism is ethnic nationalism (Connor 1972: 334-336).

Smith (1981, 1986) holds that the modern nation has lineally descended from the ethnic community which has its own distinct origin, and this claim to common descent is politicised by the intelligentsia seeking to mobilise support. Smith stresses that modern states can best legitimate themselves by reference to ethnic myths which are authentic and which already exist in the collective memories. In Smith's (1991: 39) words:

‘Though most latter-day nations are, in fact polyethnic, or rather most nation-states are polyethnic, many have been formed in the first place around a dominant *ethnie*, which annexed or attracted other *ethnies* or ethnic fragments into the state to which it gave a name and a cultural charter... The presumed boundaries of the nation are largely determined by the myths and memories of the dominant *ethnie*.’

Nevertheless, the intellectuals who evoke ethnic identities have important discretion and autonomy in terms of their choice of the ethnic myths to propagandize, their interpretations of historical continuity and their visions of the identity and destiny of the community. Their manipulation of such myths thus involves important elements of invention, even if the scope for such invention is relatively constrained. While the intellectuals who translate ethnic sentiments into nationalism are not themselves members of the state elite, they nevertheless see the modern state as the main agency for their ideals, and rely on the professional intelligentsia who comprise the state bureaucrats to disseminate their ideas (Smith 1981). In this way, arguments which stress real continuities between nation and *ethnie* do recognise that ‘much of the history will have to be rediscovered, even ‘invented’ (Smith 1981:67).

From the primordialist worldview, the conflict and violence arising out of nationalist politics is in large measure due to the incongruity between the natural boundaries of the ethnic communities which deserve and seek political autonomy, and those of the modern states. The ethnic nationalisms and dissimilar value systems of each ethnic group generates political tensions as to the allocation of resources and power. Speaking generally, Connor (1994: 196) says:

‘the sense of loyalty to one’s [ethno-]nation and to one’s state do not coincide...[W]hen the two loyalties are perceived as being in irreconcilable conflict – that is to say when people feel they must choose between them – [ethno-]nationalism customarily proves the more potent.’

The primordialist approach was applied most explicitly to the discussion of ethnic conflict in Third World societies during the 1950s and 1960s. Since these societies were considered to be backward, it was assumed that their internal politics was likely to be based on emotion and instinct, and on ancestrally based ‘tribal’ ties. Accordingly, the political movements which arose in these societies for assertion of ethnic identity were thought to be the result of traditionalism and intolerance. The birth of ethno-nationalist claims were generally perceived as negative developments in the progress graph of these countries. However, the primordialist explanation of contemporary ethno-nationalist movements depicts such ethnic assertions as ethically valuable bases for individual self-fulfilment and collective self-determination. This is so because the primordialist approach claims that the history of state-formation has primarily been one of conquest and migration, to the end that virtually all modern states contain societies which are ethnically heterogeneous. When heterogeneity in ethnic structure exists, differences and friction in the resultant politics is the most natural outcome (Brown 2000: 6).

The primordialist argument that ethnic and national identities are ascriptive, fixed and emotionally persuasive is probably so widely received because it appeals to the consciousness of those involved. Individuals who claim an ethnic or national identity know the emotional hold of their ethnocentric worldview, and believe that it asserts their objective attributes deriving from common ancestry, though they may have difficulty specifying what decisive markers of identity are. To the extent that primordialism describes perceptions of identity, it is a rather sound conceptual language. However, when it comes to explaining the causes of such perceptions, it is significantly. Indeed, the core criticism of the primordialist approach is that it taken the huge and nebulous concept of identity as merely a given, and abandons all explanations beyond it, though this in no way implies that primordialism is wrong (Eller and Coughlan 1993; Brown 2000).

The Situationalist Approach

The situationalist approach to nationalism is premised on the liberal assumption that individuals seek self-fulfilment, and that this is manifested in their pursuit of particular self-interests. In search of both self-fulfilment and particular interests, individuals frequently find it advantageous to ally with others in ‘interest groups’ or, what Ronen calls, ‘functional aggregations’ (1979: 54-62). Generally speaking, the more central the interests are to the pursuit of self-realisation, and the more intense the threats or opportunities facing the individual, the greater would be the conscious sense of individual identification with the interest group. Hechter (1986: 268) presents this argument in structuralist terms. He explains:

‘Rational choice considers individual behaviour to be a function of the interaction of structural constraints and the sovereign preferences of individuals. The structure first determines, to a greater or lesser extent, the constraints under which individuals act. Within these constraints, individuals face various feasible courses of action. The course of action ultimately chosen is selected rationally.’

Thus, under existing circumstances, individuals align themselves in ways which offer the maximum resources for the pursuit of their interests. When faced with a threat, individuals’ preferences will vary. But where their preferences are similar – as is more likely for those brought up in a common culture – it is possible to calculate the aggregate behaviour. From this follows the general assumption that favourable and equal relations with others are likely to lead individuals to identify with the interactive community. By the same token, unequal relations with threatening others will lead individuals to differentiate themselves as ‘us’ and ‘them’ communities. In sum, it is the ‘them’ which determines the ‘us’ (Ronen 1979:56).

Brown (2000: 14) writes that apart from affiliations of ethnicity and nationalism, individuals identify in varying degrees and in varying situations, with a range of alliances based on, for example, ideology, occupation, class, gender, locality and as on. Situationalists argue that the particular significance of ethnic and national attachments cannot be explained away by saying that these ties have innate priority over other possible ties. They instead argue that ethnic and national ties take precedence because they seem to offer particular utility to individual and group interests in the context of contemporary situational opportunities and threats. This may happen in several ways. For one, ethnicity and nationalism bring into play conspicuous identity markers such as language or religion because of which they can easily become the

rallying points for political mobilisation. Next, ethnicity and nationalism informs social interaction networks within which individuals develop their way of life, in a way that defending the interests connected with such a way of life seems to individuals the rational thing to do. Finally, ethnic and national relations have a crucial upper hand over other relations which cannot so easily portray themselves as natural, in that they can more readily guise the interests being defended in the name of natural rights, and thereby provide particularly effective ways to strengthen a bargaining position.

On the question of the rise of modern-states and the contemporary upsurge of nationalist contention, the situationalist approach provides a straightforward explanation. It sees both phenomena as arising fundamentally out of interest-based responses to transformations in the structure of the global economy. In other words, changes in the economic situation the world over have weakened contemporary nation-states giving rise to ethnic and nationalist claims against the existing states. This argument has two formulations: the ‘internal colonialism’ theory associated mainly with the work of Hechter, and explanations emerging from the literature on economic globalization.

Building upon the insight that modern nation-states emerged as a result of uneven spread of industrialisation in distinct territorial centres, Hechter (1975) suggests that the subsequent uneven development of industrialisation within and across these nation-states, whereby metropolitan areas develop by wheedling out resources from peripheral regions, has led to the emergence of new nationalisms in the peripheries directed against the state. Since cultural variations between people in the core and in the peripheral regions of the nation-state are extremely likely, the economic disparity tends to produce a ‘cultural division of labour’, such that those whose with the cultures of the peripheral region find themselves clustered in low status positions, while those with the cultures of the core region dominate the high status positions. Due to such clustering, each community comes to believe that their economic position derives from their cultural attributes – the peripheral community perceiving themselves as discriminated against because of their low cultural status while the core community perceiving their higher economic status as proof of their cultural superiority. The result is the development of ethnic consciousness among each regional community, and subsequently of ethnic rivalry between them. Where the peripheral community has access to political elites who can invoke their ethnic identity to legitimate claims to regional resource

and autonomy, then their ethno-regional consciousness can become the basis for a nationalist movement.

The second situational approach to explaining the contemporary upsurge of ethnic and regional nationalist claims against existing nation-states emerges out of the profuse literature on economic globalisation. Building on the assumption that nation-states developed because they were the appropriate economic units for the early stages of industrialisation, this line of argument says that as capitalist networks expand beyond national boundaries to become global in scope, and as the distinctiveness of the national economies erode, the corresponding sense of national identity will decline. In the long run, this is likely to lead to new larger regional senses of identity. But in the short term, the failure of state elites to manage the country's economy exposes peripheral communities in each state to new economic competition threats. The result is the growth of various types of reactive nationalism within marginalised communities of existing nation-states, as they seek autonomy to protect their economic self-interests (Brown 2000: 18).

The situationalist approach makes a significant contribution in the study of nationalism by recognizing that the sense of community based on ethnic or national identity can be a response to commonalities of interest, and that ethnic and nationalist movements can be instruments for the defence of such interests against economic, power or status inequalities. Further, situationalists point out that ethnic and national identity which depict themselves in attributes derived from common ancestry, might nevertheless be fluid and involve rational responses to changing situations. However, their effort to integrate both structuralist and rational-choice arguments within the situationalist approach raises one problem. As Hechter (1986: 275) recognizes, individuals of a community who have to make choices under similar situational constraints, may end up choosing from a very wide range and order of preferences, unless there exists some mechanism for 'the systematic limitation and distortion of information about alternatives existing beyond the group's boundaries.' This clarifies why situationalist descriptions of the role of the elites and ethnic entrepreneurs who mobilise support for nationalist movement is rather ambiguous: Should their behaviour be interpreted as offering true picture of situations or misleading ones? Or do they themselves happen to believe the misleading information which they articulate? Or is that their fabricated information will not draw response, unless they complement it with facts? If it were to be

accepted that elites sometimes, if not most of the times, act either deliberately or unwittingly as manipulators rather than as articulators of the situation, and that group members often believe in the lies even in the face of countervailing evidence, then the core assumption of situationalism – that nationalist politics can be understood in terms of functional and rational responses to situational changes – would appear to be called into question (Brown 2000: 18-19).

The second line of criticism of the situationalist approach is pitted against the ‘uneven development’ scenario. This process explains both how internal colonialism engenders ethno-regional nationalism against existing state nationalisms (Hechter 1975, Nairn 1977). The birth of peripheral nationalism, however, is never exclusively due to uneven development. Ethno-nationalism mobilization requires not only the activation of distinctive culture of the peripheral community, but also the emergence of political leaders who mobilize support by employing a nationalist ideology depicting the peripheral regional community as a potential nation (Hechter and Levi 1979).

The Constructivist Approach

The constructivist approach is premised on the assumption that nations are not real substantive entities, and that people’s perception of belonging to a nation is purely a matter of ideological construction. The core function of nationalism is to offer individuals a sense of identity, and such a sense of identity might be neither rationally chosen nor innately given, but constructed largely unconsciously or intuitively as a category of understanding (March and Olsen 1989, Koelble 1995). Nairn (1997:183) explains that in circumstances where individuals interact with those of their own community, identity might be taken for granted as habitual or apparently natural aspects of the self. While in situations where individuals interact with others from whom their identity label attracts hatred or disdain, then individuals become more conscious of their identity so as to either assert it strongly, or deliberately retreat from it. Thus, nationalism serves as a moral legitimizer for the defence of a range of personal interests, which might otherwise be regarded as merely selfish.

According to the constructivist approach nationalism thrives on two myths, explained primarily from the psychoanalytic perspective: the belief that the community is authentic because of its objective permanence, defined by national character, territory and institutions, and by its continuity across the generations; and the belief that the community is authentic because of its common ancestry. According to psychoanalysis, the first core nationalist myth, of permanent, fixed, homeland community, derives its emotional potency from the anxieties generated by the vulnerability of the sense of self in the face of the ambiguities inherent in relationships with the outside world and the disintegrative incoherence of the inner, psychological world. In an attempt to escape the anxiety, individuals engage in acts of self-labelling and self-construction so as to 'seek out a name' and thereby attain an imaginary sense of stability (Frosh 1997:165). The second core nationalist myth, of the unity of the national community based on distinctive culture and attributes derived from common ancestry, is explained in psychoanalysis as a form of 'regressive narcissism': a longing for a return of the feeling of oneness which the infant experiences in the womb and in dependence upon the parents. If the nation is conceived as a natural kinship community of common ancestry – like a large parental family – then it is likely that nationalism will arouse feelings of security in the individual similar to what the infant finds in dependence on the mother. If nationalism is perceived as inherited from common ancestors then it is likely to accord the sense of strong moral authority which the insecure individual seeks, emulating the authority of the infant's father (Frosh 1991:63–87). In Fromm's (1955: 59) words, nationalism is thus a flight from freedom into a 'new idolatry of blood and soil.'

Having said that, nationalism is certainly not alone in providing a repository for ideological myths of ancestry, kinship, permanence and home, and individuals indeed seek their self-esteem, security, and moral authority in various other forms of identity. But the prominence of nationalism in contemporary political discourse seems to suggest that it has a particular appeal to individuals. This popularity is on two accounts. First, in the claim by psychoanalysis noted above, it is the family and home which provide the unconscious models for the individual seeking relief from insecurity in a sense of identification with community. Nationalism, more than any other identity construction, is successful in portraying itself as the family, in all its symbolism of ancestors, forefathers, national character, homeland, motherland, and fatherland. This symbolism of kinship combines the affinity arising out of common ancestry with the affinity arising out of common commitment and love of the

demarcated territorial homeland territory. This merging of the myth of common ancestry and the myth of homeland community strengthens the potential psychological appeal of nationalism. Second, nationalism is particularly useful for being activated as the basis for political ideology, since 'it is able to grant public legitimacy to private neuroses by depicting the community as a whole as having the attributes which are sought by its individual members'. To sum up using Brown (2000: 24) words:

'In asserting the uniqueness and permanence of the national community; the emotional and physical security provided within the homeland; and the right of the moral community to self-determination, nationalism thereby translates the psychological needs of individuals into the public-rights claims of the authentic community, thus raising the insecure individual to the status of the proud nation.'

The Construction of Civic and Ethnic Nationalisms

The emotional power of nationalism might be explained, in psychoanalytic terms, as arising from the claim of nationalism to offer a community within which individuals can find the sense of identity, security and authority which is associated with family and home relationships (Frosh 1991, 1997). Nationalism claims to denote the community united by common kinship, but the claim is captured in two separate myths: one offers a sense of categorized permanence in a territorial home; the other offers a sense of cultural similarity through claims to common ancestry. The former formulation of nationalism is referred to as *civic nationalism*, defined in terms of a shared commitment to, and pride in, the public institutions of state and civil society connecting the people to the territory they occupy. The nation is thus depicted as united by a common public culture, a way of life, a national character, which is shared by all citizens irrespective of ethnic origin. Civic nationalism portrays itself as a voluntary political community formed by the recognition that the self-interest of each citizen is promoted by commitment to the common good (Viroli 1995:47). These images of the open, voluntary community based on rational choice coexist with less rational ideas of 'love of country', loyalty and self-sacrifice which have their origin in religious ideas of the sacred soil of the ancestors and ideas of a community of ethical obligation where 'citizens owe to their *patria*...a benevolent love similar to the affection that they feel for their parents and relatives, a love that expresses itself in acts of service and care' (Viroli 1995: 20). According to this less rational image, the nation is portrayed as a the

kinship home which welcomes new members who are willing to commit themselves, as in matrimonial contract, to the institutions and way of life of the home which they enter, and who consequently become kin. Civic nationalism thus offers individuals a sense of permanence in the territorial home.

The more recent formulation of nationalism is referred to as *ethnocultural nationalism*, sometimes denoted as ethnic or cultural nationalism, in which the nation is portrayed as a community united by its ethnocultural sameness stemming from the common ancestry of its members. The ethnocultural nation is depicted as a unique, natural organic entity, a 'single body with its own spiritual soul, faculties and forces' (Viroli 1995: 118). It promises the security of membership in a genetic family. Thus, whereas civic nationalism stresses the image of home and matrimonial kinship, ethnocultural nationalism stresses the image of the biological family.

From the theoretical perspective, civic nationalism offers a vision of a kinship community of equal citizens founded on contract, commitment, loyalty and love. Individuals of various ethnocultural origins may become members of this community at adulthood, through migration or by committing their loyalty to the public institutions and way of life of the homeland. Civic nationalism can thus accommodate ethnocultural multiplicity within the nation – so long as the state turns a blind eye to ethnic disparities in its public institutions and policies, and so long as individuals pledge their political loyalty to the state rather than to their ethnocultural groups. The potential problems of ethnic diversity are thus resolved by the process of civic integration.

While civic nationalism can accommodate ethnic diversity in terms of values, attributes and origins of its members who have all committed themselves to the homeland, ethnocultural nationalism cannot. Ethnocultural nationalism is based on the myth of common ancestry and of inherited ownership of an ancestral homeland. It focuses on the belief that the community shares some distinctive racial, religious or linguistic traits held as the evidence of common ancestry. Outsiders to the community, who do not possess the inherited traits, can nevertheless be able to acquire them through intermarriage, religious conversion, language acquisition and so on. Cultural assimilation through such measures implies the corresponding

acquisition of belief in the common history and ancestry of the adoptive community. The potential problem of ethnic diversity is thus resolved by the promise of assimilation.

The two myths of nationhood, ancestral kin and homeland kin, are usually entwined. As Brown (2000: 34) writes:

‘National communities tend to be depicted, therefore, as united by civic pride and by ethnocultural attributes, as having ethnic cores and as accommodating ethnic diversity, as being in some respects natural and in some respects political, as being partly ascriptive communities and partly voluntaristic ones.’

Nationalism is so dominant precisely because it can converge the notions of kinship and homeland in a way so as to unite individuals to form communities. But the mix of civic and ethnocultural elements in the nationalist ideology can also be toxic. From the standpoint of ethnocultural nationalism, civic nationalism is seen as the attempt to promote programmes aimed at subordinating minority ethnic cultures to majority ones, by disguising them in the rhetoric of a culturally neutral political integration. Advocates of minority ethnocultural nationalisms therefore denounce as ethnocentric, racist or genocidal, the efforts of the majority at achieving national assimilation. For their part, advocates of civic nationalism proclaim the virtues of political integration, deny the accusations that civic nationalism is a disguise for ethnic domination, demonize minority ethnic nationalisms as the ethnocentric assertion of group rights over individual rights, and seek to restore the essence of minority rights among the minorities who consider their ethnic nationalism to be at a lower peg in hierarchical ordering in relation to civic nationalism.

Thus, instead of seeing nationalism as being either in decline, or as resurgent, the argument developed here is that the politics of nationalism becomes increasingly problematic and unstable as the two visions of nationalism, civic and ethnocultural, compete and not combine within the modern state (Brown 2000). The contemporary contentiousness of nationalist politics, evident in the upsurge of ethnic violence and separatist conflicts, can be understood therefore, in terms of an awakening to the fact that the two notions of nationalism are irreconcilable. Ethnic minorities within modern states are now regularly depicted as being permanently marginalised, because their complete civic integration is eventually impeded by the barriers to their effective ethnocultural assimilation. Once this has been realized, the

marginalized groups begin to lose faith in pursuing integration and turn to asserting their minority rights both to a political autonomy, which challenges notions of political integration into the existing state, and to a cultural self-determination, which challenges notions of ethnocultural assimilation into the existing nation-state.

Previously, many nation-states sought to provide a sense of security by interweaving the civic and the ethnocultural visions of community, so as to accommodate the difference between the two memberships. However, many of them failed in this endeavour, with the result that today's contentious nationalisms frequently seek security by disentangling the two visions so as to expose and politicize the dissonance between the community denoted by territorial residence and civic pride, and the community denoted by ethnocultural attributes and belief in common ancestry. As it is increasingly becoming evident that most states fall short of bridging the gap between the two communities, academics have taken to close scrutiny of the very process of state formation and the paradoxes inherent in it that open up this gap in the first place or at any rate contribute to the widening of the gap. The next chapter takes up the dissection of the state-building process.

2. *State-building and Ethnic Conflict*

The modern state forms the general context within which the struggle between the civic and the ethnocultural communities takes place. Similar to the distinction between the two aspects of nationalism, the modern state may be seen as having two aspects of statehood: one which focuses on the character of the state's institutional structures, and the other which focuses on the composition of the individuals who are involved in these institutions. The distinction between the agency and institutionalist views of the state is an analytical one only, in that the behaviour of all actual states reflects elements of both aspects of statehood. Migdal offers a new definition of the state that reflects this twin behaviour. The state must be thought of in two ways, writes Migdal (2001: 16):

‘(1) as a powerful image of a clearly bounded, unified organization . . . performing in an integrated manner to rule a clearly defined territory; and (2) as the practices of a heap of loosely connected parts and fragments, frequently with ill-defined boundaries between them and other groupings inside and outside the official state borders and often promoting conflicting sets of rules with one another and with ‘official’ law.’

Indeed, as Migdal (2001: 16) remarks, the state is often ‘a contradictory entity that acts against itself.’ The parallel existence of both aspects of statehood implies that there is a potential tension, in all nation-states, between the community referred to by civic nationalism and the community referred to by ethnocultural nationalism. The following sections debate on four aspects of or contradictions in the state formation process, which have significant contribution in igniting or fuelling discord between the civic and the ethnocultural communities of the state.

Ethnicization of Bureaucracy, Exclusionist Policies and Ethnofederalism

The most important institution in the structure of the modern state is perhaps the centralized bureaucracy (Vu 2010: 151). When a state apparatus is taken over by a majority population with a tradition of political centralization, a so-called ‘state people’, a process of nationalizing the basic principles of inclusion and exclusion of the state is set in motion. The new elites seek to establish a distinction between a dominant ethnonational core, ‘the people’

considered to represent the legitimate ‘owners’ of the state and those who are seen as not belonging to that core and thus not the legitimate ‘owners’ of the state (Wimmer 2006: 336). Once the state has been captured by the nationalist movement, this politics of ethnic boundary making by state elites can take on different forms depending on power relationships between various domestic actors, the ethnic demography of the state, and the relationship with the nation-building processes of neighbouring states who may host similar ethnic populations on their territory.

Ruling elites of the nationalizing state may employ various strategies for transforming the mosaic of local ethnic identities into a homogenized population with a national identity. Two policies in particular contain the seeds of ethnic conflict: the creation of national communities through assimilation of ethnic others who are seen as potential members of the nation; and the enforcement of boundaries between national majorities and ethnic minorities in cases where assimilation is not seen as an option (Wimmer 2006: 337).

Assimilation can be achieved through several means. Elites may simply push aside the minorities and promulgate the new idea of a national community of solidarity, using time-tested mediums like ‘invented’ traditions, flags, symbols, and anthems (Hobsbaum and Ranger 1983). They may actively encourage inter-mingling and eventual amalgamation of various ethnic groups and their cultures into the melting pot of the grand nation (Wimmer 2002: Chapter 6). They may forcibly assimilate minority communities as means of overcoming ethnic divisions. More specifically state terror and violence against minorities often serve the aim of making clear, in a complex situation of overlapping membership, where the boundaries to the dangerous enemies lie (Appadurai 1998).

For those minority communities who are not meant for assimilation, the state apparatus may either forcibly expel them from the territory or relocate them within the territory. States that host permanent ethnic minorities first and foremost single them out by creating or re-arranging ethnic categories. This is followed by enforcing the distinction between national majority and ethnic minority by employing three related strategies – segregation, legalization, and discrimination. By tying the distribution of life chances to membership in ethnic categories, segregation, legalization and discrimination powerfully affect the way individuals

define themselves and are formidable tools to enforce the distinction between national majority and ethnic minority (Forsyth 1999).

Segregation is aimed at reducing interaction between members of different ethnic categories. This greatly enhances the credibility of the categorization, since creates or reinforces group boundaries and closures and thus makes the division appear natural and self-evident. Law is another powerful tool for reinforcing ethnic division by ascribing differential statuses to various ethnopolitical communities. Within the legal system, the most powerful tool is citizenship laws (Brubaker 1992). Ethnic minorities not considered part of the national majority are often relegated to the status of second class citizens. A final strategy of ethnic boundary enforcement is institutionalized discrimination: the unequal treatment of persons of different ethno-racial background in day-to-day workings of the state administration – even when no restrictions are placed on formal citizenship rights. Mechanisms such as demarcation of administrative areas to conform to presumed ethnic boundaries, establishment of systems of separate confessional autonomy, language policies, state distribution of economic resources and jobs are some of the ways of institutionalizing discrimination (Brass 1991).

Once the distinction between national majority and ethnic minority has been established and enforced, members of a dominant ethnic group with privileged relationship to the nationalizing state share a common interest in controlling the boundary (Rothschild 1981: chapter 5). It follows that groups that lose out in this struggle for state power are more fertile breeding grounds for organizations that challenge the government. Under the conditions of pervasive ethnic favouritism, political leaders and followers are driven by the strategic motive to avoid or even to overturn dominance by ethnic ‘others’. This motive is simultaneously material, political, and symbolic: ‘adequate’ or ‘just’ representation in a central government offers material advantages such as access to government jobs and services, legal advantages such as the benefits of full citizenship rights, a fair trial, and protection from arbitrary violence, and symbolic advantages such as the prestige of belonging to a ‘state-owning’ ethnic group. The more representatives from an ethnic group are excluded from central executive power, the more the likelihood of war (Cederman *et al.* 2010: 94-96).

In virtually all post-colonial and post-revolutionary states 'state-building' has meant policies aimed at assimilating communal group members, restraining their collective autonomy, and extracting their resources and manpower for the use of the state. Such policies have cross-cutting effects on communal action: they intensify grievances but also increase the costs of acting on them, and may offer payoffs for cooperating with and assimilating to dominant groups. However, not all nationalizing states are successful at their nation-building attempts. The failed nation-building projects of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia are prime examples. Federalism may be seen as a solution to check inter-ethnic conflict in multiethnic societies. However, while the federated state provides considerable political flexibility and presents minority groups with possibilities of demanding the construction of new political arenas or reorganisation of old ones, the very failure to grant adequate political autonomy to aspirant national groups promotes centrifugal tendencies that federalism was in the first place intended to resolve (Brass 1991; Wimmer 2006).

Ethnicization of bureaucracy may also come about through ethnofederalism – a federal political system in which component territorial governance units are intentionally associated with specific ethnic categories (Roeder 1991: 196-232; Hale 2004: 165-166). In such systems, the regional administrative boundaries are typically established as key lines along which coordination occurs for issues of centre-periphery relations. Ethnofederal regions have governments that typically claim to represent the 'titular' ethnic group (Hale 2008: 64). Titular status serves to territorialize the eponymous nation deemed to be 'autochthonous' (indigenous to the territory) within its given boundaries, institutionalizing a powerful sense of ownership by these groups over those territories (Broers 2005: 7). Scholars are however divided on the consequence ethnofederalism has on its constituent units. Many consider ethnofederalism to be responsible, at least in part, for the dramatic collapse of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia (Brubaker 1996). They argue that organizing the state's territory along ethnic lines unwittingly gives rise to elites who show favouritism for their ethnic community. Others, citing cases of India and Switzerland, see ethnofederalism as a unifying force in multi-ethnic states. These scholars argue that when ethnic and national minorities are granted with autonomy, opportunities for the central government to exploit these groups are automatically closed (Brass 1991; Gurr 1993).

Multiethnic states have several means by which they can survive despite strong ethnic

internal divides (Hale 2008: 255). One is redistribution of resources such that all regions see it economically beneficial to remain in the union (Treisman 1999). Another is decentralization by which regional group representatives feel greater sense of control over their fates in the union and resources with which future exploitation attempts can be resisted (Horowitz 1985; Amoretti and Bermeo 2004). However these strategies can be difficult to implement if the ethnofederation contains an ethnic core region, a single ethnic federal region that enjoys dramatic superiority in population and hence perceived potential influence in the union. Ethnic core regions promote the rise of 'dual power' situations: the ruling party of the ethnic core region commands equal or at times greater support within the federation than the central authority so as to eventually pose a challenge and dismantle the central authority. Ethnic core regions also digress the capacity of central governments to credibly commit to the security of other ethnic minority regions. Finally, core regions facilitate the collective imagining of a core-group nation-state separate from the union state. In this way, ethnic core regions increase the propensity of ethnofederal states to fissure along ethnic lines. It is hard for such countries to stay together because their ethnic minority populations are more likely to see themselves as being somehow separated from control over their fate in the union than would populations perceiving no ethnic distinctions between themselves and those in power (Hale 2004: 165-166).

In ethnofederal states where one ethnic group dominates but where the group is not located as a united core in a single federal region, the efforts of political entrepreneurs to promote the collective imagining of an independent core nation-state is hindered by serious collective action problems. Leaders find it extremely hard to incentivize members of their ethnic group for an ethno-nationalist cause. This prevents the creation of dual-power and thereby reduces the threats perceived by minority ethnic regions. This means that having an ethnic core region is not sufficient to bring about the politicization of ethnic differences; only when the ethnic core group is also united in a territorial pocket, does the likelihood of ethnicization of bureaucracy and other political and social institutions become highest. Indeed, it is found that all ethnofederations that have collapsed have possessed core ethnic regions, whereas no ethnofederation lacking a core ethnic region has collapsed (Hale 2004: 167).

Ethnic Sovereignty vs. State Sovereignty

Several scholars argue that the principle of nationalism – that ‘likes should rule over likes’ – has been the cause of waves of ethnic mobilizations and has led to a transformation in the state system (Kedourie 1960; Breuille 1994; Brubaker 1996; Cederman 1997; Wimmer and Min 2006; Cederman *et al* 2010: 92). The ethnonationalist struggles that have ensued have taken four forms: conflict over access to state power between leaders of competing ethnic communities (Brass 1991; Wimmer 2002), secession from existing states in order to establish a new state ruled in the name of a particular ethnic group (Hetcher 2001) or to join another state controlled by ethnic kin (Weiner 1971), and competition between new states over mixed territories inhabited by members of their respective ethnic core groups (Brubaker 1996). In all of these forms of ethnonationalist struggles, the principal goal of ethnic groups has been to gain status and security through demanding, what Richmond (2002: 381-385) calls, ‘ethnic sovereignty’. Ethnic sovereignty occurs when ‘ethnic groups claim sovereignty and try to act as if they were sovereign in the military, political, social, and institutional levels. It is these movements that aspire to sovereignty but are not yet recognized by it that have challenged the Westphalian state order. Often the only resources such groups are without are international relations, external legitimacy, and regional economic integration.’

‘The Westphalian state has provided the somewhat tautological conceptual and epistemological conditions for sovereignty and recognition at the level of the traditional inter-state system’ (Richmond 2002: 387). The state as a person of international law should have a permanent population, a defined territory, government, and capacity to enter into relations with other states (1933, League of Nations Treaty Series 19, Article 1). The state should also be independent, have a degree of permanence, willingness to observe international law and respect for human rights (Brownlie 1990: 72-74). The emergence of the state system has seen a drive towards coinciding territorial boundaries with a governance system, introducing standing armies, creating new mechanisms of law-making and enforcement, centralizing administrative power, altering and extending fiscal management, and formalizing diplomacy and diplomatic institutions (Held 1995: 36). For the Westphalian state, the institution of sovereignty offers a way of deciding the legitimacy of claims to power (Held 1995: 38-39). It also establishes that states are the ultimate form of political organization and the highest law-

making and enforcing authority and mediator of disputes in the context of international law (Held 1995: 78). Sovereignty represents the ‘unity of identity, security, territory and power’ (Richmond 2002: 394). States hold their sovereignty to be sacrosanct, seek to protect and promote their unity and cohesion. The exercise of sovereignty prompts states to exclude minority ethnic groups due to prioritizing international security over internal security, having democratic structures in the civil society that create minorities in the first place, and following non-intervention in inter-state relations. It is under such circumstances that disadvantaged ethnic groups turn to irredentist or secessionist movements and raise demands for ethnic sovereignty, inspired by grass roots activities, ethnic elites, or outside actors.

Horowitz (1991) explains that irredentism is a movement by members of an ethnic group in one state to retrieve ethnically kindred people and their territory across borders. It involves subtracting from one state and adding to another, new or already existing. Chazan (1991) defines irredentism more broadly as ‘any political effort to unite ethnically, historically, or geographically related segments of a population in adjacent countries within a common political framework’. Secession on the other hand is an attempt by an ethnic group claiming a homeland to withdraw with its territory from the authority of a larger state of which it is part. It involves subtracting alone. Despite the elasticity of the two definitions, the two phenomena are conceptually distinct. Irredentism falls within interstate relations of international politics, while secessionism comes under the purview of intrastate politics.

Ethnic groups believe that the international system lends greater security to sovereign actors than to non-sovereign actors. Moreover, ethnic sovereignty is thought to be an extension of personal sovereignty. Therefore if insecurity is to be prevented, both at the personal and the collective level, then claiming ethnic sovereignty offers the best prospect. In other words, ethnic groups perceive statehood as the most advanced framework through which interests and needs can be met. The exercise of ethnic sovereignty may lead to unsustainable mono-ethnic entities whose internal legitimacy may greatly exceed external legitimacy. By virtue of their mono-ethnic nature, such ethno-political entities are likely to become engaged in violent conflicts with the recognized states in which they are located. Many ethnic groups have mobilized to replicate the nation-state model in the hope that this would warrant them the same provisions in the international system as are warranted to the state. Ethnic sovereignty therefore is constituted by levels of political organization within an ethnic group, against

existing states, with the objective of autonomy, secession, and separate statehood (Richmond 2002).

The clash between state sovereignty and ethnic sovereignty arises because while the Treaty of Westphalia conferred the state with the right to govern relations between its subjects, free of external interference (Krasner 2001: 232), the Paris Peace Conference after World War I established a contradictory doctrine of self-determination whereby every 'nation' was granted the right to govern itself if it so chose (Stern 1995: 218). The expression of self-determination was derived from the principle of democratic equality and remained a somewhat vague notion incorporated into the international system since the League of Nations, although not explicitly written in it (Stern 1995; Wilson 1988: 56). 'National self-determination' operated as an international norm, which presumed that members of a nation could be easily identified even if they were not the same as the citizens of any existing state (Stern 1995: 218). Article 1 (2) and 55 (2) of the UN Charter and the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights made specific reference to self-determination as a right of "all peoples" but the principle applied to only non-self-governing territories. Since the movement of decolonization gained momentum, the principle has been applied to new areas.

The institution of sovereignty reveals several paradoxes. A first paradox is that while sovereignty asserts the territorial inviolability of the state, self-determination gives legal right to an ethnic or national group associated with a certain territory, to decide its own destiny in the international order. Consequently, ethnic groups have come to see their survival in possessing, or at the least claiming, a 'homeland' (Smith 1986: 93). In this way, ethnic groups appeal to as well as exploit the principles underlying the notion of self-determination to pursue their zero-sum objectives with regard to states. A second paradox is that while ethnic groups perceive sovereignty in its inflexible legalistic form, the very claims to sovereignty may in fact transgress this inflexibility. A third paradox is that while the traditional international system is based on rigid segregation and compartmentalization of territory as well as the division of economic resources, where identity, culture, history and tradition are valued only if they strengthen national debates and provide a source of devoted labour for defensive, military and economic purposes, the logic of the Westphalian international system seems to require identity groups to find security through becoming sovereign in a national sense and reproducing the logic of the nation-state in an anarchic

system. This tension between the international system and identity is therefore a core failing of the Westphalian international system and it attempts to promote 'order' (Richmond 2002).

In sum, in states with multi-cultural populations, dominant actors have either tried to assimilate, subjugate, or promote multiculturalism in dealing with minorities. In response, minority groups have given in to assimilation, tried to achieve autonomy, or merely voiced their grievances (Erikson 1993: 124). Ethnic groups aspire to sovereignty despite knowing that such claims would impinge on the state's claim to sovereignty in the process. Thus for ethnic groups sovereignty becomes, what Richmond (2002: 388) calls a 'trap,' because it is both 'their enemy, their saviour-liberator, and dictator' (Richmond 2002).

Xenophobia, Racism and Ethnocentrism

Wimmer (2000: 47-48) argues that the modern state for the first time links the notion of political legitimacy to ethnic solidarity. This has transformed ethnic differences into potent elements of discriminatory political discourse and practices of ethnic exclusion. Where the exclusionist discourses are ever more intensifying, the extreme points in the continuum are the development of xenophobia and racism. Xenophobia encompasses three attitudes: a fear of being culturally inundated by the 'other' and feeling estranged from one's group; a phobia that mingling with outside cultural and biological 'entities' through interbreeding is harmful; and a perception of zero-sum game between 'us' and 'others' i.e. a view that inter-ethnic relation is a showground of uncompromising standpoints where honour of one's group may be upheld by defamation of the other. Racism, both biological and 'cultural,' is also a way of perceiving the social surrounding, characterized by two notions: a hierarchic organization of groups i.e. a hierarchization of different ethnic entities in which one's own group comes first; and impregnation i.e. biological markers that tie an individual to his group cannot be altered during the lifetime of the individual or the history of the group (Miles 1991: 93-103, 1993: Chapter 3; Taguieff 1988). Together, xenophobia and racism, form the ideological constructions on which the relation between 'us' and 'them' is defined (Wimmer 2006).

The corollary of xenophobia and racism, or attitudes of out-group hostility, is the syndrome of in-group favouritism or ethnocentrism (Hammond and Axelrod 2006). Ethnocentrism may

be defined as a nearly universal discriminatory behaviour of holding one's own group (the in-group) as honourable and superior, and the out-groups as contemptible and inferior (Sumner 1906; LeVine and Campbell 1972). Ethnocentric behaviour includes preferential cooperation within the group and non-cooperation with out-groups (LeVine and Campbell 1972). The basis of ethnocentric behaviour is usually group boundaries that are typically defined by one or more observable characteristics considered to be indicating common descent, such as physical features, language and religion (Sumner 1906; Hirschfeld 1996; Kurzban *et al.* 2001). Ethnocentrism often also has a strong territorial component (Sumner 1906), because of which it usually implicates ethnic conflict (Brewer 1979; Chirof and Seligman 2001), instability of democratic institutions (Rabushka and Shepsle 1972), and even war (van der Dennen 1995).

Hammond and Axelrod (2006) write that it is usually thought that developing an ethnocentric worldview requires substantial cognitive ability on the part of individuals (Sumner 1906; Simmel 1955; Sherif and Sherif 1956; Sherif 1966; LeVine and Campbell 1972; Hewstone *et al.* 2002) and complex social and cultural inputs. They tell that while personal cognition and environmental factors certainly contribute in fomenting ethnocentric behaviour, empirical studies in psychology provide extensive evidence that suggest that strong individual predisposition for kin favouritism is prevalent even when cognition is minimal and social inputs very vague. Their laboratory experiments, for example, reveal that in-group bias can be easily triggered by even the most trivial and arbitrary group definitions (Tajfel 1970; Tajfel *et al.* 1971). In-group bias is also found to be widespread even when they prove costly for individuals and even when opportunities for direct self-interested gain are absent (Ferguson and Kelley 1964; Kramer and Brewer 1984; Brewer and Kramer 1986). Studies in cognitive psychology also support the finding that in-group bias is often rapid and even preconscious (Dovidio and Gaertner 1993; Lamont and Molnar 2002). Further, ethnocentrism can arouse in-group cooperation without requiring mechanisms such as reciprocity (Axelrod and Hamilton 1981), reputation (Nowak and Sigmund 1998), conformity (Boyd and Richerson 1985; Simon 1990), or leadership (Roosens 1989). Through these arguments, Hammond and Axelrod make the point that in-group favouritism is an undemanding yet powerful mechanism for supporting high levels of individually costly cooperation with only minimal cognitive requirements and in the absence of other, more complex mechanisms such as a central authority, typically a state (Tilly 1992).

Modernity and Ethnic-cleansing and Genocide

Legally, genocide is defined in the United Nations' *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, as the intentional destruction, whole or partial, of a national group through: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the groups; and deliberately imposing on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part (Hayden 1996: 729). Professor M. Cherif Bassiouni, who chaired the Commission of Experts charged by the United Nations to investigate war crimes in the former Yugoslavia, says that although 'ethnic cleansing' is certainly a crime against humanity, 'the question of genocide is a little more complicated' because of the definitional problem concerning whether genocide necessarily requires an intent to exterminate an entire group, such as in the Nazi 'final solution' against the Jews. The Commission of Experts defined 'ethnic cleansing' as 'rendering an area ethnically homogeneous by using force or intimidation to remove from a given area persons of another ethnic or religious group.'¹ Hayden (1996: 732) writes that coupling the 'progressive' definition of genocide forwarded by Professor Bassiouni with the definition of the Commission of Experts, resolves the legal problems of equating the two terms. However, the Expert's definition of ethnic cleansing, seen carefully, seems to suggest that genocide has been a tool for building a number of nation-states that are now honourable members of the international community.

While xenophobia, racism and ethnocentrism pertain to attitudes and feelings of hostility toward and rejection of another group, ethnic cleansing and genocide pertain to overt behaviour and action together with differential treatment. They are, in fact, a possible final stage of discriminatory policies (Mirkovic 1996: 196). For a state apparatus that is dedicated to realizing the ideal of ethnonational homogeneity by means of force and violence (Mann 2005), elites may go to the extreme of unleashing mass extermination against unwanted groups, acts termed in international law as ethnic cleansing and genocide. The term ethnic cleansing sprang to prominence with the outbreak of civil war in former Yugoslavia (Mirkovic 1996: 196; Hayden 1996: 731). 'Ethnic cleansing' implies purification of an ethnic group, characterized by distinct cultural traditions, a language, a sense of identity, a

¹ U.N. Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 780, *Final Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 780 (1992): Annex summaries and Conclusions*, UN Doc.S/1994/674/Add.2 (Vol.1), 28 December 1994, 17.

religion, from foreign people whose cultural characteristics and traditions are different. There is much debate over what ethnic cleansing connotes. Mirkovic (1996) says that in broadest sense, ethnic cleansing connotes cultural genocide or ethnocide. This means that through ethnic cleansing, only the dominant culture, language, religion, values and political organization is allowed to prevail, other cultures are subdued or obliterated. Further, differential treatment is meted out to members of non-dominant groups, by dividing the population into first-class and second-class citizens. Mirkovic (1996: 196) writes that such discrimination is highly dangerous, especially at times when states are struggling with economic degeneration and social instability. Thus, the first rounds of ethnic cleansing usually include purging outsiders from the state bureaucracy and national army, banning the use of languages other than those of the dominant group, prohibiting religious practices of the minorities, and physically separating the unwanted ethnic groups, typically through ghettoization. Sooner or later, those against whom the cleansing is directed come to be placed, as Fein (1979) puts it, 'outside the universe of obligation.' This means that cleansing comes to involve the very physical obliteration of the targeted group. When individual acts of violence 'escalate into systematic persecution, expulsion from homes and lands, detention in camps, destruction of villages and towns, mass murder of civilians (Mirkovic 1996: 197), and use of mass rape and torture to instil fear and eliminate all possibilities of continued coexistence (Hayden 200: 31), 'there is only one word in the vocabulary of twentieth century to describe such atrocities: genocide' (Mirkovic 2006: 197).

Malesevic (2006: 206) argues that cultural homogeneity is premised on the historical obliteration of the cultural difference. When this is achieved gradually or through largely forgotten historical episodes of mass scale killing, then it is accepted as normal and natural. But when the same process is put into effect suddenly and unrelentingly, such cannibalism shocks and disgusts us. Thus ethnic cleansing and genocide are not the outpouring of intrinsic savagery of some 'peoples', their authoritarian traditions or politics, their economic or technological backwardness. Ethnic cleansing to satiate the heterophobia of nationalizing states is typically a modern phenomenon (Wimmer 2006: 339). 'It is the very process of modernity and the pinnacle of its creation – the idea of the modern nation-state – that has set the foundation for all future genocide' (Malesevic 2006: 206).

Bauman (1989, 1991) and Mann (1999, 2001, 2005) provide convincing arguments as to why

ethnic cleansing is so deeply intertwined with modernity, and hence with the institution of the modern state. Baumann focuses his study on the Holocaust, arguing that the Nazi slaughter of over six million Jews is different from other forms of sporadic bloodletting, ritualistic persecution of ‘religious others’, random pogroms or gruesome cases of individual brutality because of its ‘intrinsic rationality’. The systematic persecution of a particular ethnic collectivity requires a rationally conceived master plan (‘the final solution’) and rational means of execution of the plan, such as a highly developed division of labour, a well-organized bureaucracy, clearly defined goals, and an impeccable technology. Baumann argues that the modern state not only owns these rational means, but that its obsession with creating a utopian state of social perfection – one that is ethnically homogenized – makes the state put these means to use savagely to eliminate a ‘despised enemy’ (Malesevic 2006: 207). Genocide in Bauman’s view is not the outcome of such a simple emotion as hatred; it is ‘a product of routine bureaucratic procedure: means-ends calculus, budget balancing, universal rule application’ (Baumann 1989: 17). Modern ethnic cleansing is rooted in technologically driven culture and governed by the principles of instrumental rationality, where violence is only a technique and nothing more (Malesevic 2006: 207).

Mann (1991, 2000, 2005) agrees with Bauman that systematic mass killings have intensified with modernity. Unlike Bauman, however, who emphasizes on the means of killing (instrumental rationality), Mann focuses on the ends of the process. For Mann, the two important factors relating to genocide are those which provide its structural context: the role of the state and the process of democratization. He explains that homicidal ethnic cleansing is most likely to occur in situations where elites of two ethnic groups aspire to create legitimate and achievable rival states ‘in the name of the people’ over the same territory. Two competing state-building projects would directly lead to the complete extermination of one by the other (Mann 2005: 33). Further, while Baumann characterizes the modern state as one that actively promotes homogenization to achieve its final goal of a utopian social design, Mann characterizes the state as being possessed with the staunchly modernist idea of ‘people’s rule’ such that makes the project of democratization turns into one of homogenization. Hence genocide is not the prerogative of authoritarianism; it is more likely to occur under conditions of imperfect democratization and liberalization. The link between democratization and homogenization creates a historical condition where genocide is only the ‘dark side of democracy.’

In sum, Mann's research identifies the profile of the perpetrators of ethnic cleansing, who according to him are the leaders, militants and the 'core constituencies' of ethno-nationalism. He locates the essential requirements for genocide in the ideology and process of democratization as well as the geopolitics which creates conditions for mutually incompatible state-making projects. Bauman on the other hand focuses on the psychological reasons for individual and mass obedience. He locates the causes of ethnic cleansing in the existence of a blueprint of an ideal society and the advanced technological means for its realization (Malesevic 2006: 220-226). What is clear, however, is that ethnic cleansing is a process of homogenization (Hayden 1996: 784). Within areas in which the sovereign group is already an overwhelming majority, homogenization can be implemented by legal and bureaucratic means such as denying citizenship to non-dominant groups, thereby provoking minorities who can assimilate, to do so, while expelling those who cannot assimilate or refuse to do so. In more heterogeneous areas, achieving homogeneity requires drastic measures, such as physical expulsion, removal of minorities by population exchanges, or extermination of the minority population (Macartney 1934: 423). Hayden points out that although it is only the last of these measures – 'physical slaughter' (Macartney 1934: 423) – that has come to be counted as 'ethnic cleansing' since the outbreak of the Yugoslav wars, it is important to recognize that legal and bureaucratic discrimination is bringing about the same result: the elimination of the minority. Physical slaughter comes to be a part of ethnic cleansing, since, after all, people are persuaded to leave their homes for new 'homelands', if at all, usually after extreme coercing (Hayden 1996: 784).

The implications of these debates over the nature of the state and the process of state-building raises profound questions about the underlying mechanisms at play in the relationship between states and their discontented ethnic minorities – questions that revolve around the degree to which this relationship is a zero-sum game. What is of consequence is that the logic of nation-state precludes the existence of national minorities within it (Hayden 1996: 736). The state may deal with minorities through assimilation, expulsion or extermination, or by redrawing borders and exchanging populations, in all probability, largely through the same means that may be employed for expulsion (Macartney 1934: 423). The response of the ostracized group, however, is likely to be the one of redefining borders by favouring secession from the existing state.

Tilly (1985) however suggests that the stakes are high – secessionist claims will not only generate the emergence of political entities with state-like features, nevertheless it will create a teleological dynamic pushing the mobilized ethnic groups toward statehood itself. On the other hand, the perspective from the periphery suggests more accommodative possibilities characterized by mutual, if uneasy, coexistence between state and ethnic minorities. Herbst (2000: 12-14), for example, describes many of the ethnic assertions as ‘survival strategies.’ They emerge out of broader structural weaknesses of states, but are themselves very weak and very much in danger. Moreover, given the entrenchment of the Westphalian state in contemporary international politics, it is extremely difficult for such ethno-political entities to make the transition to statehood – even if they want to. As a result, Herbst argues, most identity claims are destined to remain as ‘indeterminate and intermediate forms’ whose political influence will rise and fall depending on the stability of the host state.

3. *Theories on Ethnic Conflict*

One of first obstacles to theorizing ethnic conflict is defining ethnopolitical conflict (Horowitz 1985: 95). Coser defines conflict as a struggle in which the aim is to gain objectives and simultaneously to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals. Conflicts may be of two types: realistic conflicts, those fought over divisible material benefits; and non-realistic conflicts, those fought over indivisible symbolic goods such as identity, honour, ideology and religion. While realistic conflicts may see contenders compromising over divisible materials in order to make peace, non-realistic conflicts seldom end in compromise because contenders hold symbolic goods to be mutually exclusive (Coser 1956: 8).

Scholars have identified different conditions that may qualify a realistic or non-realistic conflict as an 'ethnic' conflict. For Gurr (2000: 65) a conflict may be 'ethnic' if a minority group makes claims against the state or other political actors. Stavenhagen (1996) requires contending parties to identify themselves or one another using ethnic criteria so as to turn a conflict into an 'ethnic' one. Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010: 101) identify two additional criteria: armed organizations must both explicitly pursue ethnonationalist aims such as self-determination, more influence for one's group over government, autonomy, and/or language and other cultural rights; and armed organizations must predominantly recruit fighters from among their leaders' own ethnic group and forge alliances on the basis of ethnic affiliations. Thus, the secessionist movement of the Abkhaz against the Georgian state, and the aggression of the Bosnian Serbs against the Bosnian Muslims in Former Yugoslav federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina are examples of ethnopolitical conflicts.

The theories discussed in this chapter have been classified in two ways, the level of analysis and the causal variable they address. Two levels of analysis are used: the domestic level and the perceptual level. Domestic explanations of ethnic conflict focus on the behaviour of states towards its constituent ethnic groups, the effect of social mobilization on group behaviour, the impact of nationalism on inter-ethnic relations, and the impact of democratization on inter-ethnic relations. Perceptual explanations focus on the group's perception of themselves and of the others. These take into account discourses, false histories, sentiments, grievances, and hatred that circulate within groups. Based on causal variables, the theories are classified

into three groups: social, economic and perceptual theories (Brown 1996: 14-20). Social factors include the effects of the process of modernization and the existence of cultural homogeneity on ethnic groups; economic factors capture the relation between the financial, organizational and military strength of ethnic groups and the likelihood of outbreak of rebellions; political factors account for the role of ethnic elites and state elites in fomenting conflicts; and psychocultural factors account for the perceptions of deprivation, anger and frustration within ethnic groups that may push them towards belligerent behaviour.

Table 1
Factors in Ethnic Conflict

<i>Level of Analysis</i>	<i>Factor</i>	<i>Theories of Ethnic Conflict</i>	<i>Authors</i>
Domestic	Social	Modernization	Deutsch (1953; 1961), Lerner (1967), Huntington (1968), Melson and Wope (1970), Smelser (2007), Geertz (1963)
		Cultural Pluralism	Furnivall (1945), Smith (1969)
Domestic	Economic	Rebel Predation	Collier (2000, 2004, 2006)
Domestic	Political	Elite Competition	Brass (1991)
Perceptual	Psychological	Relative Deprivation	Gurr (1968a, 1968b)

Based on Brown (1996: 14-20) and Van Evera (1994: 8-9)

Social Factors

One of the best known and most influential theorists in this category is the one advanced by Deutsch. He constructs a paradigm of national integration employing two key concepts: social mobilization and assimilation. On the one hand, modernization leads to greater ‘social mobilization;’ social mobilization being an overall process of change brought about by the transition from traditional to modern ways of life by substantial populations in countries. On the other hand, increasing urbanization and the spread of communication – also a consequence of modernization – result in the assimilation of the mobilized populations into the national mainstream. The outcome is national integration – the basis for nationalism (Deutsch 1953: 86-130).

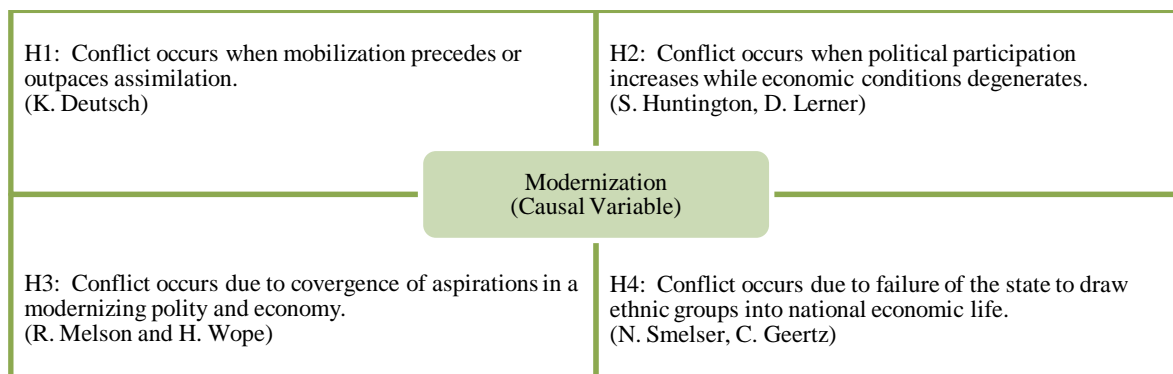
Deutsch, however, signals the dangers of disruption of the integrative process. Using the same concepts of mobilization and assimilation, he argues that parochialism or regionalism, including its ethnic forms, with their concomitant instability and national fragmentation, could result from situations in which mobilization outpaces assimilation. The mobilization-assimilation gap created when mobilization precedes assimilation causes national fragmentation and the rise of parochialism. Thus, Deutsch suggests that ethnic conflict is a product of something analogous to a race between rates of social mobilization and rates of assimilation. The proportion of mobilized but unassimilated persons is the first crude indicator of group conflict (Deutsch 1961).

Other scholars like Huntington (1968) and Lerner (1967: 305-317) make related points. Both have traced the momentum for disintegrative tendencies in developing countries to tension between 'rising expectations' and 'rising frustrations', caused primarily by modernization. In most of these societies, the process of modernization, by causing rapid social mobilization, the breakdown of the traditional order, and the expansion of communications and transportation networks, leads to an increase in the number of political participants who are sensitive to the poverty in which they live. Hence demands on the political system greatly increase as new groups enter the political arena. However, since economic growth is slow in most cases, and because elites are concerned that an equitable response to demands could further slow down economic growth, the capacity of the political system to respond to demands is restricted. As a result the initial euphoria that is generated by the 'revolution of rising expectations' is soon replaced by the despair of the 'revolution of rising frustrations'. As political participation increases and economic conditions degenerate, many transitional societies experience political fragmentation and decay and the rise of parochial and ethno-nationalist sentiments.

Another variant of Deutsch's argument is given by Melson and Wope (1970). They argue that social mobilization fosters ethnic competition especially in the competitive modern sector. People mobilized into a modernizing polity and economy come to want more and more, to the effect that many people desire precisely the same things. This convergence of aspirations leads to conflict. Conflict, therefore, originates not because of the differences among people, but the sameness; it is by making people more alike, through arousal of the same wants, that modernization acts as an agent of conflict.

Another explanation within the broad brush of modernization is provided by ‘strain theorists’. They argue that ethnic political mobilization is a result of the failure of the state to draw minority ethnic groups into the national economic life and, of the growing cultural and political divergence of the ethnic minorities from the national majority (Ragin 1987: 134). Smelser (2007) gives a detailed exposition on dynamics of social strain. He tells that along with the transitional strains of modernization, forces of political globalization lead to the widespread recognition of the norms of citizenship and human rights. With the growth of transnational advocacy organizations and international governmental organisations promoting these rights, exclusionary states come under pressure to recognise ethnic heterogeneity. This gives previously suppressed groups the chance to mobilize and press their claims for recognition, autonomy, and even independent statehood.

Figure 2
Variants of the Modernization Hypothesis



Based on Deutsch (1953,1961), Huntington (1968), Lerner (1967), Melson and Wope (1970), Geertz (1963) Smelser (2007)

Modernist theories see the politicization of cultural difference that ethnic nationalism represents as a development of the last 200 to 500 years. The core argument is that economic modernization and the development of the modern state make upward social mobility possible, but contingent on sharing the culture of the group that dominates state or society. When the state or society poses ascriptive barriers to upward mobility for minority groups, they may develop separatist nationalist movements (Fearon and Laitin 2003: 78-79).

The mechanism that gives rise to nationalist contention in modernist arguments is state or societal discrimination along the lines of cultural difference, which is thought to create the grievances that motivate rebellions. *Ceteris paribus*, political democracy may be associated

with less discrimination and repression along cultural lines, since democracy endows citizens with adult franchise that they do not have in dictatorships. Even more directly, measures of state observance of civil rights such as freedom of association and expression may be associated with less repression and thus lower grievances. State policies that discriminate in favour of a particular group's language or religion may be associated with greater minority grievances. Finally, it is often argued that greater economic inequality creates broad grievances that favour civil conflict (Muller 1985).

Another approach that draws on the modernization thesis, but only partially, is the 'communalist approach' or the 'ethnic competition theory'. It explains ethnic political mobilization by focusing on three variables: modernization, elite competition and resource scarcity. From this perspective, modernization affects ethnic groups in two ways. First, it reduces ethnic diversity within both dominant and subordinate ethnic groups by eroding local identities. Second, as a result of the erosion of local identities, large-scale ethnic identity formation is promoted because of the altered conditions of political competition between groups and elites (Ragin 1987: 135-136). Communalists argue that although large scale ethnic-identity formation occurs when groups are compelled to contend with each other for the same rewards and resources, the roots of ethnic political mobilization leading to ethnic violence and even ethnic separatism lie in elite disputes over the direction of change and grievances linked with the scarcity of resources, and also when previously acquired privileges are threatened or when underprivileged groups realise that the moment has come to redress inequality (Heraclides 1991: 9). This phenomenon is more pronounced in modern societies, particularly those in the middle ranks of economic development.

The communalist approach is credible in explaining large-scale ethnic identity formation in modernising societies, the competition for resources that this process entails, and the dynamics of the elite interaction behind the politicization of ethnicity (Ganguly 1998: 67). But its major shortcoming is that it over-emphasizes the element of greedy, power-seeking elites who exploit the communal spirit for their own ends. Because of this, it downplays the importance of the element inequality and communal identity as well as the degrees of in-group legitimization that is required for ethno-political and secessionist sentiments to develop (Heraclides 1991: 9).

The modernization theory suffers from one major defect: it operates with a tension between its assumption of nation-states as the most irreducible units of the modern political economy and its treatment of all 'undesirable' forms of nationalism as survivals from previous eras that could be expected to fade away or tone down into acceptable patriotism in the long run even if in the short-term it caused disturbance every now and again (Talmon 1952, 1960; Parsons 1960). Modernization theory thus seems to predict that when peripheral zones are integrated into the state, they would be 'homogenized' gradually to share the cultural of the rest of the system. The encompassing state would dilute local identities and overcome rebellious tendencies by one way or other. Researchers emphasizing capitalist economics more than state-formation, expostulate strongly with the modernization thesis on this point (Wallerstein 1974-1988). Hetcher (1975), for example, focuses on the economic factors of ethnic mobilization, and finds that these movements can come about even by disadvantaged economic integration of peripheral regions. He studies the ethnic mobilization of Britain's Celtic periphery, which according to him resulted from incorporation into Britain's political economy in a disadvantaged position. Hetcher however has not accounted for why ethnicity was salient, even if the cause of mobilization was economic. This has Smith's (1983) criticism, who accuses Hetcher of economic reductionism. The account of nationalism as a peripheral response to core expansion at best helps to explain levels of resentment and mobilization. It does not address the constitution of national identity or the modern conditions of its reproduction. Apart from this, modernization also fails to account for conflict in backward societies, and for the growing fragmentation in multiethnic societies (Ganguly 1998: 58). The disillusionment with the modernization paradigm has led to a renewed interest in the 'theory of the plural society' or the 'incompatibility theory', which posits that multi-ethnic societies cannot remain both stable and democratic (Ryan 1990: 1). The most systematic version of this theory is developed by Furnivall, later modified by Smith.

Furnivall (1945: 161-84) argues that in plural societies – where different ethnic groups live in close proximity to but separate from one another – inter-communal relations are characterized by unchecked economic competition. Since relations between ethnic groups remain confined to the market place, these societies fail to develop a sense of a shared loyalty that can overcome cultural and ethnic differences between the various groups. Unrestrained competition and competing nationalisms that follow between different cultural groups causes society to fragment. Thus, cultural divergence, limitation of cross-cultural contacts to

economic relations, economic specialization by cultural sectors, lack of shared values, and absence of a common will makes conflict endemic to plural societies. The only way to keep plural societies in check is by dint of external force; this external force is provided by colonialism. Also, since cultural differences play a crucial role in inter-ethnic relations of plural societies, it would not be wrong to call ethnic conflict as cultural conflict because cultural divides are among the chief sources of contention between ethnic groups.

Smith (1969: 442) modifies the plural society approach. He says that cultural heterogeneity by itself does not qualify a society as plural. There must be a formal diversity in the basic system of compulsory institutions i.e. a society must have mutually incompatible institutional systems to be considered as culturally plural. A plural society may come into existence by three ways of incorporation. One is 'uniform' incorporation, where individuals are incorporated as equal citizens with equal civic and political status irrespective of ethnic or cultural affiliation. Second is 'equivalent' incorporation, where different collectivities are incorporated into a single society with equal or complementary public rights and status. Third, 'differential' incorporation, where a dominant group exercises power and maintains its superior position by excluding other groups from power. A differentially incorporated society can be held in place primarily through the domination of one cultural group over others or a formal acceptance of some kind of ethnic hierarchy. Together then cultural incompatibility and ethnic hierarchy make a plural society prone to conflict.

Smith, however, expresses doubts over how far these integrative mechanisms can ensure stability and durability in multi-ethnic states. First, uniform incorporation, which can happen only through assimilative policies, are sure to be resented by targeted groups. Second, differential incorporation would create an ethnic stratification – with super ordination and subordination of relations among groups and the exclusion of some groups from real power – which is bound to cause discontent among the politically and economically disadvantaged groups. Finally, although the equivalent method would seem to offer the best way out, in practice it would not produce a stable, democratic, multi-ethnic society because most often 'the components of consociation are unequal in numbers, territory and economic potential' (Smith 1969: 442). It is this marginalisation by the state of its ethnic minorities which Smith (1995: 102) identifies as the core issue in ethnic conflict:

‘What has brought the issue of the ‘nation-state’ to a head has been its predominantly plural ethnic character, the arousal of previously dormant and submerged minority *ethnies* by the social penetration and cultural regimentation of the ‘scientific state’ run by élites from the dominant *ethnie*, coupled with unfulfilled popular expectations, and the resulting growing pressure of discontented minorities on the political arena of the centre and its dominant ethnic community.’

Economic Factors

Collier (2006) presses a diametrically opposing point. He says that there is compelling empirical evidence to believe that societies which are diverse in both ethnic and religious terms are in fact notably safer than homogenous societies. The reason is that the more a society is divided into a collage of distinct ethnic and religious groups, the more difficult it is to recruit an army sufficiently sizeable to bring about a rebellion. In other words, diversity causes collective action problems that make rebellions in diverse societies difficult to organize. A collective action problem is a situation in which everyone as a group could be better off by cooperating but in which cooperation can fail because the individuals involved face incentives that put their individual interests at odds with group interests (Olson 1965). For Collier the measure of ethnic diversity is however not Smith’s notion of formal hierarchy in the basic system of compulsory institutions. He instead employs a measure in which ethnic diversity proxies ethnicity by language and calculates the probability that two people drawn randomly from the country’s population will be belonging to different linguistic groups.

Collier further explains that if a rebellion is to be organized in a society that is ethnically diverse, the rebelling group must be ethnically homogenous to assist cohesion. Since the rebels will therefore be ethnically different from most of the rest of society, the rebel leadership must adopt a discourse of ethnic grievance for winning the loyalty of group members and motivating recruits for the rebel organization. Hence, ethnic grievance forms the bulk of propaganda circulated by ethnic elites. The use, or the misuse, of ethnic grievance is a major reason why conflicts in ethnically diverse societies, look and sound as though they were caused by ethnic hatreds. Observers see ethnic hatred as lying at the heart of conflict, while it is conflict which causes the inter-group hatred.

From this follows the second major point put forth by Collier (2004; 2006). If the rebel organization succeeds in generating collective grievance, perhaps by fabricating both the grievance and the group, the resulting rebellion comes to be defined as political conflict. However, it is the military needs of the rebel organization which create the political conflict rather than the objective grievances. Collier remarks that scholars often suppose the opposite causal flow – violence is the consequence of intense political conflict generated in the first place by objective grievance. Yet, for Collier, the intensity of objective grievance does not have any bearing on the likelihood of rebellion. Many societies persist through intense political conflict for many years without being enflamed by violence. Collier goes so far as to even assert that political conflict is universal but ethnic conflict is relatively rare. He argues therefore that ethnic conflict and its incumbent violence occurs only where rebellion happens to be financially viable. For ensuring military effectiveness in the conflict, the rebel organization must generate collective grievance. The generation of collective grievance politicizes the conflict. It is therefore violence that produces the intense political conflict, not the other way round.

Collier writes that the economic theory of conflict is founded on this very assumption: for a rebellion to occur, a rebellion organization must survive militarily against the government army and for this it needs manpower and equipment. In turn, these create the need for finance. The most important requirement for a rebel organization therefore is that it must be able to sustain itself financially. It is this, rather than any objective grievance which determines whether an ethnic group will rise in rebellion. The motivation for the ethnic group can be any consideration, such as perceived grievances or desire for legitimacy. Regardless of why the rebel organization is fighting, it can only fight if it is financially viable during the conflict. As a result, rebel organizations use force to extort goods or money from their legitimate owners during conflict, what Collier (2006) calls predatory behaviour. Predation is a means of financing the conflict, not an objective of the rebel group.

The economic theory of conflict then assumes that perceived grievances and the greed for power are found to a greater or a lesser degree in all societies. Ethnic groups are capable of perceiving grievances more or less regardless of their objective circumstances, a social phenomenon known as relative deprivation. Some ethnic entrepreneurs will desire power more or less regardless of the objective gains deriving from it. In this case, it is the

achievability of predation which determines the likelihood of conflict. Whether predation motivates conflict or simply facilitates it, both accounts arrive at the same conclusion: the outbreak of rebellion is independent of the objective circumstances of grievance while being directly caused by the feasibility of predation (Collier 2004; 2006).

Whether predation is feasible and organization of rebellion thereby possible depends on three economic variables: dependence upon primary commodity exports, low average income of the country, and slow growth. Collier (2000) writes that an economy which is dependent upon primary commodities offers enormous scope for financing a rebellion because these are the most lootable activities of the economy. One indication that primary commodity exports are highly lootable is that they are the most heavily taxed activity. What makes primary commodities so vulnerable to looting and taxation is that their production relies greatly on assets which are long-lasting and immobile. This characteristic makes it easy for the government to tax them as well as the rebels to loot them. In fact rebel predation is simply illegal taxation. Conversely, in some countries government activities has been described as legalized predation in which primary commodities are heavily taxed in order to finance the ruling elites. Those who are victims of such predation may not discriminate much between extortion at the hands of rebels and that at the hands of the government, but this does not mean that government predation is at par with rebel predation – the costs of rebel predation are likely to outweigh the costs of government predation because of which the society plunges into war.

Low income does not affect the occurrence of rebellion in the way commonly expected: when people are poor they become cheap recruits for rebel groups because they have little to lose from joining a rebellion. Collier (2006) writes that though this logic is not incorrect, but if rebel organizations can hire poor people cheaply, so can governments. Therefore low income does not directly increase the likelihood of rebellion. Indirectly, however, low income facilitates rebellion. It comes about in the following way: the revenues which governments extract as taxes, rises with rise in income. When income is low, government revenue is also low. This reduces the government's capacity to spend on defence, making rebel predation easier. Thus, poor countries have a high incidence of rebellion because governments cannot defend. Collier further says that poverty indeed makes it easier for rebels to extract the loyalty of people because the poor are most likely to be angry and desperate. However, if

poverty was an important factor then greater inequality could be expected to increase the likelihood of conflict. For a given level of average income, the more unequal is income distribution the more severe the poverty of the poorest. Yet inequality does not seem to affect the risk of conflict. Rebellion is not the prerogative of the impoverished. Indeed, if anything, it is the prerogative of the affluent. One way in which rebel groups can prey on primary commodity exports is by seceding with the land on which the primary commodities are located. Such attempted secessions by rich regions are quite common. Slow economic growth and rapid population growth both make rebellion more likely (Kaplan 1996: 117). Presumably, both of these assist rebel recruitment. The rebel organization needs to build itself up fairly fast in order to survive against the army. Hence, for a given level of income, if there are fewer employment opportunities, fewer schooling opportunities, and many young people seeking education and work, the rebel organization has an easier task (Collier 2006: 11).

Political Factors

The primary political factor involved in ethnic assertions is the role of ethnic elites and the interplay of their relationship with the state elites. Paul Brass is one of the foremost proponents of the elite competition theory. In his acclaimed 1991 work, he devotes much space and energy in establishing a link between actions of ethnic elites and birth of nationalist aspirations among non-dominant ethnic groups. Brass tells that nationalism in ethnic minorities is most likely to develop when new elites arise to challenge the existing pattern of distribution of economic resources and political power between ethnically distinct urban and rural groups or ethnically segregated regions. New elites arise from culturally distinct, underprivileged groups to compete for economic and political opportunities controlled by the dominant group. The more persistent the competition, and the more unyielding the dominant elite, the more likely it is that the discontented elements from the deprived group will turn to nationalism (Brass 1991: 43 – 48).

Drawing on Gellner's (1983) definition that nationalism is a political principle that demands that the unit of governance and the nation should be congruent, Brass comments that for ethnic-nationalism to take shape, it must possess three attributes: political organisation, competent leadership, and resources for gathering popular support and throwing demands in the political arena. For an ethnic group, then, political organization is both an instrument for

achieving, and evidence of achievement of, multi-symbol congruence. The success of an ethno-nationalist movement, therefore, is measurable by how far its political organisation has shaped the boundaries of its group to concur with its political goals. In this way, a group becomes defined not only by its language and/or its religion and/or its claimed territory, but by the political organisation and the leadership that pursues its claim (Brass 1991: 43 – 48).

Elite competition theorists assume that ethnic identity is a variable, rather than a fixed or 'given' disposition, and that traditions are invented (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and social realities constructed (Anderson 1983). Therefore, there is nothing inevitable about the rise of ethnic identity and its transformation into nationalism among diverse peoples. Rather, the conversion of cultural differences into bases for political differentiation between peoples arises only under specific circumstances which need to be identified clearly. Competition between ethnic elites forms the basic dynamics that precipitates ethnic conflict under specific conditions arising from the broader political and economic environments rather than from the cultural values of the ethnic groups in question.

Brass' thesis stands in denial of several earlier theories. The 'inequality theory,' or the internal colonialism literature previously referred to, explains how regional disparities between economic centre and economic periphery, engendered by industrialisation, lead to the racial or cultural division of labour, and thence to the development of reactive national consciousness among peripheral communities (Hah and Martin 1975: 372-74). Brass holds that attributing the rise of nationalism to the economic and political exploitation of one group by another is poor logic. He says that inequality alone need not necessarily give rise to nationalism, nor is nationalism exclusively the reserve of disadvantaged ethnic groups. The relative deprivation theory that moves a step ahead of the inequality theory argues that it is not objective inequality as such which precipitates nationalism but a feeling of frustration or relative deprivation defined as "the balance between the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled and the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining or maintaining, given the social means available to them" (Hah and Martin 1975: 380). Brass rejects this theory too saying that there are no ways of measuring relative deprivation and that it does not explain the rise of nationalism among privileged ethnic groups. Moving away from the economic dimension altogether, the status discrepancy theory argues that not economic inequality, but status inequality faced by a non-dominant

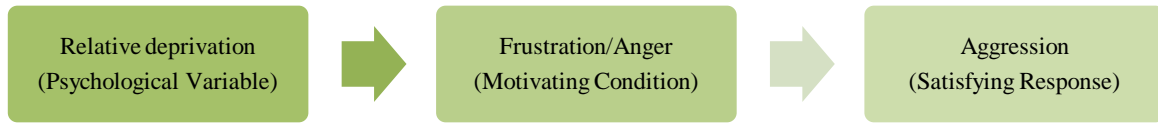
group due to the norms established by the dominant group, leads to the rise of nationalism (Glazer *et al.* 1975: 12-24). Brass however claims that strictly economic and political concerns inform the nationalist aspirations of non-dominant groups.

Elite competition makes few important points: ethnic elites who challenge the existing political and economic scheme can hail from either a privileged or an unprivileged group, but necessarily from a non-dominant group; elites embody the nationalist aspiration of the members of the group; and success or failure of elites in competing with the dominant group or the state decides the fate of the nationalist movement. Brass exposition of the theory however makes no mention of the vested interest of leaders in taking up populist causes. He gives the impression that interests and intentions of elites always serve the nationalist cause, or that elites have no personal motives in leading the movement but for their commitment to the nationalist political goals.

Psychocultural Factors

Psychological factors refer to the perceptual causes of ethnic conflict. The most prominent contribution to literature on perceptual factors comes from Gurr, whose economic scarcity and ethnic conflict correlation, and empirical studies on minorities across the globe have made him a leading scholar in demanding the primacy of perceptual causes in explaining ethnic conflict. Gurr's basic proposition is that a psychological variable, relative deprivation is the basic precondition for civil strife of any kind, and the more widespread and intense deprivation is among members of a population, the greater is the magnitude of strife in one or another form (Gurr 1968b: 1104). Relative deprivation is defined as actors' perceptions of discrepancy between their value expectations (the goods and conditions of the life to which they believe they are justifiably entitled) and their value capabilities (the amounts of those goods and conditions that they think they are able to get and keep) (Snow 1993: 60). The causal mechanism of the theory is derived from a psychological theory, the frustration-aggression relationship, which states that one of the natural responses to perceived deprivation is discontent or anger, and that anger is a motivating condition for which aggression is an inherently satisfying response (Berkiwitz 1962; Yates 1962).

Figure 3
Diagrammatic Representation of Frustration-Aggression Relationship



Based on Berkowitz (1962), Yates (1962)

The relationship between discontent and participation in strife is however mediated by a number of intervening social conditions. Gurr's initial theoretical model stipulates four such societal variables: coercive potential of the national political system; institutionalization; social facilitation; and legitimacy. There is however no hierarchical or causal interaction among the mediating variables.

The relationship between coercion or punishment, actual or threatened, and the outcome of relative deprivation is not a linear one whereby increasing levels of coercion correspond to declining levels of violence. Comparative studies of civil strife instead suggest a curvilinear relationship whereby medium levels of coercion are associated with the highest magnitudes of strife. Only very high levels of coercion appear to limit effectively the extent of strife. This relationship is based on psychological evidence which suggests that if an aggressive response to deprivation is thwarted by fear of punishment, this intervention is itself a deprivation and increases the instigation to aggression. Comparative studies, however, emphasize the importance of the loyalty of coercive forces to the ruling regime as a factor of equal or greater importance than the size of those forces in deterring strife, and this relationship is almost certainly linear: the greater the loyalty of coercive forces, the more effective they are, *ceteris paribus*, in deterring strife. Thus, two measures of coercion are used by Gurr: coercive force size, which is hypothesized to vary in a curvilinear fashion with strife, and degree of loyalty of coercive forces to the regime (referred to as 'coercive potential' in Figure 2) which is expected to have a linear and inversely proportional relationship with levels of aggression.

Institutionalization refers to the extent to which societal structures beyond the primary level are broad in scope, command substantial resources and/ or personnel, and are stable and persisting. There are diverse arguments about the role of such structures: political

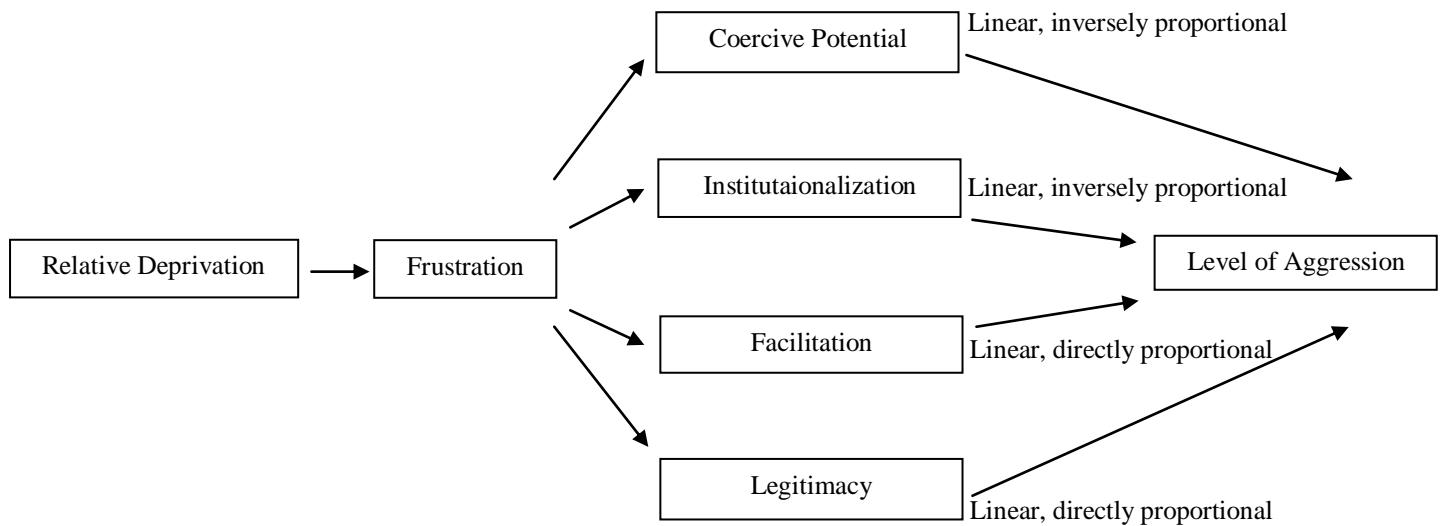
institutionalization is necessary for political stability (Huntington 1965: 386-430); there is a need for structures intervening between mass and elite to minimize mass movements (Kornhauser 1959); and labour organizations have a tendency in the long-range of minimizing violent economically-based conflict (Ross and Hartman 1960). Gurr (1968a) identifies two psychological processes that may affect the intensity of and responses to deprivation. One is that the existence of associational structures increases the alternative ways for people to attain value satisfaction. Second is that associations like political parties and labour unions and a range of others provide the discontented with non-violent means for expressing their discontents. The proposed relationship is therefore linear and inversely proportional: the greater the institutionalization, the lower the magnitude of strife is likely to be.

Facilitation of conflict depends on two variables: past levels of civil strife and social and structural facilitation per se. The theoretical basis for the first variable is that past conflicts influence the likelihood of present conflict through three mechanisms. First, ethno-nationalist activists attempt to glorify their group's history through narratives that stress their victories and might take up arms again without risk assessments even when chances of winning are dim (Rydgren 2007). Second, memories of traumatic experiences may live on in oral tradition or official history textbooks and public rituals, nourishing calls for revenge (Kalyvas 2007). Third, prior exposure to combat develops a set of beliefs among the population that violent responses to deprivation are justified and may help create organizational structures and identities that can be reactivated at later points in history or even create a culture of violence (Laitin 1995; Waldman 2004). The second variable, social and structural facilitation (referred to as 'facilitation' in Figure 2) comprises of organizational resources and environmental conditions that assist in aggression, and the provision of external assistance. The operational hypothesis is linear and directly proportional: the greater the level of past strife, and of social and structural facilitation, the greater is the magnitude of strife (Gurr 1968b: 1105; Cederman *et al.* 2010: 97).

On the proposed relationship of legitimacy as an intervening variable, Gurr postulates that people comply with directives of the regime in order to gain both the symbolic rewards of governmental action and the actual rewards with which government first associated itself, and that people are less aggressive when they perceive frustration to be reasonable or justifiable.

The hypothesis is therefore a linear and directly proportional one: the greater is regime legitimacy at a given level of deprivation, the less the magnitude of consequent strife (Gurr 1968b: 1106).

Figure 4
Intervening Variables in the Frustration-Aggression Relationship



Based on Gurr (1968a; 1968b)

In his later works, Gurr develops his initial causal model of civil strife into a sophisticated theory. He explains that the advent of economic scarcity changes the politics of distribution from one of optimistic cooperation (a non-zero-sum game in which cooperation is expected to lead to positive payoffs for all parties) to one of antagonistic cooperation (a game in which cooperation, or compliance, is required to avoid negative payoffs for all parties). In the short term, optimistic attitudes may prevail. In the longer-run, however, more and more ethnic groups will conclude that economic scarcity is a lasting condition. The prospects for economic gain of a group will then depend on inducing or coercing others to settle for less. Both advantaged and disadvantaged groups are equally likely to feel threatened by efforts of others to improve their position. Moreover, it is no longer possible for democratic politicians to broker demands of challenging groups. Groups come to understand that there is no more to be had unless taken from more advantaged groups. And if economic advantage also corresponds to political advantage, as it usually does, then advantaged groups can be expected to resist strenuously any threatened loss of either absolute or, especially, relative

well-being. In such a negative-sum-game situation group conflict over distribution is likely to intensify to collective violence (Gurr 1985: 60).

Cederman *et al.* (2010: 90-91) write that Gurr's work (1993a, 2002) on the relative deprivation tradition remains the most prominent data source for evaluating ethnic mobilizations and violence at the group level. However, they find that Gurr's empirical testing of mechanisms linking group characteristics to conflict propensity, the Minorities at Risk (MAR) study, has produced somewhat conflicting results regarding whether or not political disadvantage and discrimination increase the likelihood of ethnic rebellion. In fact, whereas some scholars building on the relative deprivation tradition find that political disadvantage has an impact on the likelihood of armed rebellion and secession (Gurr 1993b, Walter 2006b), others find that the degree of political exclusion has no effect on secessionism (Cetinyan 2002, Saideman 2002). The picture is even more mixed as regards the effect of political discrimination: while Regan and Norton (2005), as well as Walter (2006b), find strong evidence that political discrimination increases rebellions and secessionist civil wars, Fox (2000) fails to find any clear relationship for the subset of ethno-religious groups, and Gurr's (1993b) study of ethnonationalist rebellions in the 1980s even suggests that political discrimination is associated with less rather than more conflict. Olzak (2006: 124) aggregates data on the country level and arrives at the conclusion that both formal recognition of ethnic group rights and political discrimination increase the likelihood of conflict. Cederman *et al.* explain that these incongruities arise because Gurr's MAR study 'hardwires' the degree of power access to excluded groups. This decreases the scope of comparison and thus makes it harder to comprehend the effects of political exclusions in unequivocal ways. Moreover, in many countries the power orientations have dramatically changed, for example, the political status of an ethnic group may change from discriminated minority to ruling elite from one period to the next. Cederman *et al.* therefore urge that studies of ethno-nationalism should treat ethnic groups' representation within government as a variable instead of a constant. Finally, focusing on minorities combines the demographic concept of numerical domination with political exclusion. Accordingly, the Gurr's MAR scheme is not workable for countries with ruling minorities or complex coalitions of ethnically defined elites, as for example in Nigeria, India, or Chad, where ethnic conflict will be pursued in the name of excluded majorities (rather than minorities) or ethnic groups that share power (and are thus not 'at risk').

4. *Dynamics of Ethnic Violence*

A final issue on the subject of ethnic assertions and separatist conflicts is that why and when these movements turn violent. There is widespread agreement among scholars that of all forms of conflict that can take place between two or more groups, the one most likely to turn violent is the conflict along ethnic lines. However, scholars are at serious odds as to when exactly contentious nationalist politics escalates into ethnic war. Some scholars look to the very nature of ethnic ties: ethnic brethren are considered to be metaphorical family members, ethnic conflicts involve intense emotions and a sense of threat to existence, and killing may appear a more reasonable and justified reaction to assault on one's ethnic group (Horowitz 1985). In such explanations, ethnicity *per se* does explanatory work. (Fearon 2000: 10). Others scholars develop more general explanations for violent conflict for cases where combatants are organized or would like to promote organization along ethnic lines. While such generalized explanations do a good job in revealing the conditions under which ethnic violence is most likely, still many suggest that there is something atypical about ethnic violence so that there is reason to believe that its unspeakable cruelties springs from distinct roots.

The first step in the study of ethnic violence is to distinguish which type of violence may be referred to as 'ethnic'. Fearon explains that a violent attack might be described as 'ethnic' under any of the following three circumstances: it is motivated by animosity towards ethnic others; the victims are chosen by ethnic criteria; and the attack is made in the name of an ethnic group (Fearon and Laitin 2000a; Fearon 2004: 5). As opposed to Fearon's (2000a: 5) somewhat simplistic conditions, Brubaker and Laitin maintain that the 'ethnic' quality of ethnic violence is not intrinsic to the act itself – it emerges through after-the-fact interpretive claims. The claims may be contested, generating what Horowitz (1991a: 2) calls a metaconflict i.e. a 'conflict over the nature of conflict.' Such social struggles over the proper coding of conflict and interpretation of acts of violence then become worthy of being studied in their own right because they form an important aspect of the phenomenon of ethnic violence (Brass 1996a, 1997; Abelman and Lie 1995). The next step therefore is to illustrate, what Brubaker and Laitin (1998: 443) call, the 'constitutive significance of coding or framing processes in ethnic violence.'

The instrumentalist school offers the most simplistic explanation of ethnic violence: it is the joint product of political manipulation and organized thuggery. Many scholars believe that this simplistic approach does not take into account the routinized and ritualized nature of ethnic violence (Brubaker and Laitin 1998: 433). Instead these scholars emphasize on the institutionalized mechanisms, what Brass (1996b:12) calls the ‘institutionalized riot systems,’ through which acts of violence are accomplished. They seek to theorize the social psychological dynamics of volatile crowd behaviour to bring out the ‘organized, anticipated, programmed, and recurring features and phases of seemingly spontaneous, chaotic, and orgiastic actions’ (Tambiah 1996: 230). They do not address particular processes of violence but instead look at general intra-group mechanisms that condition and foster inter-ethnic violence; Brubaker and Laitin (1998: 432) call this the pattern-finding mode.

In-group Strategic Interactions that Implicate Violence

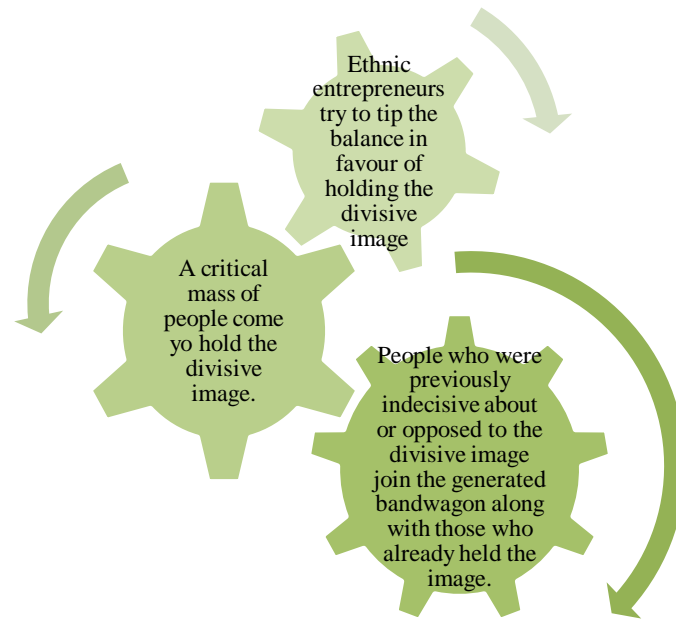
A first mechanism that drastically inflames a conflict situation is ethnic polarization: the division of a people into mutually exclusive and distrustful ethnic categories. Radical ethnic polarization is most likely to lead to violent ethnic conflict. Somer (2001: 128) writes that in the study of ethnic conflict, the effect of ethnic polarization is a relatively well researched topic, but surprisingly there is no satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon of ethnic polarization itself. This is because ethnic polarization is considered to be exogenous to analysis. Ethnic divisions that arise after groups have polarized are treated as if they are constant and do not require explanation. Yet without explaining how polarization occurs in the first place and alters the nature of identities in societies, it is not possible to understand how ethnic identities become catalyst for violence. Most analysts assume the deep-seated ethnic hatred and antagonistic perception to have been present in the society forever. In fact, however, hatred and misperception develop as a product of ethnic polarization. The ethnic identities that come to be formed after polarization are not the same as those that existed before polarization; polarization transforms the identities. If the groups’ past is traced, the groups may even be found to have a culture of intermingling and brotherhood. Somer’s attention is aimed at theorizing this transformation: how inclusive ethnic identities become exclusive (Somer 2001: 128-129).

Somer shows that the nature of ethnic identities in societies is endogenous to changes in public opinion and popular discourse. He therefore conceives of ethnic polarization as a

cascade process of individual reactions, wherein a particular image of ethnic identities – the divisive image – is boosted among the members of a multiethnic society. The divisive image is a projection of the ethnic identities as being mutually exclusive and incompatible with the idea of belonging to the same nation. If a critical mass of people appears to subscribe to the divisive image, then people who secretly followed it before and those who feel obliged to follow now, both come to subscribe to the image. In this way, the divisive image comes to be the norm and it is considered wrong, even blasphemous, to encourage inter-ethnic mixing. Accordingly, outsiders' image of the society also undergoes a change (Somer 2001: 128-129).

Ethnic divisions are highly prone to massive and violent conflict because ethnic ties are based on a putative 'blood tie' (Horowitz 1985; Connor 1993). Since ethnic relations by nature are so potentially explosive, once ethnic polarization takes hold of the critical mass of people in a society, interpersonal dependencies, or snowballing or bandwagon effects become very powerful. Hence the most appropriate theoretical framework for the examination of ethnic polarization is the cascade model because it incorporates inter-personal behavioural dependencies (Somer 2001: 129). Cascades may be understood as self-reinforcing processes that change the behaviour of a group of people through interpersonal dependencies. More generally, cascades explain situations in which the individual's motivation for taking an action, holding a belief, or conforming to a norm is determined considerably by the conduct of others in the society (Kunar and Sunstein 1999: 687-691). By the logic of cascades, if the number of or the social and political significance of the initial advocates of an action, belief, or norm touches a critical level, the balance of incentives tips in favour of that action, belief, or norm for a great number of people, who alter their behaviour accordingly. In the case of ethnic polarization therefore, ethnic entrepreneurs – people who have, for political, economic, intellectual, or psychological reasons, a high level of interest in the diffusion of the divisive image and actively try to promote it – constantly try to tip the balance of incentives in favour of holding the divisive image and undertaking actions that directly or indirectly promote it. If the entrepreneurs succeed, a chain reaction of individual responses is set in motion. People who previously were indecisive about or opposed to the behaviour in question join in the generated bandwagon along with those who had already been advocating it.

Figure 5
Ethnic Polarization as a Cascade Process



Based on Somer (2001: 128-129)

A second mechanism, very closely related to the ethnic polarizing of society, is the development of mass hostility: the wave of popular enthusiasm in an ethnic group for fighting for the ethnic cause (Kaufman 1996: 152). Van Evera (1990, 1991) disaggregates mass hostility into two constituent attitudes: hyper-nationalism or belief that one's group deserves dominance; and militarism or belief in the acceptability of using violence to pursue dominance over other groups. Hyper-nationalism may be more accurately labelled as ethnic chauvinism (Motyl 1990: 51). It is expressed in disputes over the status of ethnic symbols or ethnic leaders (Horowitz 1985: 130). Disputes over dominance and constitutional structures are highly likely to be violent (Hewitt 1977: 433) because groups are rarely if ever willing to accept subordinate symbolic status or, for that matter, even equal symbolic status (Kaufman 1996:153). Militarism refers to a group's norms relating to violence. In studying rebellions against the state, Gurr (1970) finds a connection between domestic political violence and a 'culture of violence'. Kaufman (1996: 153) says that the connection is highly cogent, though it has rarely been applied to the study of ethnic conflicts. Yet its relevance to ethnic conflicts is very apparent: groups which have a militaristic tradition do not restrain from using it, while groups that maintain a history of non-violence are not easily moved to violence even during conflict.

A third mechanism that groups engage in is deflecting challengers and policing dissenters within the group. Ethnic leaders try to deliberately stage, instigate, provoke, dramatize, or intensify violent or potentially violent confrontations with outsiders in an attempt to defend their position from challengers within the group and redefine the fundamental lines of conflict as inter-group rather than, as challengers would have it, intra-group (Brubaker and Laitin 1998: 433-434; Gagnon 1994). In the same vein, leaders administer formal or informal sanctions inside the group, even violent ones, to enforce a certain line of action with regard to outsiders who may be defined not only ethnically but in terms of religion, ideology or class as well (Laitin 1995a). Killing of suspected ‘collaborators,’ for example, is a way by which leaders maintain control over group members (Brubaker and Laitin 1998: 433).

A fourth mechanism is ethnic outbidding: competition among the elites of a group to formulate more and more extreme demands against other ethnic groups (Rabushka & Shepsle 1972, Rothschild 1981, Horowitz 1985: Chapter 8, Kaufman 1996). This can occur in a context of competitive electoral politics when two or more parties identified with the same ethnic group compete for support, neither having an incentive to draw voters of other ethnicities, each seeking to demonstrate to their constituencies that it is more nationalistic than the other, and each seeking to protect itself from the other’s charges that it is flexible on ethnic issues. The outbidding can overleap itself into violent confrontations, dismantling the very democratic institutions that allow for the outbidding in the first place (Brubaker and Laitin 1998: 434).

Yet outbidding does not take place always nor does it pay off as a political strategy all the time. Gagnon (1996) for example argues that contrary to many interpretations, the violent collapse of Yugoslavia had nothing to do with ethnic outbidding. Serbian elites instigated violent conflict and framed it in terms of ethnic antagonism, not to mobilize but to demobilize the population, to thwart challenges to the regime. When they needed to appeal for public support during election campaigns, elites engaged not in ethnic outbidding but in ‘ethnic underbidding,’ striving to appear more liberal than radical in comparison to their opponents on ethnic issues.

Activation of Ethnic Security Dilemma and Spiralling to Violence

Strategic interactions inside the group tend to reinforce affinity for ethnic kin and hostility for outsiders by way of propagating a popular nationalist agenda, coercing all group members to pledge their loyalty to the agenda, and purging all those who oppose it. A final mechanism that many scholars hold as the tipping point in a conflict is the activation of an ethnic security dilemma: a situation where efforts by one group to make itself more secure has the effect of making the other groups less secure (Kaufman 1996: 111-112). Developed first in international relations, the concept of security dilemma has been extended to the study of ethnic conflict by Posen (1993). In the broadest sense, security dilemma is a dynamics that follows axiomatically from anarchy. Under anarchy, states in the international system must resort to self-help and constant military aggrandizement to ensure their security. In intra-state relations, anarchy corresponds to a situation in which the state is either unwilling or unable to protect its constituents (Kaufman 1996a: 159-162). By analogy, the absence of an effective central government means that groups within the state must provide for their own security thus rendering inter-ethnic relations as self-help environment. In Posen's (1993: 38) words:

‘This is security dilemma: what one does to enhance one's own security causes reactions that in the end can make one less secure. Cooperation among states to mute these competitions can be difficult because someone else's ‘cheating’ may leave one in a militarily weakened position. All fear betrayal.’

When a group is suddenly compelled to provide for its own protection, it must determine: whether the other group is a threat or no, if yes, how much of a threat it is and will the threat increase or decrease over time (Posen 1993: 27). In answering these questions, the main tool that groups use to judge the intentions of the others' is history: what has been the previous pattern of behaviour of the other group (Posen 1993: 30). The judgements which the groups make can often be inaccurate and misleading. This is due to a number of reasons. First, regimes in multi-ethnic states may well have concealed or manipulated historical records to elevate their own status. Second, within the groups themselves old rivalries will have been preserved more in stories, poems, and myths than in ‘proper’ written history. Third, because of this each group will have difficulty accepting another's view of the past. And fourth, as central authority begins to collapse and local politicians struggle for power, they will begin to write down their versions of history in political speeches. Yet because the purpose of the

speeches is domestic political mobilization, these stories are likely to be emotionally charged. The result is a worst-case analysis: ‘unless proven otherwise, one group is likely to assume that another group’s sense of identity and the cohesion that it produces is a danger’ (Posen 1993: 31). Anarchy by itself therefore is not the cause of worst-case assumptions; rather it provides the necessary conditions in which this can take place (Roe 1999: 189). In this way, each side perceives the other side’s efforts to survive as threatening to its own survival. Both sides are likely to see the use of extreme measures, though highly threatening to the other group, as necessary for their own survival (Kaufman 1996a: 159-162). Measures taken by oneself for self-preservation can threaten others, who may react by maintaining and expanding their capabilities leading to a spiral of arms-racing and hostility. In short, the dilemma arises because of the inability of both sides to gauge each other’s intentions correctly. If each party knew that the other was arming strictly for defensive purposes, the potential spiral would be cut short (Lake and Rothchild 1996: 52-53). But because groups cannot know the intentions of others with certainty, ‘what one does to enhance one’s own security causes reactions that, in the end, can make one less secure’ (Posen 1993: 104).

Understood in this broad way, security dilemma, more accurately rests on the information failures and problems of credible commitment i.e. the inability both to know with certainty the intentions and abilities of others and to commit credibly not to arm for offensive purposes that drives the insecurity spiral (Lake and Rothchild: 1996: 52-53). The analytic core of security dilemma lies in situations where one or more disputing parties have incentives to resort to pre-emptive use of force. Jervis (1978: 167-213) observes that incentives to pre-empt arise when offensive military postures dominate more defensive ones, thus the side that attacks first reaps a military advantage. The offense is likely to dominate when there are significant military benefits from surprise and mobility. In addition, both sides must have the means and the ability to mobilize and fight. This requires arms, organizational capabilities, and territorial foothold (Kaufman 1996a: 159-162). When the offense dominates, even status quo groups, may be tempted to launch pre-emptive strikes to avoid a possibly worse fate. When incentives to use force pre-emptively are strong, the security dilemma materializes and works its destructive effects. Apprehension of pre-emptive attack from the other side motivates a group to opt for striking first and negotiating later. In ethnic relations, as in international relations, when there are significant advantages to pre-emption, a cycle of violence can seize previously peaceable groups even as they seek nothing more than their own security.

Table 2
Approaches to Ethnic Security Dilemma

<i>Author</i>	<i>Causal Variable</i>
Jervis (1978) Posen (1993)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offensive and defensive military forces are more or less identical i.e. groups cannot signal their limited objectives. 2. Offensive operations are more effective than defensive i.e. perceived superiority of offense creates incentive to start pre-emptive war.
Kaufman (April 1996; Autumn 1996)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>De facto</i> anarchy i.e. state is either unwilling or unable to protect its constituents, forcing groups to resort to self-help. 2. Threat perception i.e. each side perceives the other side's efforts to survive as threatening to its own survival. 3. Military capabilities i.e. both sides have the means and the ability to mobilize and fight.
Lake and Rothchild (1996)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information failure i.e. inability both sides to know with certainty the intentions and abilities of others. 2. Lack of credible commitment i.e. inability of both sides to commit credibly not to arm for offensive purposes that drives the spiral.

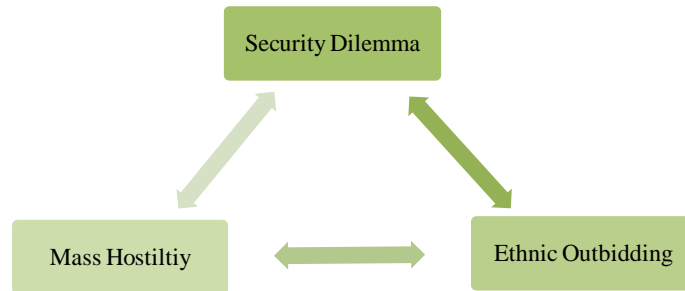
Based on Posen (1993), Kaufman (April 1996; Autumn 1996), Lake and Rothchild (1996), Roe (1999)

The basic logic of violence is as follows: people do not engage in ethnic violence unless they are hostile, that is, unless they are actively desirous of harming the other, and they cannot engage in large-scale organized violence unless extremist elites mobilize the group to the fight. Elites mobilize their followers for violence by engaging in ethnic outbidding. If outbidding goes far enough, its result is to make the policy goal of each group mirror the worst fears of the other groups. Each group's fear of extinction may then become justified, because its existence as a community may actually be threatened by the goal of the other. If this point is reached, each group is driven to adopt increasingly extreme measures, especially the creation and use of armed forces to protect itself and intimidate other groups. The result is a security dilemma (Kaufman 1996: 111-112).

Figure 4 illustrates the cycle of ethnic violence formed by the three interdependent and mutually reinforcing factors: mass hostility, ethnic outbidding and security dilemma. Figure 5 is a graphical representation of how in the presence of extremist propaganda and widespread

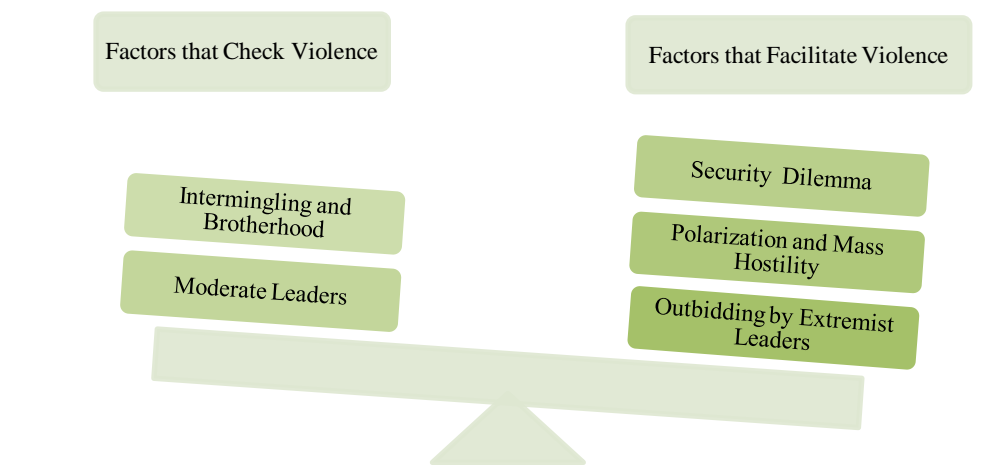
hatred, if an ethnic security dilemma is takes hold, then the conflict tips from a nonviolent to a violent stage.

Figure 6
Ethnic Violence Spiral



Based on Kaufman (Autumn 1996: 113-114, April 1996: 157); Brubaker and Laitin (1998: 423-452); Lake and Rothschild (Autumn 1996: 52-53); Posen (1993: 27-29)

Figure 7
Outbreak of Violence



Based on Kaufman (Autumn 1996: 108-138, April 1996: 157); Brubaker and Laitin (1998: 423-452)

Mass-led and Elite-led Processes of Violence

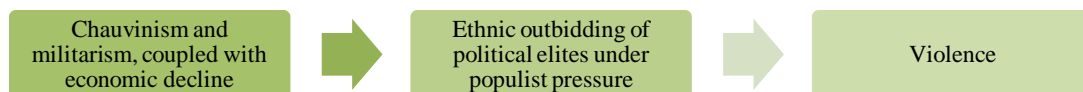
Who initiates ethnic violence depends on which of the two factors, mass hostility or ethnic outbidding, activates the security dilemma. If security dilemma is triggered by mass hostility and fear, violence will most likely be initiated by masses. Emotions of fear and hostility among the people generate spontaneous outbursts of violence, activating a security dilemma

which in turn exacerbates fear and hostility. Elites have a minimal role to play in such cases. For the most part they have only to bandwagon with the popular sentiment, articulating the goals which are already motivating mass behaviour (Kaufman 1996: 157-158).

Horowitz (1990) identifies four sources of mass hostility found to be present in almost every case of long-drawn ethnic conflict. First, an external affinity problem i.e. a situation in which a group that is a majority in one state is the minority in the broader region. Second, a history of domination of one group by another. In some worst cases, regions even have histories where competing groups have taken turns as dominator and dominated. Historical domination makes plausible the fear of ethnic extinction that feed security dilemma. Third, a presence of negative ethnic stereotypes. Fourth, a contest over ethnic symbols and last, economic deprivation. Economic deprivation is not a necessary condition but it is always a contributing factor because decline in economic health tends to make other injustices less endurable. Where these factors are present the process of mass-led violence is under way.

Rabushka and Shepsle (1972) hypothesize how the events unfold: the population's preferences are extreme because of long-embraced chauvinist and militaristic beliefs and hard pressed standards of living. Masses pressurize the elites to adopt extreme positions on ethnic issues in what is called 'ethnic outbidding' (Chandra 2005: 236). If leaders do not espouse such positions, they are replaced by other leaders who do. Intra-ethnic politics thus assumes the shape of a competition in extremism. Finally, the extremist propaganda and policy practices lead to security dilemma spiral of increasing violence resulting in ethnic war (Rabushka and Shepsle 1972: 66-68; Kaufman 1996: 153).

Figure 8
Stages of Mass-led Violence



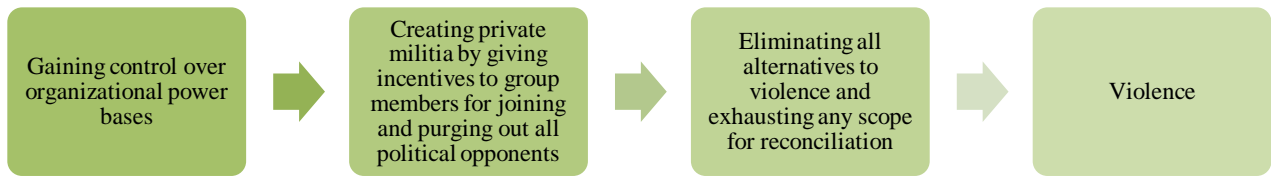
Based on Kaufman (1996: 153) and Rabushka and Shepsle (1972: 66-68)

Where elites have an active role to play, the process is different because elites intentionally cause both mass hostility and security dilemma instead of merely being conditioned by them. If violence is elite-led then security dilemma has been activated most likely by ethnic

outflanking of moderate elites. It comes about in the following way: extremist elites calculate that inciting violence holds the promise of strengthening their leadership position. In order to incite violence they outbid the moderate elites by declaring their conciliatory and comprising ways as untrue to the ethnic cause. They pitch an offensive goal, usually the political domination over another group, and expect that once violence erupts they can bank upon their group members to rally for them which would boost their power and delegitimize the opponent leadership (Kauffman 1996: 157-158).

Snyder (1993: 17-19) explains the process in greater detail. In the first stage, extremist elites try to gain control over organizational power bases, beginning with the mass media. Elites use the media to distort history and falsify facts to the point that they give their co-ethnics an illusion that some half-forgotten ethnic enemy has rematerialized. As fear and hostility circulate, co-ethnics actually begin to believe that the other group is a threat. This justifies and reinforces the chauvinistic ideology that leaders pursue. In the second stage, elites create a private militia using state funds and weaponry. Since there may not be a large turnout for joining the militia, elites need to provide personal incentives to their people to mobilize them to fight. Once mobilized, such militias can be counted upon to stage violent acts and provoke the other side to respond by arming itself. The arming of the enemy group is used as a pretext to conduct more military raids, provoking still more counteraction. The result is a security dilemma for both sides. While offering incentives to militiamen and supporters, leaders undertake a parallel process of purging out political opponents within their own group. Members who disregard or oppose the chauvinistic agenda are plucked out by political or economic harassment or intimidation at the hands of militiamen. The final tactic used by elites is to remove or discredit all the alternatives to violence. This may be done by simply defining the contentious issues in non-negotiable terms, or if peace talks are underway then disrupting it by behaving unyieldingly or dishonouring it by accusing the other party of obstinacy. Whichever the way, the aim is to eliminate any scope of conciliation (Kauffman 1996: 155).

Figure 9
Stages of Elite-led Violence



Based on Kauffman (1996: 155-157) and Snyder (1993)

In a given case, the processes of mass-led and elite-led violence can be distinguished by looking at the order of events. The first distinguishing feature is the relationship between mass opinion and mass media. If mass hostility materializes before the media comes under the sway of chauvinist propaganda then violence must be mass-led because leaders will not have had the opportunity to generate the hostility. If mass hostility appears well after an extremist media campaign has begun then violence is elite-led. The second distinguishing feature is timing. If ethnic violence begins before extremists have acquired political and military muscle, any violence must be mass-led because extremist leaders cannot have had the capability to initiate it. If on the other hand ethnic extremists come to power before serious ethnic conflict breaks out and for reasons unconnected to ethnic issues then an elite-led process is likely. If there is evidence that the leaders intentionally created a security dilemma for example by using selective incentives to create private militias which would carry out violence, the process of elite-led violence is made even more likely.

Table 3
Elite and Mass-led Processes of Ethnic Violence

<i>Causal Variable</i>	<i>Trigger</i>	<i>Order of Events</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Process of Violence</i>
Mass hostility and fear	Security dilemma	Mass hostility precedes chauvinistic propaganda through media	Violence begins before extremist acquire political and military power	Mass-led
Ethnic outflanking by political elites	Security dilemma	Extremist media campaign precedes mass hostility	Ethnic extremists come to power before serious conflict breaks out	Elite-led

Based on Kauffman (1996: 149-159)

Involvement of Ethnic Diaspora

The study of nationalism and violent ethnic conflicts primarily focuses on the relationship between the state and the identity groups represented by the elites and the masses. There is an influential amount of literature however that stresses that ethnic conflict is not localized to a certain nation-state which hosts the ethnic group that makes political claims, nor is the community involved in the conflict only that which physically resides within the state. An ever-increasing – and difficult to ignore – role is played by diaspora communities, generally understood as ethnic kinsmen residing outside the borders of the state. Diaspora is commonly confused with transnationalism. Though similar in practice, there are two significant differences between them. First, whereas transnationalism is defined as a process by which immigrants develop and maintain multiple social relations that bond their society of origin and with the society of their settlement (Basch *et al* 1994: 34), diasporas are taken more as communities in exile (Clifford 1994: 304). Second, whereas transnationalism is premised on the forging of social links between the communities in two nation-states, diasporas are seen as more globally dispersed (Demmers 2002: 89).

Safran (1991: 83-84) gives a more structured description of diasporas. They are expatriate minority communities: that are dispersed from an original centre to at least two peripheral places; that preserve a memory, vision, or myth about their ancestral homeland; that believe they are not and possibly cannot be fully admitted into their host country; that see the ancestral homeland as the place of eventual return; that are committed to the maintenance or restoration of this homeland; and whose collective consciousness and solidarity are influenced by the continuing relation with the homeland. Clifford (1994: 308) however suggests that such a strict definition of a nebulous term like diaspora should be avoided. Diaspora is a signifier, ‘not simply of translocality and movement, but of political struggles to define the local, as distinctive community, in historical contexts of displacement’ (Clifford 1994: 308).

The definitions of diaspora, the strict as well as the more accommodating one, reveal much about how identity may be conceived of in contemporary nationalist politics. As Demmers (2002: 89) says:

‘In the contemporary world, group identities are no longer spatially or territorially bounded. People support, produce or cling to territorially based identities even though they do not actually live in the territory.’

Since diasporas are ethnic kinsmen located outside the homeland yet emotionally tied to the homeland and to ethnic kinsmen, their role has steadily grown in contemporary nationalist politics. This increased role can be attributed to four factors: the rise of a new pattern of conflict; the rapid rise of war refugees; the increased speed of communication and mobility; and the increased production of cultural and political boundaries. First, the conflicts that characterized international politics up until 1945 were primarily those fought between states over issues of foreign policy, security and economic resources. In the post-war period most conflicts were the result of East-West rivalry, though the period of decolonization had thrown up the issue of political recognition of suppressed identities. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the breakdown of communist regimes throughout Eastern Europe, conflicts have taken a new form. Most contemporary conflicts are fought not between states but within states, where the protagonists are either an identity group on the one hand and the state on the other, or two or more identity groups. Second, the outbreak of internal conflicts generates great numbers of refugees who take shelter in other countries thus directly producing more diaspora communities or enlarging pre-existing ones. Third, the new means of communication and travel have allowed diaspora communities to easily bond with ethnic kinsmen in their homelands. They are actively engaged and psychologically involved in the developments and events in their homeland. And fourth, owing to the increased numbers and significance of cultural and political boundaries in countries of the Western world, contemporary diaspora communities find complete incorporation in the countries in the West within which they resettle either not possible or sometimes not desirable. The new diaspora find it safer to maintain close relationships with their ancestral homelands than to risk everything in a new, and for that matter, alien country (Demmers 2002). Clearly, the above ideas and concepts need further elaboration and fine-tuning. However, there is reason to believe that the political weight of diaspora communities in intra-state conflict has increased.

Collective Responsibility for Ethnic Conflict

A significant debate revolves around the highly pertinent question: whether ethnic groups can be held responsible morally and legally for their collective action. Held (2002: 157-158)

contends that ethnic groups, though lacking a clear organizational structure, are not random collections of people. They have a relatively clear set of decision procedures, are capable of united action and therefore 'should' be considered morally and legally responsible for what they do as a group. This is not because the group tends to behave like a full-fledged moral person but because assigning responsibility is a human practice, and as Held puts it, 'we have good moral reasons to adopt the practice of considering such groups responsible' (Held 1986: 159-181). Frankena (1973: 73) writes that the question of group responsibility should be considered in terms of whether it is better or worse to consider people morally responsible when they act freely in the various senses i.e. whether ascribing responsibility is justified on moral grounds. In the case of ethnic conflict, the strongest ground for holding members of a group morally responsible is that their actions are a revelation of their attitudes and choices. Smith (1998) writes of Frankena that his position recognizes that assigning responsibility is not merely an empirical question about causality, it involves at least moral arguments about when should and when should not persons be held responsible.

There are others who reject the notion of collective responsibility – on the very moral grounds that others accept it – calling it erroneous and even evil. Cushman and Metrovic (1996: 18-25) for example, show how Serbian explanation for aggression and ethnic cleansing of Croats and Bosnian Muslims was based on the idea of intergenerational 'collective guilt.' The Serbs held all contemporary Muslims and Croats blameworthy for the historic wrongs done by the Ottomans and the wartime Nazi Ustasha regime respectively. Similarly, Hayden (1996) says that the problem with the notion of collective guilt is that many in the condemned collective are not themselves guilty of anything. Lewis (1991: 17) also finds collective responsibility to be a 'barbarous' notion but by the alternative logic: it encourages individual persons to escape responsibility by blaming their group but not themselves for its crimes. Held (2002: 161-166) explains that the practice of group responsibility holds two opposing dangers: on the one hand, blame may be extended from a few wrongdoers to their whole group, and on the other, individual wrongdoers may escape responsibility by blaming others in their group and not themselves for wrongs attributed to the entire group. Having pointed out this danger, Held believes that those who defend the idea of group responsibility are fairly conscious of the gamble involved in putting it into practice, but rejecting the idea holds still greater danger as it would presage that absolutely no one is responsible for large-scale crimes perpetrated during wars. Thus in

defending the notion of group responsibility Held urges scholars to realize the dangers of rejecting such a notion. To say that a group is responsible for a wrong that has happened does not mean that all members are equally responsible or even responsible at all. But individuals should not assume themselves to be innocent simply because they did not directly commit the harmful act that fellow members did.

May (1992) throws a new perspective on the question of whether groups can be held morally and legally responsible, and if yes, what are the implications for individual responsibility. He argues that 'people should see themselves as sharing responsibility for various harms perpetrated by, or occurring within, their communities' (May 1992: 1). This means that persons should themselves take responsibility for an act instead of outsiders judging them for it. May's argument shifts the perspective of responsibility from the inside to the outside. Held (2002: 160) believes that the practice of people themselves sharing responsibility instead of people being held blameworthy, holds greater promise for decreasing the brutality that groups engage in.

Raikka (1997: 103) explains the clause under which individuals can escape responsibility for the blameworthy acts committed by other members of their group: if an individual dissociates himself from or actively opposes the morally wrong acts or policies of his group, he does not share the group's blame. By corollary, one who retains the advantages of group membership while merely professing to dissociate himself from the group's policies may fail to escape responsibility for those acts or policies. Held (2002) urges that in case of unorganized groups such as ethnic groups where assigning responsibility to collectives is concerned, it is not practical to hold every member equally responsible. Surely group members who oppose the morally blameworthy acts or policies of the group have diminished responsibility compared to those who actively engage in them or support them. In legal contexts, it may be necessary to conclude the question of group responsibility on an either-or basis, but in moral contexts such rigidity should be avoided. Moral responsibility has degrees. It is more appropriate to assess degrees of responsibility and degrees of sharing responsibility for the large-scale wrongs perpetrated by groups. But unless responsibility is acknowledged by a group's members for wrongs brought about by the group, restraints on the unjustifiable actions of some members are weakened; and, if wrongs occur, it is less likely that reconciliation with the wronged can or should take place.

In addition to the question of group responsibility for morally blameworthy acts, ethnic conflict also raises the question of whether persons with attitudes of ethnic hatred are morally blameworthy. May (1992: 37) explains that a person's attitudes are just as important to the increased likelihood of harm in a community as his overt behaviour. The members of a group who, for example, hold racist attitudes, both those who have directly caused harm and those who could directly harm but have not done so yet, share in responsibility for racially motivated crimes in their communities by sharing in the attitude that risks harm to others. Held (2002: 168) says that hatred for the other group is not against the law. Such hate may even be expressed publicly protected by the norms of free expression. Yet hate propaganda may significantly contribute to a climate of ethnic hostility which in due course can become the propellant for heinous crimes like ethnic cleansing, genocide and mass rape. Individual attitudes can add up to create a highly volatile atmosphere that increases the likelihood of racially motivated crime. As far as people share in creating the hateful environment, they are participants in something like a joint mission that increases the likelihood of harm (May 1992: 47). Even those who harbour racist attitudes but have not themselves directly committed harm do contribute to an increased risk of violence and are therefore blameworthy.

Conclusion

The principal aim of this dissertation has been to put identity and identity claims, under rigorous scrutiny: to explore the conceptual value of ethnicity and nationalism, to ascertain the relationship between modern state-building and identity claims, to indicate the strengths and operational weaknesses of theories seeking to explain the causes of these claims, and to come to terms with the social-psychology of the collective violence that such claims elicit. While an attempt was made to critically review the large body of literature on ethnic identity, ethnic conflicts and the elusive phenomenon of ethnic violence, the principal focus of the study was the ideological potency of ethnicity.

The first observation of the study is that identity discourse is one of the most dominant of strategies for political mobilization of collectivities in our times (Malesevic 2006: 227-228). Regardless of who uses it – bureaucracies of the modern nation-states, political parties, individual political entrepreneurs, religious and cultural organizations or social movements – the rhetoric of identity often turns into a powerful device for the ideological justification of political inequality by those in power, and in the most extreme cases, for mass slaughter of those left wanting for power. However, regardless of how unintentional such a heinous outcome is, identity is far from being a naive academic jargon. Rather its nearly universal appeal and credence is the very core of its ideological strength.

At present, social science faces a striking amount of disagreement over the nature of ethnicity and nationalism. Objectivist and objectifying definitions of these terms are exceedingly inadequate in capturing the diverse forms of cultural difference they entail. Ethnic groups and nations are not secluded entities; they have emerged as specific group labels in a particular moment of time and with a particular social and political purpose. In both cases, they ideologically rely on culture, whether as an anthropologically understood culture in ethnic relations i.e. culture as encapsulated in the way of collective existence or a socio-political understanding of high culture in nation-formation i.e. culture as civilizational precursor expressed in artistic excellence.

What is of consequence is that instead of addressing ethnic groups and nations as collective

assets of a particular group and thereby treating them as externally presumed ‘ethnic and national identities,’ it is far more gainful to treat these entities as categories of social practice. ‘Ethnic group’ and ‘nation,’ just as ‘ethnic and national identities,’ are not particularly robust concepts because they inevitably convey stability and inflexibility. Instead, it is more useful to talk about ‘ethnicity without groups’, or about nationness as set of eventualities, broad frameworks, political enterprises or organizational practices. Just as ethnicity is not a group but a form of social relationship, similarly nationness is a set of dynamic, historically contingent processes (Brubaker 1998, 2004).

This is not to say that no objective cultural differences exist. On the contrary, for the very reason that cultural differences exist – and not only exist but are blatant – that they easily become scapegoats for ethnic politics and nationalism. For unlike cultures, which are multi-layered expressions of actual distinctions in the ways of collective existence, ethnicity is not, as many scholars suggest, the aggregate of objective characteristics such as race, language or religion. Nor is it the representation of a tangential ‘ethnic identity.’ Ethnicity is a politicized social action, a process whereby elements of actual, lived cultural differences are campaigned in the context of strategic interaction between and within groups. By the same token, ethnicity is not synonymous to cultural diversity because very evidently a great majority of our cultural practices and beliefs are rarely, if ever, politicized. Whereas culture is about lived collective difference, ethnicity is often about segments of that broad cultural repertoire which does not have to be lived experience (Malesevic 2006). Ethnicity is essentially a political phenomenon, as traditional customs are used only as idioms and mechanisms for political alignment (Cohen 1969).

The second observation of the study is that the process by which identity turns into a propellant for ethnic conflict is related, but not restricted, to the manipulation of leaders, the ‘false consciousness’ of followers, particular economic processes or specific political regimes. Instead the overwhelming popularity of identity derives from the institution of the modern nation-state, whose political structure and value system constantly encourages and endorses the politicization of cultural difference. In fact, politicization of cultural difference remains the very source of internal and external legitimacy of modern states. Modern states are obsessed with the creation a utopian state of social perfection (Baumann 1989, 1991); they staunchly pursue the modernist idea of people’s rule (Mann 1991, 2000, 2005); and their paramount concern is international security (Richmond 2002: 382). This creates a situation

where states assimilate, dominate, or promote an ideology of multiculturalism with regard to minority ethnic groups. In other words, the states' exercise of sovereignty produces the exclusion of non-homogenous identity groups who can respond by accepting assimilation, trying to gain autonomy, or merely vocalizing their difficulties (Erikson 1993: 124). In this way, both ethnic groups and states are caught between the inviolability of state claims to sovereignty and the sanctity of identity (Richmond 2002: 400).

The third observation is that ethnic divides are not in themselves the key source of conflictual impulses. Ethnic identification itself does not inherently supply people with particular values, sense of self-esteem, or even dignity. Nor is ethnicity a by-product or manifestation of material and political interests, though it is true that ethnic lines are useful for elites wishing to distribute spoils, provoke violence, or coordinate their actions and expectations. These findings do not necessarily reject the seminal theories on ethnic conflict that claim ethnicity to be an inherently conflictual motive or epiphenomenal, but it does suggest some modest yet significant reinterpretation. Most important is the fact that those markers which usually define the 'ethnic' identity hold a strong capacity for serving as highly meaningful rules of thumb in dealing with societal relations. First, ethnic symbols 'thickly' connote a sense of common fate due in large measure to the myths of common origin and history. Second, ethnicity frequently features highly visible physical differences that are difficult to change or disguise. Third, ethnic differences frequently concur with other differences that determine a person's survival chances, such as socio-economic status, value systems or ways of life, meaning that ethnic markers can become convenient cognitive shorthand for rapidly inferring a wide range of information about a person one has never actually met before. Thus, ethnicity is important to people primarily because of the critical role it plays in navigating their social world of uncertainties. What people do in their less uncertain worlds, on the other hand, depends on the interests that drive the rest of the human behaviour, most importantly the interest in maximizing their life chances. Ethnicity can involve great emotion when people view their life chances as being significantly constrained along the lines of an ethnic divide. Researches in human psychology have confirmed these propositions. Ethnicity is neither inherently conflictual nor epiphenomenal, instead, it is a cognitive device for uncertainty reduction that precedes and enables interest-oriented behaviour (Hale 2008: 241-264).

To sum up, identity is no longer regarded as something which emerges in the practice of politics, but rather something which must be consciously engineered. As Tom Nairn says:

‘Identity’ has emerged from neutrality and become a positive term... Nationalities have always had identity. But now it seems they must have it. No longer taken for granted, identity has to measure up to certain standards. The comfortable old clothes won’t do: identity must toe a line of uniformed respectability. If defective, its shames call out for remedy, or at least a coverup; if ‘rediscovered’, it must then be ‘preserved’ from further violation; and above all it has to be asserted (‘proudly’) and so get itself recognised by outsiders. Yes, it’s time the world stopped smirking about *our* identity. (1997:183)

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