

# Two Paths to Nationhood: Explaining the Goals of Ethnic Rebellions

by

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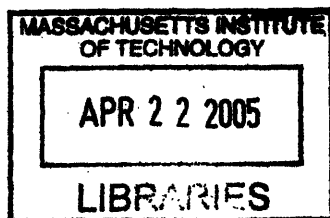
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# **Two Paths to Nationhood: Explaining the Goals of Ethnic Rebellions**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Contrary to widely held assumptions in the ethnic conflict literature, ethnic rebellions do not have to be separatist. Indeed, roughly one third of the largest ethnic rebellions since World War II have been attempts to take over, rather than separate from, existing states. Incorporating theories of nationalism and collective action, this dissertation offers an explanation for why ethnic rebellions take on different goals. The theory posits that popular grievances against the state concerning the legitimate relationship between the ethnic group and the government are crucial for understanding the objectives rebel groups seek. These grievances are shaped by cultural and historic differences between the ethnic group and the ruling group, and affect the goals of rebel movements in part by constraining elites who would organize popular support for rebellion.

The dissertation introduces a new dataset of 88 cases of large-scale ethnic rebellions since World War II. Using this dataset, the theory is tested against an alternative view that rebel group goals are determined primarily by opportunity. The analysis finds that opportunity explanations are not sufficient, and that a better explanation incorporates the ideas of group grievances the dissertation introduces. Specific mechanisms whereby cultural and historic differences affect group goals are illustrated through case studies of separatist and state capture ethnic rebellions in Ethiopia.

The dissertation makes several unique contributions to both the academic literature and to policy debates surrounding ethnic civil wars. Offering the first of its kind dataset of ethnic rebellions categorized by goals, and clearly distinguishing between different types of rebellions, the dissertation adds conceptual clarity to a literature that is often muddied by ambiguous categories, and advances the study of ethnic civil war by suggesting that different types of conflicts are triggered by different factors. Arguing against one-size-fits-all solutions, the dissertation also shows how conflict mitigation strategies will be more effective the more they are tailored to the specific political objectives advanced by rebel groups.

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Of course, I am ultimately responsible for the content of this dissertation, and any errors it contains.

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# Chapter One

## Introduction: Ethnic Rebellions and Political Objectives

### I. Introduction

Why are some ethnic rebellions separatist while others aim to capture the state? While social scientists widely agree that the loyalty of ethnic groups to existing states cannot be taken for granted, and that rebellions sometimes break out when this allegiance disappears, they have written very little about the goals ethnic rebel movements pursue. In fact, when such rebellions erupt, their objectives can take on strikingly different forms. Most commonly, they either aim to create new political entities (either new states or autonomous regions within existing states), or they are revolutionary, focusing their sights on capturing the state. This dissertation explains why ethnic rebels pursue one of these objectives over the other.

Through a quantitative analysis of 88 large-scale ethnic rebellions since World War II, and detailed case studies of two separatist and state capture rebellions in Ethiopia, the dissertation concludes that a key factor determining the direction ethnic rebellions take is how ethnic group members perceive the proper relationship between their group and the state. These perceptions are formed by historical and cultural relationships between the ethnic group on the one hand and the state and its dominant group(s) on the other hand, and shape the content of the grievances groups try to resolve through rebellion. The dissertation's conclusion stands in sharp contrast to many works that emphasize the importance of opportunity over grievances to explain ethnic rebellions. While not discounting the role opportunity plays in determining rebel goals, the dissertation shows that to best explain these objectives requires taking the content of group grievances into account. Specifically, the dissertation finds that grievances held by members of

ethnic groups that have enjoyed political autonomy, even in the distant past, are likely to focus on reclaiming that political status. Similarly, members of ethnic groups that are culturally distinct from the state's dominant group are more likely to see their distinctiveness as justification for separating from the state in order to rule themselves. Rebellions launched by such groups are likely to be separatist. In contrast, grievances held by politically-integrated groups are more likely to focus on improving group status within existing state structures. Moreover, ethnic groups with close religious and language ties to the state's dominant ethnic group will more commonly see themselves as rivals within a common cultural sphere. Rebellions launched by these groups are more likely to be aimed at capturing the state.

## II. Typology and Literature Review

A direct answer to the question being asked by this dissertation cannot be found in the ethnic conflict literature, partly because the categories of conflict used are overly aggregated or not well defined. The literature often fails to distinguish civil wars from other types of ethnic conflict,<sup>1</sup> and typically confuses very different types of civil wars when it does focus on them.<sup>2</sup> I

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<sup>1</sup> Though much of the literature on civil wars does not explicitly deal with *ethnic* civil wars, in the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the vast majority of civil wars have been ethnic in nature. See for example Nicholas Sambanis, "Do Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes? A Theoretical and Empirical Inquiry." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45:3 (June 2001), 269. Sambanis compiled time series data on 161 countries observed annually from 1960 to 1999. During this period he measured 32 non-ethnic versus 77 ethnic war starts (269). The question of the extent to which ethnic civil wars share characteristics with civil wars generally has also been studied in the ethnic conflict literature. See Ibid. and Chaim Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars," *International Security* 20:4 (Spring 1996), 136-175, which discusses differences in the appropriateness of partition as a solution to ethnic and non-ethnic civil wars.

<sup>2</sup> See Michael E. Brown, "The Causes of Internal Conflict: An Overview," in *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Michael E. Brown, et al. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), 3-25, which claims that "...there are many different types of internal conflict, each caused by different things," yet finds only different *causes* in its review of the literature, and does not disaggregate the dependent variable—internal conflict—at all. In the same vein, see David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict," *International Security* 21:2 (Fall 1996), 41-75. Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1993), especially chapter 4, offers a detailed coding of the level of violence used by hundreds of ethnic groups, but is vague when it comes to the direction such violence takes, especially since his definition of rebellion, as occurring when groups "...openly resisted the terms of their incorporation in states controlled by other groups" (92), is perfectly compatible with the one used here. One exception to the absence of theorizing about the goals of rebellion can be found in James D. Fearon and David D.

begin, therefore, by offering my own typology of rebellions, whose categories I employ in the dissertation.

Rebellions in this dissertation are categorized according to their goals, defined as the proximate changes sought in power relations between the rebelling group's constituency and the country's rulers. These are the direct political changes toward which violence is employed by the rebelling group. The typology distinguishes this dissertation from other works on ethnic rebellions in several ways. As noted, many works do not distinguish between different types of rebellion at all. Other works attempt to distinguish ethnic rebellions by characteristics of the ethnic groups involved,<sup>3</sup> or by the intensity of the fight.<sup>4</sup> Many other works categorize internal conflicts more broadly, not focusing on ethnic fights specifically.

The goals that categorize rebellions here can be distinguished both from short-term, tactical military accomplishments (taking this hill or that valley) and from the indirect

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Laitin, "Weak States, Rough Terrain, and Large-Scale Ethnic Violence Since 1945," Paper prepared for delivery at the 1999 Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, 2-5 September 1999, Atlanta, GA. Several works on the relationship between secession and irredentism are also exceptions. See, for example, Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), ch. 6, and Naomi Chazan, "Irredentism, Separatism, and Nationalism," in *Irredentism and International Politics*, ed. Naomi Chazan (Boulder: L. Rienner, 1992), 139-151. Horowitz briefly mentions the possibility of state capture, but only to suggest that state capture is a goal secessionists would pursue if the opportunity presented itself, implying that state capture is the more difficult goal and, more importantly, that any 'choice' between the two is simply a function of opportunity (232). The research on the dynamics of conflict being conducted jointly by the Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, Sweden, and the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, Norway, is also an exception in the way it characterizes armed conflicts. Such conflicts are classified as being over either *government* or *territory* in roughly the same way as this dissertation distinguishes revolutionary from separatist conflicts. However, this research does not distinguish internal conflicts from interstate wars, and does not incorporate ethnicity at all. See Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg, "Armed Conflicts, Conflict Termination and Peace Agreements, 1989-96," *Journal of Peace Research* 34:3 (August 1997), 339-358.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Gurr, *Minorities at Risk*, whose discussion of goals related to group characteristics verges on the tautological. It defines one type of group, ethnonationalists, as "[l]arge, regionally concentrated peoples with a history of organized political autonomy who have pursued separatist objectives at some time during the last half century" (18) and then suggests that in terms of goals, "[m]ost ethnonationalists...aim at what we have called 'exit' or greater autonomy from the state" (115). Jan Angstrom, "Towards a Typology of Internal Armed Conflict: Synthesising a Decade of Conceptual Turmoil," *Civil Wars* 4:3 (Autumn 2001), 93-116, offers a particularly unhelpful typology of internal wars because its categories cut across different dimensions.

<sup>4</sup> Gurr, *Minorities at Risk*, 95; Wallensteen and Sollenberg, "Armed Conflict..."

achievement of goods like better jobs, schools, or access to natural resources.<sup>5</sup> Importantly, while these latter goods might be objectives rebelling groups ultimately pursue, they can be achieved through several of the different changes in power relations I define as goals. For example, the desire for increased employment opportunities for an ethnic constituency may certainly motivate a rebellion. However, rebelling groups can increase job opportunities for their constituents in more than one way: through secession, by expelling immigrant workers from the newly-independent territory and replacing them with members of the constituent ethnic group, or through state capture, by opening up job opportunities at the center that might have been previously denied to members of the constituent group.

I categorize rebellions by identifying six types of goals rebel organizations can pursue to directly change the status quo political relationship between the ethnic group and the state. The goals are categorized as either separatist or center-oriented. The categories are both mutually-exclusive and exhaustive of the types of goals that can be pursued.<sup>6</sup> By addressing the definitional and conceptual problems found in the existing literature, this typology represents an important step forward in our understanding of ethnic revolts.

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<sup>5</sup> Though as a class, fights that seek desired goods like these *directly from the government* are considered one specific type of rebellion, called “policy challenges.” See below.

<sup>6</sup> The categories are mutually exclusive in terms of demands. That is, one should be able to place a single demand in only one of the six categories. However, in certain situations group goals may include demands drawn from both categories five and six at a single given time, and group goals could theoretically shift between any of the six goals listed in the typology over time.



<b>Table I – Typology of Rebellions</b>	
<i>Separatist</i>	1. <b>Secession</b> —The group fights to remove government control from a particular geographic region and seeks international recognition of that region’s sovereignty.
	2. <b>Autonomy</b> —The group’s goal is not sovereignty, but solely increased powers of self rule within a particular geographic area, without challenging existing state borders. <sup>7</sup>
	3. <b>Irredentism</b> —The group seeks incorporation into a neighboring state, presumably ruled by ethnic brethren. <sup>8</sup>
<i>Center-oriented</i>	4. <b>State Capture</b> —The group’s goal is to take power over the central state. <sup>9</sup>
	5. <b>Constitutional Challenge</b> —The group’s goal is to pressure the government, through military means, to change or preserve the balance of power between government and ethnic group, in terms of their respective abilities to enact policies. <sup>10</sup>
	6. <b>Policy Challenge</b> —The group’s goal is to pressure the government, through military means, to institute, change, or end particular policies. <sup>11</sup>

As will be shown, among the large-scale ethnic rebellions this dissertation examines, one mostly finds only three of the six types listed above: fights for autonomy, secession, and state

<sup>7</sup> Note that the categories of secession and autonomy could both plausibly include the goal of separating from a government below the state level (eg., from a regional government). Indeed, the Konjo and Amba in Uganda fought in the mid 1960s to secede from the semi-independent kingdom of Toro in southwestern Uganda, not from the state of Uganda itself. However, it is less plausible to imagine that the violence employed by such groups could be focused solely against the regional government, ignoring the central state. In the Konjo/Amba case, although the cause was separation from Toro, arms were taken up against the Ugandan Rifles. See Kenneth Ingham, *The Kingdom of Toro in Uganda* (London: Methuen, 1975), 157-61.

<sup>8</sup> I use the term irredentism to refer to the ideology of either the incorporating or the incorporated group.

<sup>9</sup> Also included in this category would be cases in which no single group can claim to represent the “center” during a war, but the goal of the particular group in question is rule over the state as it existed before violence broke out.

<sup>10</sup> Demands by Albanian rebels in Macedonia for proportional representation in government would fall into this category. For a list of such goals see, for example, Carlotta Gall, “Rebels in Macedonia’s Woods Unsettle Region,” *New York Times*, March 14, 2001, A3. This category would also include fights for self rule over a particular group of people defined in a non-geographic way, for instance a particular religious community. The separate laws governing the Muslim community in India are an example of a type of status that could conceivably become the goal of a rebelling group, whose effort I would label a constitutional challenge to the center.

<sup>11</sup> That is, groups involved in policy challenges recognize the legitimacy of government authority, but protest particular uses of such authority. Some demands by Zapatista rebels in Chiapas, Mexico fall into this category. For instance, demands that the Mexican government redistribute land and protect the poor from economic reforms (O’Toole [1995]) are examples of policy but not constitutional challenges. See Tod Robberson, “Mexican Ranchers Move to Fend Off Landless Squatters,” *The Washington Post*, September 23, 1995, A21, and Gavin O’Toole, “Mexico: The Day the Souls of the Dead Return,” *The Guardian*, October 31, 1995, 12. Zapatista demands for autonomy for the indigenous Indian population, however, fall squarely into the constitutional category. These demands are distinguished from a general desire for political goods like access to jobs because the former are the proximate goals sought by the rebellion.

capture. Further, fights for autonomy and secession often cannot be distinguished from one another, for two reasons. First, rebel groups have incentives to misrepresent their secessionist goals as simply a desire for autonomy because of international norms against redrawing state borders. Second, the actual goals of rebel groups commonly shift between autonomy and secession over time.<sup>12</sup> In practice, therefore, this dissertation boils down to explaining the choice between two types of rebellions: separatist—defined broadly as incorporating fights for secession and autonomy, as well as irredentism—and state capture.

Disaggregating the concept of ethnic rebellion from other sorts of ethnic violence, and disaggregating categories of ethnic civil wars themselves, should be of great benefit to an ethnic conflict literature that is often muddied by conceptual ambiguities. Ethnic civil wars represent a separate category, distinct from other types of ethnic conflict (like communal riots, for example). Ethnic civil wars are distinct from the larger category of ethnic conflict in at least three ways: 1) the necessity of state involvement,<sup>13</sup> 2) the degree of organization and mobilization required to

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<sup>12</sup> This is very different from the distinction between the broader categories of separatist and center-oriented revolts: the content analysis conducted to code the goals of rebellions for the next chapter's quantitative study showed no cases in which rebel group goals shifted between these two larger categories. This point is contested by Zartman, who claims that one goal is "...so often a stage successive to the other that they can be considered together." I. William Zartman, "Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts," in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, ed. I. William Zartman, (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 7. My conclusion on this point leads to an important implication: if rebel group goals can shift within the "center-oriented" and "separatist" categories of goals, then claims that violence in civil wars hardens positions beyond the opportunity for compromise might be wrong. In fact, I argue in Chapter Five that it is precisely within these broad categories that compromise positions can be found that can lead to the peaceful conclusion of these conflicts.

<sup>13</sup> States will usually, but not always, play a role; in cases of total state collapse, no group can claim to represent central authority and all contending parties vie either to become the central power, or to form states of their own (the reason for conflict in the latter case being, perhaps, contention over new state boundaries). The absence of central authority is key to Rotberg's definition of a failed state. Robert I. Rotberg, "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators," in *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Cambridge, MA: World Peace Foundation, 2003), 1-25. It is also important to dispel the idea that might seem implicit in the terms "ethnic war" and "ethnic civil war" that these conflicts literally pit whole communities against one another. In reality, such conflicts are actually fought between organized subpopulations claiming to act *on behalf of* a larger, ethnic population, and a state, usually controlled or dominated by members of another ethnically defined group. See John Mueller, "The Banality of 'Ethnic War,'" *International Security* 25:1 (Summer 2000), 42-70, and the discussion of the definition of an ethnic organization in this dissertation. It is also in the interests of any rebelling ethnic group to play up the ethnic composition of the regime, no matter the extent to which it can be seen

muster an armed force strong enough to challenge the state,<sup>14</sup> and 3) the level of death and destruction that typically results. Predictably, when studies of conflict causation treat “ethnic conflict” as an analytical whole, efforts to discover causes will lack analytic precision. That is, in trying to explain a wide variety of phenomena, the explanations will necessarily be overly broad.<sup>15</sup>

However, even when ethnic rebellions are studied separately from the larger class of ethnic conflict, such studies frequently assume that rebellions are simply synonymous with separatist fights.<sup>16</sup> Even further, some works refuse to consider the *possibility* that ethnic wars might be fought over state power.<sup>17</sup> As a result, studies that adopt overly-broad or unclear

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as comprising a single group. When an ethnic group rebels, the ensuing conflict is likely to take on ethnic tones, with the homogeneity of the sides increasing with violence.

<sup>14</sup> In contrast to ethnic riots, for instance.

<sup>15</sup> This point is inspired by Brubaker and Laitin, who put forward a rare call for disaggregation of the concept of ethnic violence. Rogers Brubaker and David D. Laitin, “Ethnic and Nationalist Violence,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998), 423-52.

<sup>16</sup> There are many examples, including Peter Alexis Gourevitch, “The Reemergence of ‘Peripheral Nationalisms’: Some Comparative Speculations on the Spatial Distribution of Political Leadership and Economic Growth,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21 (1979), 303-322; John R. Wood, “Secession: A Comparative Analytical Framework,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* XIV:1 (March 1981), 107-134; Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Conflict*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Political Science, University of Chicago, 1998; and Henry E. Hale, “Secession From Ethnofederal Systems: A Statistical Study of Russia, India and Ethiopia,” Paper Prepared for Delivery at the 1998 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, September 3-6, 1998; Exceptions include William Zartman, who writes that “[c]entralist and regional protests have different goals and hence are satisfied by different outcomes...” (Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints,” 6) and Roy Licklider, “How Civil Wars End: Questions and Methods,” in *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End*, ed. Roy Licklider (New York: NYU Press, 1993), 3-19. Fearon and Laitin hypothesize that states with an ethnic majority produce separatist rebellions and states without an ethnic majority produce state capture rebellions. Fearon and Laitin, “Weak States...” This claim is analyzed systematically in Chapter Two. Svante Cornell claims that geographically-concentrated groups will pursue separation and interspersed groups will focus their energies at the center. Svante E. Cornell, “Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective,” *World Politics* 54 (2002), 245-6. Steven David seems to recognize the distinction when he claims that “[m]ost internal wars...stem from power struggles in which ethnic and religious groups seek to wrest control of the state from regimes they believe are oppressing them.” Steven R. David, “Internal War: Causes and Cures,” *World Politics* 49 (July 1997), 553. But the claim itself is actually false; most internal wars are separatist, as Chapter 2 will demonstrate. Michael Ross, “How Does Natural Resource Wealth Influence Civil War?” unpublished manuscript, Department of Political Science, UCLA, 2001, links the use of resources in different ways to separatist and non separatist civil wars (pp. 32-3). See also David C. Rappoport, “The Importance of Space in Violent Ethno-Religious Strife,” IGCC Policy Paper No. 21 (San Diego: Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, University of California, 1996).

<sup>17</sup> According to the State Failure Project: “The distinction between political and ethnic war is difficult to draw precisely because some conflicts have elements of both. Insurgencies in Afghanistan, Guatemala, and Uganda have all drawn support from particular ethnic groups—the Pashtuns, Tajiks, and Uzbeks in Afghanistan, Mayans in

categories of analysis simply cannot answer the question presented here. An additional and related problem this dissertation addresses is that analysis of state capture ethnic conflicts is underrepresented in the literature. But applying reasonable and commonly-accepted definitions of what an ethnic civil war is, without prejudging categories by incorporating goals of rebellion into those definitions, it is clear that ethnic civil wars *can* be fought over state power.<sup>18</sup> And indeed, almost a third of the largest ethnic rebellions since the end of World War II have been state capture fights.<sup>19</sup> The TPLF capture of the Ethiopian state in 1991, detailed in chapter four, is a case in point. The war was fought primarily by a homogenously-ethnic army, made up of the Tigrayan ethnic group, which gave itself an ethnic name (The Tigrayan People's Liberation Front), adopted ethnic symbols, and made no bones about the ethnic motivations for its struggle.

Thus, since very few works even mention the difference between separatist rebellions and fights over state power, and no work systematically explores the distinction, this dissertation breaks new ground in the ethnic conflict literature. I attempt, however, to engage that literature

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Guatemala, the Acholi in Uganda—but since their leaders were fighting mainly to seize control of the state, we categorize them as political rather than ethnic wars. The leaders of Mexico's Chiapas uprising talked revolution but were mainly concerned about empowering indigenous communities, therefore we categorize this conflict as an ethnic war." Ted Rober Gurr, et al., *Peace and Conflict 2001: A Global Survey of Armed Conflicts, Self-Determination Movements, and Democracy* (Center for International Development and Conflict Management), <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/peaceconflict.pdf>, 10, fn. 3. Distinguishing state-capture conflicts from ethnically-based separatist conflicts, one author describes the former as "...cases in which the conflict is over central power and the rebels are ideologically or socioeconomically motivated; ethnic minorities come into play only incidentally." Zartman, "Dynamics and Constraints," 25. No room is given for state capture conflicts in which ethnic minorities come into play in any way less than "incidentally." Even in the case of the ultimately-successful Tigrayan fight to take over the Ethiopian state, presented here in Chapter Four, one observer persisted in labeling it a separatist challenge almost to the very end. James Minahan, *Nations Without States: A Historical Dictionary of Contemporary National Movements* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996).

<sup>18</sup> While ethnic rebellions can be launched either to seek separatism or control over the state, it is interesting that ideological wars seem to be almost always state capture conflicts. There are probably two reasons for this. First, there is no reason that the community for whom the fighters are trying to build a new society would be concentrated geographically so as to facilitate separatism. Second, and more importantly, ideological conversion is relatively easy; fighters, even if they know supporters of their cause to be a minority of the overall population, can believe they can eventually convert "non-believers" to their side. Indeed, this is a primary reason one is more likely to see the type of violence toward civilians discussed in Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Wanton and Senseless? The Logic of Massacres in Algeria," *Rationality and Society* 11:3 (August 1999), 243-285 (namely, violence aimed at either conversion or preventing defection) in ideological as opposed to ethnic civil wars.

<sup>19</sup> See chapter two.

by deducing certain hypotheses from existing works on the causes of ethnic civil wars, and applying these as hypotheses about the political objectives rebelling ethnic groups pursue. The section below asks what implications one can draw from the assumptions made by works on conflict causation to apply to theories explaining rebel group goals. I review two broad categories of competing claims in the literature about the motivations for group rebellion. These two categories are those that consider opportunity to be the primary cause of rebellions, and those that focus on group grievances. The distinction rests on the difference between what groups can do, and what they feel they should do.

### *Opportunity-based Approaches to Ethnic Conflict*

A growing body of work on the causes of ethnic rebellion examines the importance of feasibility or opportunity in determining when groups rebel, and focuses on relative capabilities between groups. We can deduce certain propositions about rebel group goals from many of these works. Both rational choice and Realist approaches to rebellion have focused on feasibility. Most recently a number of scholars have argued that group capabilities are more important than grievances in explaining the outbreak of rebellion. Collier and Hoeffler claim that the opportunity to rebel—including the availability of financial support for rebels and the opportunity costs for individuals to join rebel movements—is a much better predictor of rebellion than group grievances.<sup>20</sup> In a similar vein, Fearon and Laitin argue that factors that increase the ease of maintaining an insurgency play a greater role in explaining civil war than ethnic or religious characteristics of the populations involved.<sup>21</sup> They also show that territorial

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<sup>20</sup> Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, “Greed and Grievance in Civil War,” unpublished manuscript, The World Bank, 2001. The paper is open to some criticism on the appropriateness of the variables used as proxies for grievances, eg., fractionalization measures as proxies for ethnic or religious hatred.

<sup>21</sup> Fearon and Laitin, “Weak States...”

concentration of groups is a virtual prerequisite for group rebellion.<sup>22</sup> Monica Toft argues that group concentration affects the feasibility of rebellion by increasing the number of individuals that can be organized to fight, as well as the ease with which they can be mobilized.<sup>23</sup> Donald Horowitz also implies that the choice between state capture and separatism is a function of the relative feasibility of those goals.<sup>24</sup>

Several works on civil war draw from the Realist school of International Relations on the cause of conflict between states. These studies emphasize the balance of capabilities between parties to conflict, and the fear engendered by an imbalance, to explain the outbreak of violence. For example, the security dilemma<sup>25</sup> is used by both Barry Posen, who predicts violence in situations in which “[i]slands of one group’s population are...stranded in a sea of another,”<sup>26</sup> and Stephen Van Evera, who predicts violence to be more likely where ethnic groups are locally intermingled.<sup>27</sup> What all these studies have in common is a focus on what the potential parties to conflict have the *ability* to do, rather than on specific grievances they may hold.

How would the emphasis on relative capabilities and opportunities in studies of the onset of violence translate into hypotheses about the goals of rebellions? Capabilities-based theories suggest, simply, that goals are determined by the ease with which they can be achieved. State capture is more likely under conditions that favor its success, and likewise for separatism. In

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<sup>22</sup> James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, “Sons of the Soil, Immigrants, and Civil War,” unpublished manuscript, 2002.

<sup>23</sup> Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Conflict*, 49. Although this work concludes, wrongly, that concentration advances the likelihood that groups will “advance autonomy claims” (41). The evidence presented in Chapter Two, that almost all large-scale rebellions are launched by concentrated groups, yet a significant number of these were state capture attempts, belies Toft’s claim.

<sup>24</sup> Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 232.

<sup>25</sup> The security dilemma is a concept borrowed from international relations theory. In the context of inter-ethnic relations, it says that in the absence of a central government capable of maintaining order, ethnic groups understand that they must mobilize and arm themselves in order to protect themselves from another group. These actions, in turn, threaten the other group, which must mobilize and arm itself as a result. The dilemma is that by taking defensive actions to increase its security, a group may actually make itself less secure. See Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival* 35:1 (Spring 1993), 27-47, particularly 27-9.

<sup>26</sup> Barry Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict,” *Survival* 35:1 (Spring 1993), 32

<sup>27</sup> Stephen Van Evera, “Hypotheses on Nationalism and War,” *International Security* 18:4 (Spring 1994), 5-39.

addition, because forward thinking leaders are likely to take into account not just the feasibility of achieving the immediate ends of the rebellion, but also the feasibility of consolidating the political status that a successful rebellion would bring,<sup>28</sup> the concept of feasibility should incorporate consolidation of goals and not just their immediate achievement. The specific factors that should affect the relative feasibility of separatist and state capture rebellions will be discussed below. But in general, this discussion leads to

*H<sub>1</sub>: The probability of a given goal increases with the relative ease of both achieving that goal and consolidating rule over the polity that results from the achievement of that goal.*

A number of specific hypotheses relating opportunity to the goals of rebellion are discussed and tested in the next chapter.

Of all the factors one might expect to most strongly affect the relative feasibility of goals, group concentration stands out. If anything should make separatism easier, and state capture more difficult for a rebelling ethnic group, it would be a high level of geographic concentration.<sup>29</sup> A concentrated group pursuing separatism is probably already established in the territory it wishes to control, and is more likely to make up a majority of the population of that territory. A campaign of state capture, on the other hand, would present the difficulty of operating militarily in other ethnic groups' territory. Moreover, a concentrated ethnic group pursuing separatism would not have to worry as much about retrieving ethnic kin from other regions of the country, as would a dispersed group. Interestingly, nearly all large-scale ethnic rebellions are launched by geographically-concentrated groups.<sup>30</sup> This fact presents one of the

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<sup>28</sup> Cornell, "Autonomy as a Source of Conflict," 245.

<sup>29</sup> Among studies that suggest an association between concentrated groups and separatism are Ibid., and Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Conflict*. Toft's Chapter Two suggests that group capabilities are largely a function of concentration.

<sup>30</sup> In the dataset analyzed in Chapter Two, 81 of the 88 cases of rebellion were launched by territorially-concentrated ethnic groups.

key puzzles that motivates this dissertation: why do so many territorially-concentrated groups pursue state capture when they rebel against the state, when separatism would seem to be the more feasible option?

### *Grievance-Based Approaches to Ethnic Conflict*

Works focusing on grievances have a lengthy pedigree in the ethnic conflict literature, and generally contend that the greater the grievances against the ruling group, the more likely rebellion is to take place. Here the emphasis is less on what groups can do than on what they feel they should do. Davies' J-curve theory falls into this category when it argues that revolutionary fervor jumps when sharp economic downturns follow periods in which rising expectations accompany strong economic growth.<sup>31</sup> It is a grievance-based approach because it focuses primarily on the disparity between expectations and reality. Gurr also forwards the argument that group grievances motivate rebellion.<sup>32</sup> This work focuses on conceptions of fairness: political and economic differentials between ruling and ruled are seen by members of the ruled group as fundamentally *unfair*. The mechanism linking grievances to rebellion in Gurr's account seems to be a natural feeling that unfair situations demand redress. Collier and Hoeffler, and Fearon and Laitin both explicitly contrast their materialist approaches with grievance-based hypotheses.<sup>33</sup> Joining this debate, Sambanis argues<sup>34</sup> that when ethnic civil wars are distinguished from civil wars as a whole, grievances emerge as an important cause and a better explanatory factor than economic opportunity costs.<sup>34</sup> Toft explores the relationship of

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<sup>31</sup> James C. Davies, "Toward a Theory of Revolution." *American Sociological Review* 6:1 (February 1962), 5-19, reprinted in James C. Davies, ed., *When Men Revolt and Why: A Reader in Political Violence and Revolution* (New York: The Free Press, 1971), 134-147.

<sup>32</sup> Gurr, *Minorities at Risk*, Chapter 5.

<sup>33</sup> Collier and Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance..."; Fearon and Laitin, "Sons of the Soil..."

<sup>34</sup> Sambanis, "Do Ethnic and Non-Ethnic..."



demographic patterns to ethnic rebellion at least partly through the idea of grievances: that being denied the right to rule themselves drives territorial majorities to rebel.<sup>35</sup>

I link the idea of grievances with that of legitimacy. The specific content of the grievances groups hold against the state should affect how those groups perceive the legitimacy of different political programs offered to them by rebel organizations. Thus, a grievance-based approach to the study of the goals of rebellion focuses on how grievances affect group perceptions of the relative legitimacy of separatist versus state capture rebellions. Specifically, one can derive the hypothesis

*H<sub>2</sub>: Factors that cause ethnic group members to believe they deserve autonomy should increase the probability that rebel goals will be separatist, and factors that cause group members to believe they deserve to rule the state as a whole should increase the probability that goals will be aimed at capturing the state.*

### **III. Theory**

Of these two broad approaches, this dissertation posits a theory that rebel group goals are derived from the content of group grievances. These grievances affect the legitimacy with which goals are perceived by members of the ethnic group rebels claim to represent. The theory is informed by ideas about nationalism. For the most part, nationalism can be seen as a movement to strengthen the political bond between an ethnic group and the land it considers its own.<sup>36</sup> The norm of self determination is a key component of this type of nationalism: that every people deserves to rule itself on its own land. To understand when and how nationalism works, however, we must know something about which groups consider themselves distinct peoples, and what the extent is of the territory they claim. The underlying assumption of the ethnic conflict literature is that ethnic groups engaged in a nationalist project must by definition be

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<sup>35</sup> Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Conflict*, 21.

<sup>36</sup> Civic nationalism being the exception, which does not stress ethnic purity.

separatist. But this is true only to the extent that the group considers itself a distinct nation, and considers a piece of land smaller than the country as a whole to be its own. Nationalism allows for an alternative possibility: that members of the ethnic group believe that they are part of a broader nation that may include other groups,<sup>37</sup> and that they deserve to rule themselves on the entire territory the state controls. A nationalist rebellion guided by these beliefs would likely aim toward the center. The key question, then, is what factors affect the focus of nationalism, toward either a subcomponent of the country's land or toward the entirety of it. These factors will be critical to understanding the political objectives ethnic groups seek through rebellion.

I propose that two key factors shape ethnic group political objectives: historical and cultural differences between the group and the ruling group of the state. First, the dissertation argues that groups that have had a history of autonomy—that is, having been ruled separately from the state in the past—are likely to feel a nationalist attachment to the land on which they were autonomous.<sup>38</sup> Institutions and symbols produced under autonomy can affect the character of nationalism discussed above. The existence of one's own parliament, flag, currency, coat of arms, etc., all suggest a distinct people. Autonomous educational institutions are also likely to emphasize the group's distinct character. Moreover, having once been ruled separately, even long ago, members of groups will likely feel they *deserve* to be ruled separately in the future.<sup>39</sup> Thus, even autonomy that took place in the distant past, so that the direct effect of institutions and symbols on those living under the autonomous regime has faded away, may still motivate

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<sup>37</sup> This does not contradict the definition of nationalism offered above, which refers to the feelings of a single ethnic group to a piece of land. Ethnic groups are not a basic unit of human organization, but are made up of sub groups and, with others, form larger ethnic entities.

<sup>38</sup> Past autonomy may also play a role in increasing the feasibility of separatism, by directly producing institutions, and personnel familiar with those institutions, that can help consolidate a separatist rebellion. In Chapter Two I test both the feasibility and the legitimacy effects of past autonomy.

<sup>39</sup> Prospect theory, which posits that people typically value losses more strongly than they value gains, offers a theoretical underpinning for this claim. See Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," *Econometrica* 47 (1979), 263-291.

contemporary members of the ethnic group to desire separation from the state.<sup>40</sup> Second, major cultural differences between the ethnic group and the ruling group should also lead members of the former to consider themselves a distinct people. Cultural differences help define the “self” in self-determination, and a group that is objectively distinct from its neighbors is more likely to consider the pursuit of political separation a legitimate objective. Thus, both past autonomy and cultural differences should increase the likelihood that a revolt will be separatist, rather than aimed at state capture.

In contrast, members of groups with no history of autonomy have been politically integrated into the state. They have shared political, economic, and educational institutions, as well as national symbols, with other groups in society. Therefore, they are likely to view the existing state as the legitimate focus of national politics, even if they consider themselves rival to the group that controls the state. Similarly, groups that possess few or no objective cultural differences with the state’s other groups are much more likely to see their national identity as encompassing a broader range of peoples—not necessarily all of those living within the state’s political borders, but some of them. And therefore, any revolt launched by such groups is likely to aim at capturing the state rather than separating from it.

Of course, grievances do not translate directly into rebellion. Groups can be sufficiently repressed by the state so no rebellion is possible. They can lack adequate material or organizational resources to mount an insurrection, or may forgo rebellion because they can pursue grievances through peaceful political channels. Finally, group members may not feel grievances so strongly as to warrant rebellion. There are many reasons why rebellions may not occur, but at the same time it is a mistake to claim that grievances have nothing to do with their

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<sup>40</sup> Anthony Smith, among many others, emphasizes the common occurrence of moderaday nationalists reaching back into history for symbols to motivate potential constituents. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986).

outbreak,<sup>41</sup> because when rebellion occurs, the content of group grievances against the state will affect the political objectives groups seek through violence.

The theory presented here also incorporates the lessons of the collective action problem,<sup>42</sup> which has specifically been shown to hinder the development of rebellions, among other collective activities.<sup>43</sup> Theorists have offered multiple solutions to the collective action problem, including top-down inducements/threats from elites that offer “selective incentives” to potential participants,<sup>44</sup> and material and affective benefits that accrue from participation itself.<sup>45</sup> These latter solutions recognize that pre-existing values and ideas held by potential followers constrain the options elites can pursue to motivate them for collective action. Wickham-Crowley notes the importance of common ideas between guerrillas and peasants for boosting recruitment prospects by rebel elites.<sup>46</sup> Popkin points out that the credibility elites maintain with potential followers is enhanced by the existence of common references: “A leader must, first of all, be able to use terms and symbols his targets understand.”<sup>47</sup> Along these same lines, I propose that elites seeking to overcome the collective action problem will benefit from taking into account the popular ideas about the ideal relationship between group and nation discussed above. For instance, if members of an ethnic group widely believe their group to be a distinct nation deserving of its own homeland in the section of the country it occupies, then they are not likely to be easily organized to support a state capture rebellion. Thus, I propose that the ability of

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<sup>41</sup> Mark I. Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 282-4.

<sup>42</sup> See Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965).

<sup>43</sup> Samuel L. Popkin, *The Rational Peasant: The Political Economy of Rural Society in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 243-267; Mark I. Lichbach, “What Makes Rational Peasants Revolutionary? Dilemma, Paradox, and Irony in Peasant Collective Action,” *World Politics* 46 (April 1994), 383-418.

<sup>44</sup> Lichbach, “What Makes Rational Peasants...”

<sup>45</sup> See Elisabeth Jean Wood, “Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War: Defiance and Agency in Rural El Salvador,” unpublished manuscript, New York University, May 8, 2001; and Popkin, *The Rational Peasant*, 254-5. Both accounts remind us that not all collective action aims at securing pure public goods.

<sup>46</sup> Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, *Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America: A Comparative Study of Insurgents and Regimes since 1956* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 130-153.

<sup>47</sup> Popkin, *The Rational Peasant*, 260.

elites to use the content of these historically- and culturally-constituted grievances as a solution to the collective action problem is an important mechanism linking past autonomy and cultural differences to rebel group goals.

#### **IV. Definitions**

The dissertation studies large-scale ethnic rebellions, or more particularly, large-scale rebellions launched by ethnic political organizations. Thus, four definitional issues must be addressed. The first issue is what constitutes a rebellion; second, the definition of large-scale; third, the definition of ethnic; and the fourth issue that must be resolved relates to how particular political organizations, the groups actually engaging in violent action against the state, can be defined as ethnic.

A rebellion is organized, politically-motivated violence against the state. It precludes the type of individual acts of violence against governments that are normally treated as criminal matters by most societies. Instead, it focuses on violence perpetrated by groups of people, to achieve political goals. Moreover, this dissertation studies *large-scale* ethnic rebellions, for two main reasons. First, such rebellions have the greatest impact on the countries involved and the world at large, and are thus an important focus of inquiry. Larger rebellions lead to greater humanitarian costs in terms of deaths, destruction of economic resources, and population displacement. Moreover, they increase the likelihood of international involvement. They are also more likely to produce wholesale changes in governance and relations between a society's constituent groups. Second, studying only large rebellions avoids the methodological difficulty of counting extremely small-scale rebellions and separating them conceptually from non-political, criminally-motivated activity.

The conceptual distinction between large and small rebellions basically lies in the level of violence employed by the groups fighting the state. To this end, the dissertation adopts criteria defined by the Minorities at Risk Project<sup>48</sup> to define conflict situations it considers either “intermediate guerrilla activity,” “large-scale guerrilla activity,” or “protracted civil war.” Specifically, 1) there must be at least 1000 armed fighters in the rebel organization, 2) there must be more than six armed attacks per year, 3) attacks must affect a large part of the area occupied by the rebel group, or 4) the conflict must be fought by rebel military units with base areas.<sup>49</sup>

This project conceives of an “ethnic group” as a group of unrelated individuals who share one or more ascriptive (inherited) characteristics,<sup>50</sup> in which members are bound by either a common myth of origin or a common notion of group history, which are passed down to future generations of people who share the same ascriptive characteristics.<sup>51</sup> The definition must include both the notion of ascription and the idea of shared myths. A definition based solely on ascriptive characteristics would mean that practically any group of people could be labeled an ethnic group; eg., brown-haired individuals. A definition based solely on a common myth would be too inclusive as well, incorporating any collectivity that has a myth of common descent, including practically all countries. Rather, both parts of the definition are necessary. The most

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<sup>48</sup> See the appendix for more details. Materials produced by The Minorities at Risk project are located online at <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/>.

<sup>49</sup> Minorities at Risk Project, *Minorities at Risk Dataset Users Manual* 040903, 2003.

<sup>50</sup> Such characteristics need be inherited, but not biological. Thus, native language and religion are most often passed down from parent to child, and are included among other biologically inherited characteristics like race as ascriptive categories.

<sup>51</sup> The idea being a commonly-understood chronological link between past, present, and future generations of people sharing the same ascriptive characteristics. The definition allows for changes to those myths/histories to occur, so long as the new myths/histories are shared and passed down. The origins of this definition lie with Max Weber, who writes that ethnic groups are groups that “...entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration...” Max Weber *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 389. As with any social science definition, there will be exceptions to it at the margins, for instance those produced by migration, conversion, etc. For example, a first-generation Irish American cannot be said to receive her ethnic identity from her parents, who would be Irish. Nevertheless, for most people in most situations, this definition covers the commonly-understood idea of ethnicity.

common ascriptive characteristics around which ethnic groups are formed are religion<sup>52</sup> and language, but other characteristics can form the basis of ethnic groups as well (for example, caste in India). Region of birth is not considered ascriptive, although all of the regionally-defined groups analyzed in the following chapter are defined by other ascriptive characteristics.<sup>53</sup>

Finally, one must consider when a rebelling organization should be considered an ethnic organization (and therefore when the rebellion launched by such an organization should be considered ethnic).<sup>54</sup> This is an important issue because the groups actually doing the fighting in a rebellion are not entire ethnic groups, of course, but military organizations comprised of only a small percentage of the ethnic group's members. This was also a practical problem that emerged in the case selection process for the quantitative study described in chapter two, and is discussed further in the appendix to that chapter. This dissertation employs broad criteria, considering an

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<sup>52</sup> Some scholars persist in treating religion and ethnicity as separate. This dissertation follows Donald Horowitz in treating religion as one among many types of ascriptive markers that can be used to distinguish ethnic groups. Thus, religious groups are a *type* of ethnic group, not members of a different conceptual category. See Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 51-4.

<sup>53</sup> While most ethnic groups have a "home" region, unless an ascriptive characteristic binds members of the group together as discussed in the definition above, the group will not be considered ethnic. Thus, the Basques are a different ethnic group from Castilian Spaniards not because they reside or consider as their home region certain provinces of northern Spain, but because of linguistic differences and different historical bonds imagined between them.

<sup>54</sup> Several other works have made attempts to define ethnic rebellions or ethnic civil wars. Chaim Kaufmann defines ethnic civil wars as "...disputes between groups which see themselves as distinct ethnic, clan, or religious communities." Chaim Kaufmann, 'Intervention in Ethnic and Ideological Civil Wars: Why One Can be Done and the Other Can't,' *Security Studies* 6:1 (Autumn 1996), 65. For definitional purposes, then, Kaufmann does not distinguish between ethnic communities and the rebelling organizations acting in their name, as this dissertation does. Licklider considers "identity-based civil wars" as those for which "ethnic-religious-identity issues" motivated the combatants. Roy Licklider, "The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945-1993," *American Political Science Review* 89:3 (September 1995), 685. Sambanis defines ethnic [civil] wars as "...wars among communities (ethnicities) who are in conflict over the power relationship that exists between those communities and the state." Sambanis, "Do Ethnic and Non-Ethnic..." 6. Sambanis goes on to write that "...not all wars that involve ethnic groups as combatants should be classified as ethnic wars. The issues at the core of the conflict must be integral to the concept of ethnicity..." (Ibid.) and notes that "the wars Fearon and Laitin (2000) call 'violent contests' over the state apparatus" are considered non-ethnic. "Wars aimed at securing power for a new elite, or at [sic] the acquisition of control of economic resources territories are coded as non-ethnic wars for the most part. The differentiating component between my two categories is the role of ethnicity as a cause of the conflict" (Ibid., note 2).

organization ethnic if most of its members are of the ethnic group in question, or the organization advocates policies that favored the group.<sup>55</sup>

## V. Implications of Categorizing Rebellions by Goals

### *The Importance of State Capture*

As noted, studies of ethnic rebellion are likely to assume such rebellions are separatist. Therefore, the practical effect of disaggregating different types of rebellion is to shed more light on ethnic conflicts fought over state capture. Bringing more attention to these revolutionary conflicts is important. State capture conflicts may be more deadly than separatist wars,<sup>56</sup> and the stakes higher for all involved. It should not be surprising that state capture conflicts are deadlier. From the point of view of both elite and non-elite members of the ruling ethnic group, a successful separatist rebellion offers prospects of a serious, but limited, set of consequences. The ruling ethnic group faces loss of prestige, wealth generated from the separating territory, and the prospect of a demonstration effect leading to separatist movements from other groups. However, with state capture revolts, a ruling group faces the prospect of total loss of power, along with the economic benefits power conferred, not to mention the often deadly score-settling that can result when previously-dominated ethnic groups take control. For these reasons it makes perfect sense that state capture wars may be more deadly: facing particularly-distasteful

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<sup>55</sup> See Kanchan Chandra, "Coding Protocol for Cross-national Database on Ethnic Parties," manuscript, April 28, 2004, for an example of another project that codes organizations as ethnic or non-ethnic based on the issues the group advocates.

<sup>56</sup> Estimate of deaths resulting from civil wars are notoriously imprecise and varied. Nonetheless, some general conclusions can be drawn. Using data from the table of ongoing "Ethnopolitical Conflicts in 1993-94" published in Ted Robert Gurr, *Peoples Versus States: Minorities at Risk in the New Century* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2000), 369-375, and selecting those conflicts from the table that are clearly either state capture or separatist in nature (that is, excluding non-rebellions like Muslim-Christian clashes in Nigeria that are listed in the table), state capture conflicts ongoing at the time are shown to produce on average about 106,000 deaths compared to 90,000 for separatist conflicts. The data in this table were produced prior to the Tutsi genocide in Rwanda; when one substitutes the 750,000 presumed killed during that episode for the 3,500 deaths listed in the Gurr table, the resulting average for state capture conflicts jumps from 106,000 to more than 180,000.



prospects of defeat, groups in control are more likely to resort to brutal means to preserve their power, as the ruling Hutus did in Rwanda in the face of a Tutsi state capture insurgency.

Moreover, there is reason to believe that the stakes of revolutionary ethnic war should be higher than separatist conflicts *even for groups not directly involved in the fight*. That is, in a country that contains ruling group Q, as well as groups X and Y, group Y will have a much greater stake in a state capture rebellion launched by group X than a separatist attempt by group X, because group X's state-capture rebellion puts the relationship between group Y and the government at stake. State capture conflicts force all ethnic communities in a country to choose sides in a way that separatist conflicts do not, and are therefore more likely to spread to other groups. Separatist conflicts should more often remain limited to fights over the objective conceived by the original rebelling group.

Several examples demonstrate the propensity of state capture conflicts to spread among other groups within a country. The Lebanese civil war involved state capture rebellions by almost all of the country's major ethnic groups. The Afghan civil war in the 1990s also was comprised of state capture rebellions by all major groups: Tajiks, Uzbeks, Pashtuns, and even the Hazaras, a group that makes up less than 20 percent of Afghanistan's population. Similarly, as the Tigrayan state capture rebellion analyzed in chapter four gained steam against the Ethiopian state in the late 1980s, it assembled a coalition comprised of organizations representing practically all of Ethiopia's major ethnic populations. At the same time, a previously anti-government organization, comprised mainly of the dominant Amhara ethnic group, banded with the government in a last ditch attempt to prevent the Tigrayan-dominated coalition from taking power. Like the revolutionary civil wars in Afghanistan and Lebanon, the dynamics of conflict in Ethiopia forced all groups to take sides and participate in violence.

### *Implications for other types of studies*

Understanding the differences between separatism and state capture has important implications for a broad array of studies on civil wars, including those that focus on their origins, duration, termination, prevention, and recurrence.<sup>57</sup> All such works would benefit from breaking down the broad concept of ethnic civil war into theoretically-defendable components. Just as we find it useful to distinguish between different types of violence as a general category (it is for good reason that scholars tend not to lump together internal wars, inter-state wars, homicide and suicide in one category labeled “violence”) we would similarly benefit from breaking down the concept of civil war.<sup>58</sup> We find that disaggregating the concept of violence is useful because different sorts of violence have different causes, and different effects on other social phenomena that we care about. Similarly, disaggregating the concept of civil war as proposed here should strengthen the results of all studies in which civil war appears as a variable.

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<sup>57</sup> On the origin of civil wars see, for example, Fearon and Laitin, “Weak States...”, though Fearon and Laitin at least recognize the two main types of civil war proposed in this paper. Other examples include Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, “On Economic Causes of Civil War,” *Oxford Economic Papers* 50:4 (October, 1998), 563-573; Errol A. Henderson and J. David Singer, “Civil War in the Post-Colonial World, 1946-1992,” *Journal of Peace Research* 37:3 (May 2000), 275-299; Ryan Dudley and Ross A. Miller, “Group Rebellion in the 1980s,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42:1 (February 1998), 77-96; and Ronny Lindstrom and Will H. Moore, “Deprived, Rational or Both? ‘Why Minorities Rebel’ Revised,” *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 23 (Winter 1995), 167-190. On civil war prevention see Ibrahim Elbadawi and Nicholas Sambanis, “Why Are There So Many Civil Wars in Africa? Understanding and Preventing Violent Conflict,” *Journal of African Economies* 9:3 (October 2000), 244-269. On explaining the duration of civil wars see Dylan Balch-Lindsay and Andrew J. Enterline, “Killing Time: The World Politics of Civil War Duration, 1820-1992,” *International Studies Quarterly* 44:4 (December 2000), 615-642; and Collier and Hoeffler, “On Economic Causes...” Kalyvas, “Wanton and Senseless?,” is an excellent study on one characteristic of civil war, the level of violence toward civilians. On civil war termination see Licklider, “The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements,” which, while recognizing a distinction between wars of “revolution” and “secession,” nevertheless does not base its analysis on this difference; Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, “International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis,” *American Political Science Review* 94:4 (December 2000), 779-801; Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints...”; and Barbara F. Walter, *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002). On civil war recurrence see Caroline Hartzell, Matthew Hoddie, and Donald Rothchild, “Stabilizing the Peace After Civil War: An Investigation of Some Key Variables,” *International Organization* 55:1 (Winter 2001), 183-208; and Daniel L. Byman, “Preventing the Recurrence of Ethnic Conflict: Lessons from the Middle East,” Ph.D. dissertation. Department of Political Science, The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1997.

<sup>58</sup> Doug McAdam, et al., *The Dynamics of Contention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) is interesting for pursuing the exact opposite inclination, that is, aggregating different types of violence into larger categories in order to pursue the causes of violence as such. This work notes that “...strong if selective recurrent mechanisms and processes appear across ostensibly different varieties of contention” (23).

This is not a study of how civil wars begin or end, but a few exploratory comments can be made about how incorporating a better understanding of the difference between state capture and separatist conflicts should improve our understanding of both conflict causation and termination. The theory offered above suggests that ethnic groups are predisposed toward certain types of political goals even before violence breaks out. When mobilization occurs, these different predispositions lead to different types of rebellion. One implication of this dissertation, therefore, is that different triggers for rebellion may exist for different groups, since if groups are predisposed to seek different types of political goods even under the normal political process, it stands to reason that the denial of these different goods may play a role in the initiation of conflict.

Taking this a step further, another implication is that if different triggers exist for different types of rebellions, then different policies should be required to prevent or end those rebellions. For example, groups predisposed to separatism are likely to be appeased by policies giving them local autonomy. However, those groups that are predisposed toward state capture might be prevented from initiating violence by being given a greater share of power at the center. Only by distinguishing what predisposes some groups toward separatism and others toward state capture can problems in our understanding of conflict prevention and recurrence be rectified. These predispositions are rooted in the historical and cultural relationships this dissertation examines. In the end, preventing the occurrence or recurrence of ethnic separatism will likely require very different institutional arrangements and political strategies than those needed to deal with state capture conflicts. These and other implications for conflict resolution are addressed more fully in chapter five.

## **VI. Layout of Dissertation**

Chapter two offers quantitative tests of the competing opportunity and grievance theories presented earlier, employing a dataset of 88 cases of large-scale ethnic rebellions since 1945. This is the first dataset of its kind in which rebellions are distinguished according to the goals they seek. These tests demonstrate that our understanding of the goals of ethnic rebellions benefits most from taking into account the historical and cultural factors that shape group grievances.

Chapters three and four are detailed case studies of two ethnic rebellions, one separatist and one revolutionary. These chapters explore the mechanisms by which historical and cultural factors affect group perceptions about their ideal relationship to the state. Chapter three examines the Eritrean separatist rebellion against Ethiopia that lasted from the early 1960s through 1989. The chapter illustrates how cultural differences between the Eritreans who dominated the early separatist movements and the ruling Amhara group of Ethiopia, in addition to Eritrea's history of autonomy from the Ethiopian state, influenced separatist feelings among Eritreans. Chapter four examines the state capture rebellion launched by the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) against Ethiopia from 1975 to 1989. Unlike neighboring Eritrea, Ethiopia's Tigray province never had formal political autonomy from Ethiopia. In fact, Tigrayans and Amharas share a long-standing cultural, religious, and political tradition. Tigrayan nationalist propaganda before and after the 1975 revolt repeatedly refers to this shared tradition. Moreover, Tigray's integration into the Ethiopian state in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century resulted in a generation of Tigrayan intellectuals participating in a broad national political movement with Ethiopians of many other ethnic backgrounds. This movement focused on the problems of the Ethiopian state as a whole and directly influenced the TPLF's early political goals. Thus,

cultural similarities and political *integration*, as opposed to autonomy, influenced the direction of the Tigrayan rebellion toward the center of the Ethiopian state, rather than away from it.

Chapter five examines the implications of the previous chapters' analysis for conflict mitigation and resolution. It examines existing works on negotiations in civil wars, and on the consolidation of peace in post-conflict environments. The literature on each of these subjects typically ignores the political objectives of the participants in the conflicts. However, solutions that do not take rebel group goals into account are likely to lead to a fragile peace and revisionist challenges down the road. The chapter argues that bringing political objectives into the analysis of conflict resolution will help produce arrangements that can succeed in the long run. Finally, chapter six summarizes the findings of the dissertation, and offers some implications for future research.

## Chapter Two

### Quantitative Analysis: Testing the Roles of Grievances and Opportunity

#### I. Introduction

Chapter one presents a theory to explain the different goals of ethnic rebellions. The theory focuses on the content of grievances ethnic groups hold against the state; it explains the political objectives groups seek to accomplish through rebellion by reference to pre-existing beliefs they hold about their proper political relationship to the state. These beliefs are shaped by the historical interaction between the group and the state, and by cultural differences between the group and the state's dominant ethnic group. Those ethnic groups that have a history of being ruled separately from the state, and that are culturally distinct from the state's ruling ethnic group, are more likely to feel they deserve to rule themselves. Conversely, those groups with closer historical and cultural ties to the state and its dominant group are more likely to pursue state capture if they rebel. Without dismissing the role feasibility plays in determining group goals, the theory focuses on how groups see some goals as more legitimate than others, and predicts that the choice of rebel group political objectives depends at least in part on beliefs about what political status the rebelling group *deserves*.

This chapter presents a dataset of 88 large-scale ethnic rebellions that took place between 1945 and 1998, and tests the effects of both feasibility and grievances on the goals the rebellions pursued, using a statistical method called binary logit. As discussed in chapter one, goals are defined as the proximate changes in power relations that rebelling groups seek vis-à-vis the state; they are the direct political changes desired and toward which violence is employed. In practice,

the goals of large-scale rebellions are almost always either separatism (defined as including fights for autonomy, independence, or irredentism), or state capture. The chapter concludes that both opportunity and grievances play crucial roles in the formation of rebel group goals.

The chapter also anticipates the criticism that autonomy, by producing the institutions of self-rule and personnel familiar with self-government, works to affect group goals simply by increasing the feasibility of separatism. The chapter uses the same statistical methods described above to probe the specific mechanisms by which past autonomy affects goals, distinguishing the opportunity and legitimizing effects of this variable. It presents evidence that autonomy affects group goals by instilling a sense among the rebelling population of the legitimacy of separation, and *not* solely by increasing the relative feasibility of a separatist revolt.

The layout of this chapter is as follows. First, data set is described, including the variables that will be used to measure the relative effects of opportunity and grievances on the choice of goals. The chapter then analyzes the results of the tests conducted, comparing the strength of the effects of the different variables. Finally, conclusions are offered showing that our understanding of rebel group goals is greatly improved by incorporating the grievances ethnic groups hold against the state, and therefore also the relative legitimacy with which ethnic groups view different political objectives.

#### A Note on the Dual Role of Autonomy

The effects of a group's history of autonomy can bridge the gap between capabilities- and grievance-based approaches to the study of ethnic civil wars. Autonomy is defined here as either a degree of self-rule in the post-colonial system, as a political system distinct from that governing the rest of the territory under colonialism,<sup>1</sup> or as the existence of an independent polity

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning rule by a different colonial power, or separate rule by the same colonial power.

in the period immediately preceding colonialism. When a group has had a history of autonomy, it can increase the likelihood that a rebellion carried out by that group will be separatist,<sup>2</sup> in two ways. First, it can directly increase the feasibility of both pursuing and consolidating separation by providing the institutions of self rule and human resources<sup>3</sup> with experience in self government. Second, it can increase the legitimacy of separatist demands in the eyes of group members, therefore increasing the chances a modern-day rebellion will be separatist, even if no institutions or personnel survived the period of self-rule. This is because, as argued in chapter one, a history of separate rule should affect the content of the grievances group members hold against the state. Those with a history of autonomy are more likely to come to believe that they deserve to rule themselves, while those without a history of autonomy are more likely to believe that they deserve to rule the state as a whole. The widely-accepted norm of self-rule states that a people deserves to rule itself on its own territory. By delimiting the borders of the group's territory, and by helping define the group as distinct from the country's other groups, past autonomy helps groups apply this norm to their present situations.

## II. Description of the Dataset

The dataset used for this analysis consists of 88 cases of large-scale ethnic rebellion between 1945 and 1998, whose goals were determined to be either separatism or state capture.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Gurr makes the claim that an actual or perceived history of past autonomy leads to autonomy demands, but this claim is not explicitly linked to civil war. Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1993), 76. Cornell also recognizes the impact of autonomy on both the feasibility of and the desire for autonomy. Svante E. Cornell, "Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective," *World Politics* 54 (2002), 252.

<sup>3</sup> Cornell, "Autonomy as a Source...", 255.

<sup>4</sup> Ninety-three cases of large-scale ethnic rebellion during this period were found using the case selection process detailed in the appendix to this chapter, but for five of these cases either goals could not be precisely identified or goals were identified as being something other than separatism or state capture. Since nothing theoretically bound these five cases together, it made more sense to drop them from the analysis than to try to explain their occurrence along with that of separatist and state capture rebellions using a multinomial regression technique.



It was derived primarily from the Minorities at Risk (MAR) dataset,<sup>5</sup> although four cases were added that are not part of MAR. The Appendix details the case selection process. Each unit of the dataset is a rebellion attributed to a given ethnic group in a given country, and occurring during a certain time period. When a single ethnic group is determined to have rebelled more than once, it is listed multiple times in the dataset, although no ethnic group is listed more than twice. If the same nominal ethnic group exists in two different countries, two distinct groups are considered. Thus, Kurds of Iran and Kurds of Iraq are considered two separate groups.

Table I compares the regional distribution of the rebellions in the dataset used here with that of the ethnic groups in MAR. The most striking differences are the lack of rebellions in Western democracies, the disproportionately small number of rebellions in Latin America, and the disproportionately high number of rebellions in Asia and Africa. This regional distribution is consistent with the findings of a number of other studies of rebellions.

**Table I: Regional Distribution of Rebellions Compared to MAR**

Region	Rebellions		MAR	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Western Democracies & Japan	0	0.0	34	10.0
E. Europe / Fmr Soviet Union	9	10.2	83	24.3
Asia	33	37.5	62	18.2
North Africa/ Middle East	11	12.5	29	8.5
Sub-Saharan Africa	33	37.5	97	28.4
Latin America/ Caribbean	2	2.3	36	10.6
<b>Total</b>	88	100.0	341	100.0

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/>.

<sup>6</sup> The dataset of rebellions used in this dissertation and the Minorities at Risk dataset are not exactly comparable, because the MAR unit of analysis is the ethnic group, while the unit of analysis in this dataset is a rebellion.

Fourteen independent variables are used to explain the determination of group goals. A brief description of each is included here, but full details of their construction can be found in the appendix.

### Feasibility Variables

Five variables are used to test the proposition that goals are determined by the feasibility of achieving those goals or by the feasibility of consolidating a military victory after conflict has ended.

***grppro***      The size of the rebelling ethnic group as a percentage of the country's total population.

The greater the value of ***grppro***, the greater the feasibility of both achieving and consolidating state capture.<sup>7</sup> Relatively large groups are more likely to occupy larger portions of the country, which should facilitate the military goal of state capture. Further, working under the assumption that state capture is the more difficult goal to realize,<sup>8</sup> relatively larger groups should on the whole produce stronger military organizations that are more capable of achieving this goal, while the reverse is true of smaller groups.

***land***      The total land area of the country, measured in millions of square kilometers.

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<sup>7</sup> When the group percentage of the country's population passes 50 percent one would expect the norm of majority rule to increase the perceived legitimacy of state capture as well, but this occurs in only a small percentage of the cases of rebellion analyzed here. It is therefore more appropriate to assume that relative group size primarily affects the feasibility of rebellion.

<sup>8</sup> The assumption that state capture is the more difficult goal to achieve is based on the idea that it is easier to defend territory than to conquer it. After securing its "home" region a state capture movement must additionally conquer territory defended by the center, while a separatist movement must only defend the home region it has already taken. Defenders of territory have the additional advantages of greater familiarity with terrain and a greater likelihood of popular support in the areas being contested. For a brief discussion, see Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 357-66.

The greater the value of **land**, the more difficult both achieving and consolidating state capture should be since these require the establishment of control over a larger amount of territory.

**majority** A dummy variable<sup>9</sup> indicating whether the country has a majority ethnic population.

Fearon and Laitin claim that countries with majority ethnic populations tend to spawn separatist revolts while countries without majority ethnic populations tend to produce state capture revolts.<sup>10</sup> One mechanism through which this proposed correlation might be explained is the relationship between the size of the ruling group and the power of the state. States with a majority ethnic population are 1) likely to be ruled by that majority group and 2) more likely to have a government strong enough to repel state capture attempts. Again, the assumption is that state capture is the more difficult goal.

**gdp:** country's per capita GDP

In addition to **majority**, the GDP of the country facing an ethnic rebellion is used here as a proxy for state capacity. If the goals of rebellion are determined by opportunity, then one can argue that stronger central governments should be better able to resist state capture challenges.<sup>11</sup> That is, a given increase in state resources should translate more effectively into strengthening the government's ability to defend against a state capture attempt as opposed to defending against a separatist attempt. The locus of separatist revolts is likely to be on the periphery of the

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<sup>9</sup> That is, a yes or no indicator. Dummy variables are coded 0 to indicate the absence of the concept being measured, and 1 to indicate the presence of that concept.

<sup>10</sup> James D. Fearon David D. Laitin, "Weak States, Rough Terrain, and Large-Scale Ethnic Violence Since 1945," Paper prepared for delivery at the 1999 Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, 2-5 September 1999, Atlanta, GA.

<sup>11</sup> Admittedly, while GDP measures the productive capabilities of a country's population, it says less about the ability of the state to convert those capabilities into coercive power. GDP may not be the best measure of a state's military might, but it is used in the ethnic conflict literature for state capacity (see Fearon and Laitin, "Weak States, Rough Terrain," 28) and few alternative measures are available.

state, where familiar terrain and supportive local populations are likely to offset increases in government military capacity.

***kindred***: A dummy variable indicating whether the group has close kindred in a country adjoining the group's regional base.<sup>12</sup>

The effects of ***kindred*** on goals are not certain. Having close kindred in a neighboring country next to a group's regional base could help consolidate separatist rule if the institutions and personnel of the kin are made available to the group following conflict. Moreover, if both groups share irredentist feelings, then the presence of kin across the border willing to fight for the group could facilitate a separatist rebellion. On the other hand, elites within the neighboring kin group might be wary of group separation since competition with the newly-successful elites of the rebelling group might threaten the status of the former. Further, if the kin group is not in power in the neighboring country, then the rulers of that country might have an incentive to work against the group's achievement of separatism, lest its success foster irredentism in the kin group. Thus, ***kindred*** is included as a feasibility variable, but no prediction is made as to the direction of its effect on goals.

These five variables do not exhaust all those that could be used to operationalize feasibility. Some important group-level information that should affect feasibility, like the existence of natural resources in areas groups occupy, and other group-level economic data, is simply not available. Data do exist for one important feasibility variable that is not analyzed in the regression that follows, namely, group concentration. It is not used because of a lack of variation among the cases in the dataset: ninety-two percent of the cases analyzed here are

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<sup>12</sup> This variable is based on **gc10**, coded by Fearon and Laitin, and described in *Minorities at Risk Project, Minorities at Risk Dataset Users Manual 040903*, 2003, 19.

rebellions of regionally-concentrated groups.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, one of the central puzzles this dissertation seeks to answer is why so many regionally-concentrated groups pursue state capture rebellions when separation appears so much more easily accomplished.

### Grievance Variables

Two types of variables are used to measure the content of rebel group grievances against the state, and therefore the relative legitimacy of the different political objectives groups can pursue. These are measures of cultural difference between the rebelling ethnic group and the dominant ethnic group of the state, and indicators of the degree to which rebelling groups once enjoyed political autonomy from the state.

***culdif***: A dummy variable indicating whether the group had both major language and religious differences with the ruling group.

Greater objective cultural differences between a rebelling ethnic group and the ruling group of the state should lend credence to the idea that the group deserves to be separate.<sup>14</sup>

Additional objective differences add to the legitimacy of the idea that the ethnic group is somehow unique, and the idea that unique groups should rule themselves is already established

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<sup>13</sup> Lending credence to Fearon and Laitin's claim that regional concentration is more or less a necessary condition for rebellion. The group concentration variable used is Fearon and Laitin's *gc2*, from the latest version of the MAR dataset. See Minorities at Risk, *Minorities at Risk Dataset Users Manual*, 17.

<sup>14</sup> Several authors have theorized about the impact of cultural differences on the feasibility of conflict. Some have theorized that ethnic heterogeneity hinders the ability to organize groups for rebellion, while others have claimed the opposite. See Nicholas Sambanis, "Do Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Civil Wars Have the Same Causes? A Theoretical and Empirical Inquiry," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45:3 (June 2001), 259-82; According to Fearon and Laitin, a number of prominent scholars saw objective cultural differences between ruling and ruled groups as aggravating the tendency of blocked upward mobility to cause nationalist violence, because "when preexisting differences are slight, assimilation is more likely." James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Sons of the Soil, Immigrants, and Civil War," unpublished manuscript, 2002; Horowitz casts doubt on the idea that objective ethnic differences play a role in the propensity for violence between ethnic groups. Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 135-139; Sambanis sees ethnic heterogeneity as a cause of ethnic civil wars, and proposes a positive and linear relationship between ethnic differences and ethnic war. Sambanis, "Do Ethnic and Non-Ethnic...", 13. However, while cultural differences have been widely discussed in the literature in terms of their impact on the likelihood of conflict, there is less reason to believe they may have an effect on the relative feasibility of one type of conflict as opposed to another.

as legitimate as part of the norm of self-rule: the “self” is a group distinct from others. The more alike a group is objectively to the ruling group of a country, the more difficult it would be to establish the legitimacy of a claim to separation. Cultural differences are measured here by the presence of both language and religious differences between the ethnic group and the state’s dominant group.

As discussed above, autonomy might affect both the direct opportunity to pursue and consolidate one goal over the other, and it might affect the content of group grievances and the relative legitimacy of the two goals. I assume here that autonomy plays a larger role as a legitimizing force, though I specifically test the different effects of autonomy below. Two primary measures of autonomy are used, one to measure the *amount* of past autonomy, and the other the *existence* of past autonomy.

***autsum:*** An index of past autonomy, with a possible range from 0 to 9, incorporating the degree to which the group had post-colonial or colonial regional autonomy, or independence in the period immediately preceding colonialism.

This variable is the sum of scores on three indicators relating autonomy in three different historical contexts: autonomy in the post-colonial period (scored 0 if none, 1 if the group had some autonomy in name only at any time during the period, 3 if real autonomy with actual legislative and executive powers existed, and 2 if the group possessed a degree of autonomy that fell somewhere between 1 and 3), in the colonial period (scored 0 if none or the country was never colonized, 1 if the group was separately governed by the same colonial administration that governed the rest of the territory, and 2 if the group was colonized by a different European power than ruled the rest of the territory), and in the pre-colonial period (coded 1 if the group was more or less united in a single polity, ruled by members of the group, in the period immediately

preceding colonization, 3 if the group possessed an independent state for any period during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and 0 otherwise). See the appendix for full details on the coding of this variable.

***autany***: A dummy variable indicating whether the group had any sort of regional autonomy in the post-colonial or colonial period, or independence in the period immediately preceding colonialism.

Autany is a less subjective measure than autsum because it does not rely on the distinctions between different degrees of autonomy.

Two additional variables divide past autonomy into distinct historical periods.

***autpostc***: A dummy variable indicating whether the group had any sort of regional autonomy in the post-colonial period.

***autpreind***: A dummy variable indicating whether the group had any sort of regional autonomy in the colonial period, or independence in the period immediately preceding colonialism.

These two variables are designed to separate the feasibility and legitimizing effects of autonomy on group goals described above.<sup>15</sup> Since more recent autonomy is much more likely to produce useable institutions of self-government and still-living personnel familiar with self-rule, ***autpostc*** is used as a proxy for the feasibility effects of autonomy. Similarly, ***autpreind*** is used as a proxy for the legitimizing effects autonomy has on the desire for separation, since the more time that has elapsed since autonomy was in place, the less likely such institutions and personnel could have survived to have a real effect on present-day capabilities. If ***autpreind*** is significant predictor of separatism, it shows that past autonomy is likely to have affected the content of the grievances ethnic groups have against the state, specifically increasing the perceived legitimacy of the idea of reclaiming a political status once held.

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<sup>15</sup> A discussion with Cory Welt helped stimulate this idea.

Of course, as with the feasibility variables listed above, past autonomy and cultural differences do not exhaust the variables that might be used to test the impact of grievances on group goals. For example, Monica Toft offers two possibilities that cannot be explored here due to data limitations: whether a group is a majority in its own region (which if true should increase the legitimacy of the idea that the homeland is rightfully theirs and increase the probability of separatism), and the length of a group's residency in a country, which should similarly strengthen claims that the country as a whole belongs to group members. The first measure, offered by Fearon and Laitin in the latest version of MAR, suffers from severe missing data problems,<sup>16</sup> and the second measure suffers from a lack of variation—almost all the rebelling groups have a lengthy period of residency in their countries.

### Control Variables

Four control variables are also included in the analysis below. Two focus on colonialism because a number of authors have shown how colonialism institutionalized ethnic relations that continued to be salient in the post-colonial state.<sup>17</sup> It stands to reason that such institutionalization may play a role in the aspirations of ethnic groups when they rebel against state rule, though it does not predict the particular way it may affect goals.

***britcol:*** A dummy variable indicating whether the country is a former British colony.

***frenchcol:*** A dummy variable indicating whether the country is a former French colony.

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<sup>16</sup> Data are missing for 64 out of the 88 cases in the dataset.

<sup>17</sup> See David Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change Among the Yoruba* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), and Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), for example. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 149-166, claims that colonial authorities created subjective evaluations of superiority and inferiority that are at the root of ethnic conflict.



I therefore look to see whether either British colonialism or French colonialism affected group political aspirations in the post-colonial state.

***africa:*** A dummy variable indicating whether the country is in Africa.

One possible consequence of the definition of pre-colonial independence I use to code the autonomy variables above is that it might be biased against ethnic groups in Africa. There, colonial powers might have been more likely to encounter independent political systems that crossed ethnic group lines and which therefore would not be coded as independent according to the criteria used here. Additionally, one might guess that modern ethnic groups in Africa are more likely to have been formed under colonialism than ethnic groups elsewhere, also eliminating the possibility of being coded as independent in the pre-colonial era. To deal with this potential problem I include a dummy variable for African countries. If the significant effect of pre-colonial independence on goals is due to these characteristics of pre-colonial African political systems, then one would expect the significance of this autonomy variable to drop once the Africa variable is included in the model. Additionally, adding an Africa variable allows me to test the effect of geography on group goals.

***collapse:*** A dummy variable indicating whether the rebellion began before 1990, or in/after 1990.

Finally, this variable measures whether the conflict began before or after the collapse of the Soviet Union. A number of important changes in the international system took place following this event. The mass separatism of the former Soviet republics may have increased the legitimacy of separatism worldwide in the 1990s. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the price of weapons on international markets fell precipitously,<sup>18</sup> and the major powers became generally

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<sup>18</sup> Thanks to Barry Posen for suggesting the inclusion of the collapse variable for this reason.

less interested in sponsoring rebel movements. No specific prediction is made with regard to the relative effect this time variable may have on rebel group goals.

Table II offers descriptive statistics for each of the variables used in the analysis below.

**Table II: Variables used, with Descriptive Statistics**

Name	N	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
<b>goal</b>	88	0.35	--	0.48	0	1
<b>grpupro</b>	88	13.86	6.0	17.9	0.06	85.00
<b>land</b>	88	1.42	0.66	2.5	0.01	17.07
<b>majority</b>	88	0.47	--	0.50	0	1
<b>kindred</b>	88	0.69	--	0.46	0	1
<b>gdp</b>	81	2787	3685	1494	354	6369
<b>culdif</b>	88	0.50	--	0.50	0	1
<b>autsum</b>	88	1.33	1.00	1.67	0	5
<b>autany</b>	88	0.53	--	0.50	0	1
<b>britcol</b>	88	0.34	--	0.48	0	1
<b>frenchcol</b>	88	0.14	--	0.34	0	1
<b>africa</b>	88	0.37	--	0.49	0	1
<b>collapse</b>	88	0.26	--	0.44	0	1

Table III summarizes the expected signs of the coefficients for each independent variable. The dependent variable in the regressions described below, **goal**, is coded “1” for state capture and “0” for separatism. Therefore, a negative coefficient means that an increase in the value of the independent variable, or a change from 0 to 1 in the value of a dummy variable, lowers the probability of state capture (and increases the probability of separatism); similarly, a positive coefficient means that an increase in the value of the independent variable, or a change from 0 to 1 in the value of a dummy variable, increases the probability of state capture (and decreases the probability of separatism).

**Table III: Expected Signs of Independent Variables**

Variable	Expected Sign	Reasoning
grpupro	+	The greater the relative group size, the greater the feasibility of accomplishing state capture and ruling the state post-conflict
land	-	A large land area diminishes the feasibility of accomplishing state capture and ruling the country post-conflict
majority	-	Countries that have majority ethnic groups are more likely to have stronger centers that make state capture relatively more difficult; further, the norm of majority rule reduces the legitimacy of state capture, thereby making it less likely.
kindred	?	Some might argue that presence of ethnic brethren would lead groups to want to join them. But constraints against irredentism may be too strong for this mechanism to work.
gdp	-	As state capacity increases, capturing the state becomes more difficult as compared to separating from it.
britcol	?	No prediction
frenchcol	?	No prediction
africa	?	No prediction
collapse	?	No prediction
autsum	-	The greater the magnitude of past autonomy, the more legitimate separation will appear for the rebelling group
autany	-	The existence of past autonomy makes separation legitimate for the rebelling group
autpostc	-	The existence of recent autonomy makes separation legitimate for the rebelling group and easier to administer post-conflict
autpreind	-	The existence of autonomy in the colonial or pre-colonial periods makes separation legitimate for the rebelling group
culdif	-	Greater cultural differences with the ruling group make separation more legitimate for the rebelling group

### III. Analysis

This analysis uses binary logit regression, which assesses the effects of one or more independent variables on the probability that a binary dependent variable will take on one of its outcome categories. The dependent variable here is goal, with the two outcome categories being separatism and state capture. Since this variable happens to be coded as “0” for separatism and “1” for state capture, the analysis looks at the effects of the independent variables on the

probability that a rebellion will pursue state capture. Specifically, binary logit returns the change in the natural log of the odds of state capture given a one unit increase in each independent variable, holding the effects of all other variables constant. Thus, the regression coefficients presented in Table IV below require interpretation to hold any intuitive meaning.

Five models were constructed from the variables described above. The first two models assess the impact of the feasibility variables with and without the controls. The third model adds two grievance variables: the index of past autonomy, **autsum**, and the indicator of language and religious differences, **culdif**. The fourth model replaces **autsum** with **autany**, the yes/no indicator of past autonomy. The fifth model uses a third combination of past autonomy indicators, in this instance one to indicate post-colonial autonomy, **autpostc**, and a second to indicate colonial autonomy or pre-colonial independence, **autpreind**, in order to separate the legitimacy from the feasibility effects of autonomy, as per the discussion above. GDP is left out of models IV and V because missing data problems reduce the number of cases substantially, and the variable is highly insignificant in the models in which it is used.

Table IV presents the binary logit coefficients for each independent variable in each of the five models tested here, as well as their significance levels. As noted, the coefficients themselves are not intuitively interpretable, but their signs are. The signs relate the effect of an increase in the value of the independent variable to the probability of the dependent variable taking on a value of 1, in this case state capture. Thus, if a variable has a negative sign in front of its coefficient, it means that a unit increase in this variable will make it *less* likely that a rebellion will be state capture, and a positive coefficient means that a unit increase in that variable makes it *more* likely a rebellion will be state capture, with the effects of all the other independent variables in the model held constant.

Table IV: Binary Logit Coefficients

	Model I Opportunity	Model II Opportunity + Controls	Model III Full Model with Autsum	Model IV Final Model with Autany	Model V Final Model with pre/ post indep. Auton. Vars.
grppro	0.06*** (0.02)	0.06*** (0.02)	0.06** (0.03)	0.07*** (0.03)	0.07*** (0.03)
land	-0.98*** (0.42)	-1.17*** (0.50)	-1.36** (0.65)	-1.19** (0.57)	-0.98** (0.59)
majority	-1.57*** (0.65)	-1.16** (0.70)	-1.02 (0.99)	-1.61** (0.94)	-1.67** (0.95)
kindred	-0.34 (0.67)	-0.46 (0.78)	-1.03 (1.01)	-0.56 (0.85)	-0.57 (0.89)
gdp	0.25e-4 (0.21e-3)	0.19e-3 (0.27e-3)	0.43e-3 (0.36e-3)	---	---
britcol	---	0.36 (0.86)	0.75 (1.18)	0.70 (0.96)	0.82 (1.02)
frenchcol	---	0.66 (0.84)	0.05 (1.09)	0.43 (1.09)	0.67 (1.17)
africa	---	1.46** (0.73)	1.94* (1.09)	1.82** (0.93)	1.85** (0.94)
collapse	---	-0.14 (0.78)	1.22 (1.16)	1.12 (1.07)	0.83 (1.11)
autsum	---	---	-1.80*** (0.69)	---	---
autany	---	---	---	-2.76*** (0.87)	---
autpostc	---	---	---	---	-1.94** (1.20) p=.052
autpreind	---	---	---	---	-3.07*** (1.07)
culdif	---	---	-1.39** (0.86) p=.052	-1.29** (0.77)	-1.15* (0.79)
constant	0.14 (0.94)	-1.17 (1.23)	-0.30 (1.58)	0.61 (1.16)	0.37 (1.25)
pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.29	0.35	0.55	0.54	0.55
log likelihood	-37.50	-34.52	-23.87	-26.48	-25.57
N	81	81	81	88	88

Standard errors in parentheses. Bold-faced coefficients are significant. \*=Significant at the .10 level, \*\*=Significant at the .05 level, \*\*\*=Significant at the .01 level; one-tailed tests used for all variables for which theories presented above predict direction of causation; that is, for all variables except **kindred**, **britcol**, **frenchcol**, **africa**, and **collapse**.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> For a justification of using one-tailed tests in this situation, see Scott J. Long, *Regression Models for Categorical and Limited Dependent Variables* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 86.

#### IV. Discussion

The first thing to notice from Table IV is that the coefficients of three of the four feasibility variables, **grppro**, **land**, and **majority**, are significant and possess the expected signs, across almost all model specifications. Of these, **grppro** has the highest significance consistently across models. One can confidently say that the probability of a rebellion's goal being state capture increases as the relative size of the rebelling group increases and as the land area of the country decreases, and is higher for countries without a majority ethnic group than for countries with a majority ethnic group. This result is hardly surprising—one would not expect the Chechnyans to have the capability to march on Moscow and take over Russia, for instance. The magnitude of the influences of these feasibility variables will be discussed below. The coefficient of **kindred** is consistently negative across models, but it is not significant in any of them. Thus, we cannot say with any great confidence that the presence of kindred across an international border from a group's base region has any effect on the type of rebellion that group will launch. GDP per capita also has no significant effect on the goals of ethnic rebellions. It is possible that this result derives from the fact that per capita wealth is a poor measure of state capacity, more than anything else.

It also seems clear that a country's past history as either a British or a French colony has no effect on the goals of rebellions.<sup>20</sup> Further, the time period in which a rebellion takes place also has no significant influence on the political objectives pursued. The influence of the **Africa** variable, suggesting that African countries are more likely to produce state capture rebellions and non-African countries separatist rebellions, is interesting. The variable is consistently positive,

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<sup>20</sup> I also tested whether having been a colony of any sort influenced goals. When a variable indicating whether the country used to be a colony is used in Model IV in place of both the **britcol** and **frenchcol** variables, the colony variable is highly insignificant, and the coefficients of the other variables are very little changed.

and significant at least at the .10 level across all four models in which it is used. In addition, its inclusion does not affect the significance of either **autany**, **autsum**, or **land**.<sup>21</sup> That is, a past history of autonomy has a significant effect on present goals of rebellions independent of any effect African political systems<sup>22</sup> or the relatively small size of African countries<sup>23</sup> may also have had on those goals.<sup>24</sup> Thus, before we even turn to the grievance variables, we can see that, not surprisingly, the objectives of rebelling groups are significantly affected by the relative feasibility of achieving one goal over the other. But is this the whole story?

As Table IV shows, three different combinations of variables representing past autonomy are tested. Model III includes the summary index of past autonomy, which incorporates not merely the existence of past autonomy, but the extent of that autonomy. As discussed above, while this variable is richer in terms of the information it contains compared to the dummy autonomy variables used in Models IV and V, it is more subjective and perhaps therefore deserving of greater scrutiny. Model IV also contains only one autonomy variable, but this is the dummy variable, indicating only whether the group had any history of autonomy. Importantly,

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<sup>21</sup> This conclusion is not shown in the table above, but is based on running both Models III and IV with and without the Africa variable. Doing so showed only minute changes in the significance of either autonomy variable or **land**.

<sup>22</sup> In fact, performing a  $\chi^2$  test of independence on the relationship between **africa** and **autprec**, an indicator of an independent state in the period immediately preceding colonialism used to code the **autpreind** variable employed in this chapter (see Appendix), strongly suggests that there is no relationship ( $\chi^2=0.36$ ,  $\text{prob}=0.55$ ). [The results of this test specifically say that we cannot reject the possibility that the two variables are independent. In contrast, a probability value below 0.05 would suggest that there is at least a 95 percent likelihood that the two variables are not independent.] Similar and even more conclusive results emerge when Africa is tested against **anycol**, the existence of a separate colonial administration for the group ( $\chi^2=0.0045$ ,  $\text{prob}=0.95$ ). However, a  $\chi^2$  test between Africa and **autind**, indicating autonomy in the post-colonial period, results in our being able to reject the independence of these two variables at the .01 level ( $\chi^2=10.4$ ,  $\text{prob}=0.001$ ). Ethnic groups in African states are *much less likely* to have had autonomy in the post-colonial period than are groups in non-African states, but groups in African states are not any more or less likely to have had autonomy in the colonial period or independence in the pre-colonial period.

<sup>23</sup> The mean value of **land** is 73 percent greater for non-African countries in the dataset (0.97 million sq. km. for African and 1.68 million sq. km. for non-African countries).

<sup>24</sup> What independent effect is the Africa variable capturing if not the propensity of African ethnic groups to exist in relatively loose configurations in the pre-colonial period? I speculate there might be two possible reasons. African states might disproportionately produce weak centers in ways not captured by the majority, **land**, or group proportion variables. This hypothesis suggests future work to operationalize additional capabilities-based variables. Second, if African ethnic groups are relatively young, they may hold less attachment to particular homelands, decreasing the legitimacy of separation.

reducing the subjectivity of the autonomy indicator by removing different *types* of autonomy from the variable does not reduce its significance. For this reason, Model IV will be the model used to discuss the magnitude of the effects of the independent variables on group goals below. Finally, Model V contains two autonomy variables, one indicating whether the group had any autonomy in the post-colonial period, and one indicating whether the group had any autonomy in the pre-independence period.<sup>25</sup>

All of the autonomy variables have the expected negative sign, meaning that increases in past autonomy reduce the probability of state capture, and increase the probability of separatism. Three of the four variables are highly significant, at the .01 level, and one, indicating post-colonial autonomy, is significant at the .05 level. Past autonomy clearly makes separatism more likely over state capture when groups rebel against the state. As discussed above, however, one could argue that past autonomy affects both the feasibility and the legitimacy of separation. But the strong significance of the **autpreind** variable, indicating autonomy during the colonial period or independence in the pre-colonial period, should dispel any idea that past autonomy affects group goals simply by increasing the feasibility of separatism. The evidence presented here strongly suggests that autonomy increases the idea that separatism is legitimate in the eyes of group members, because the capabilities effects of past autonomy—institutions of self-

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<sup>25</sup> As detailed in the appendix, the preindependence period variable takes into account two codings: one for autonomy in the colonial period, and one for independence in the pre-colonial period. The effects of these two variables on goals could not be tested separately because colonial autonomy predicts separatism perfectly, and is therefore automatically dropped from the logit regression. Autonomy in the pre-colonial period is attributed only to those ethnic groups that exercised self-rule under a single polity. If sources describe a colonial encounter with a series of autonomous tribes or kingdoms, each of which was ruled by the ethnic group in question but existing independent of one another, then the group is not considered to have been autonomous in this period. This coding rule was put in place both for the sake of convenience and for theoretical reasons. In practical terms, it becomes difficult to define autonomy the looser the criteria one adopts. In theoretical terms, the idea that past autonomy might influence the goals of rebellion rests on the notion that the ethnic group as a whole sees itself as deserving of its own polity. When multiple polities existed in the past, this line of reasoning becomes less clear.



government and personnel familiar with self-rule—are much less likely to come into play the further back in history the autonomy took place.

Finally, the cultural differentials variable is consistently significant and has the expected sign across all models. Cultural differences between the rebelling group and the ruling group increase the probability that group goals will be separatist, independent of the effects of the other variables specified. I propose that cultural differences between the rebelling group and the ruling group allow rebel group members to relate more strongly to the norm of self-rule, and that therefore this finding lends further support to the influence of the content of grievances on group goals during rebellion. The mechanisms by which both cultural differences and past autonomy affect the relative legitimacy of separatism and state capture will be explored in greater detail in the next two chapters.

### Comparing the Strength of the Models

How do the five models compare with one another in terms of their ability to explain the goals of ethnic civil wars? In particular, does our understanding of the goals of rebellion improve by adding variables derived from non-capabilities based hypotheses? The answer to this question is clearly yes. We can compare how well different models predict the results of the cases in the dataset. The statistical software can generate a predicted probability that a given goal of rebellion will occur for each case, which can then be compared to the actual result. That is, if based on the regression, a model predicts a separatist rebellion for a particular case, and that case actually did generate a separatist rebellion, then the model successfully predicted that case. The standard for judging the models in terms of the percent of cases successfully predicted is the degree to which they can predict outcomes better than an educated guess based on knowing the

actual outcome categories of **goal**.<sup>26</sup> That is, knowing that the goal of 57 of the 88 cases (64.7 percent) was separatism, one would successfully guess the outcome about 65 percent of the time if one were to guess separatism for each case; models should be judged on their ability to generate better predictions than this. In fact, combining the opportunity and feasibility variables greatly improves our ability to predict the type of rebellion that will be launched beyond the educated guess—Model IV successfully predicts 87.5 percent of the cases (77 out of 88).

Table V below uses a different measure to compare the explanatory power of each model called Bayesian Information Criterion.<sup>27</sup> Criteria developed by Raftery<sup>28</sup> are used to label the magnitude of the differences between the quantitative BIC scores for each model. Each cell of the table shows the relative strength of two different models.

**Table V: Comparisons of the Explanatory Power of Each Model, BIC Differences**

Model	I	II	III	IV	V
I	---	---	---	---	---
II	7.85 (strong support for I)	---	---	---	---
III	-3.12 (positive support for III)	-10.97 (very strong support for III)	---	---	---
IV	-0.62 (weak support for IV)	-8.47 (strong support for IV)	2.50 (positive support for III)	---	---
V	1.46 (weak support for I)	-6.39 (strong support for V)	4.59 (positive support for III)	2.08 (positive support for IV)	---

Table V shows that model III offers more explanatory power than any other model. The largest difference in the amount of support between any two models is that between Model III and

<sup>26</sup> See Adam Przeworski, et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Material Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), Chapter 2, which uses this same method.

<sup>27</sup> The models used to generate this table do not include the GDP variable, because there are a number of missing values associated with this indicator. BIC can only compare models with the same number of cases, and if GDP is left in some of the models have more cases than others. The collapse variable is also excluded.

<sup>28</sup> A.E. Raftery, "Bayesian Model Selection in Social Research," in *Sociological Methodology*, Vol. 25, ed. P.V. Marsden (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1996), 111-163.

Model II; that is, adding the autonomy and cultural differences variables to the feasibility and control variables gives us the best explanation. Model II suffers in comparison with Model I because of the addition of the three control variables, two of which (the two colonial variables) turned out to be highly insignificant. It is also important to note that while Model III offers a better explanation than either Models IV or V, which examine different types of autonomy variables, the differences here are marginal. Because, as discussed above, the **autany** variable used in Model IV is a more objective measure than **autsum**, Model IV is used in the discussion below on the magnitude of the effects of the individual variables.

Magnitude of Effects of Independent Variables on Goals

If past autonomy and cultural differences play a significant role in determining rebel group goals, then how much of a role do they actually play? And what is the relationship between the effect of these legitimacy variables and the effects of the feasibility variables? The discussion below answers these questions, providing details on the magnitude of the effects of each variable on group goals. Table VI details the magnitude of the effect of each independent variable that was significant in Model IV on the probability that a rebelling group will pursue state capture.

**Table VI: Changes in Predicted Prob. of State Capture, Sig. Vars., Model IV**

variable	min->max	0->1	+/sd/2
<b>grppro</b>	0.88	--	0.24
<b>land</b>	-0.41	--	-0.52
<b>majority</b>	--	-0.29	--
<b>africa</b>	--	0.36	--
<b>autany</b>	--	-0.50	--
<b>culdif</b>	--	-0.24	--

Notes: variable land held at its median value, all other variables held at their means. Min->max indicates the change in predicted probability of state capture as each variable changes from its minimum to its maximum value. 0->1 is the change in the predicted probability of state capture as each dummy variable changes from 0 to 1. And +sd/2 is the change in the predicted probability of state capture as each variable changes by one standard deviation, centered around its mean value.

The table shows that as relative group size varies from the minimum value it takes on in the dataset to the maximum value it takes on in the dataset, the probability of state capture increases by 88 percent.<sup>29</sup> It also shows that as country size moves from its minimum to its maximum value, the probability of state capture decreases 41 percent, that rebellions in countries with a majority ethnic group are 29 percent less likely to be state capture, and that rebellions in African countries are 36 percent more likely to be state capture. In terms of the grievance variables, the table shows that when the rebelling group has both major religious and language differences with the ruling group, goals are 24 percent more likely to be separatist. Finally, rebelling groups that have had some past autonomy are, on average, 50 percent less likely to pursue state capture as opposed to separatism.

However, it is important to note that the relationship between all of the independent variables and group goals is non-linear; for example, the effect of a one unit increase in relative group size on the probability of state capture is smaller at the low end of the range of group size, largest toward the middle of that range, and small again at the top of that range. Figures 1 through 4 depict these non-linear relationships, as well as the effect of the legitimacy variables on the relationship between the two continuous feasibility indicators—relative group size and country size—and goals. These figures give a better picture of how autonomy and cultural differences matter as other important variables in the equation change. Specifically, they show that the grievance variables have particularly large effects on group goals when the opportunity indicators do not take on extreme values. This makes perfect sense, as the Chechnya-Russia example above brings to life—no matter how deserving of state capture a group like the

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<sup>29</sup> Assuming that all other variables are held at their mean values, with the exception of the country's size, which is held at the median value. Of course, because dummy variables can only hold values of 0 or 1, it is assuming a somewhat fictional scenario to hold them at their mean.

Chechnyans may have felt, its relatively tiny size and the enormous size of the territory it would have to conquer would almost certainly preclude any state capture attempt.<sup>30</sup>

The predicted probabilities that were generated and used to create Figures 1 and 2 assume that the values of all variables other than those depicted are held at their means, except for country size which is held at its median value. The predicted probabilities that were generated and used to create Figures 3 and 4 also assume that the values of all variables other than those depicted are held at their means, except for group proportion, which is held at its median value.

**Figure 1**

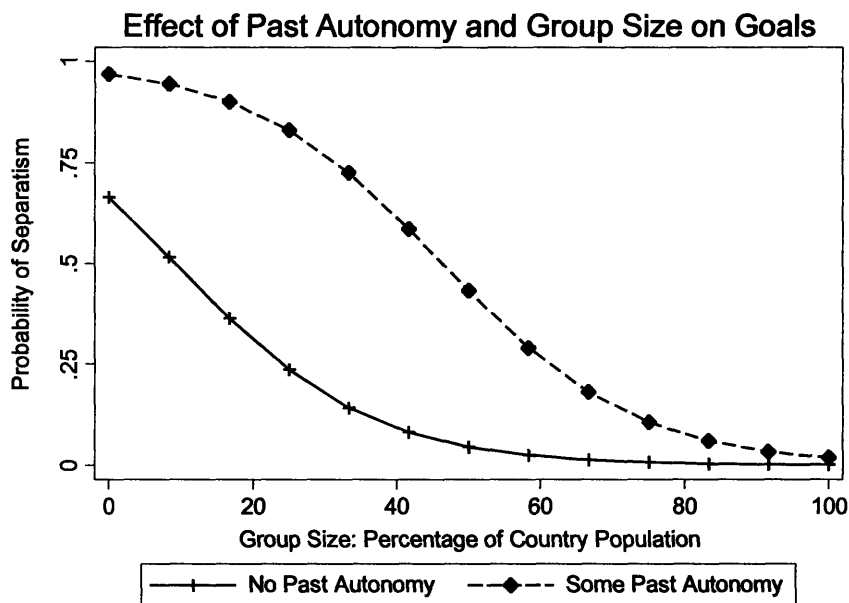
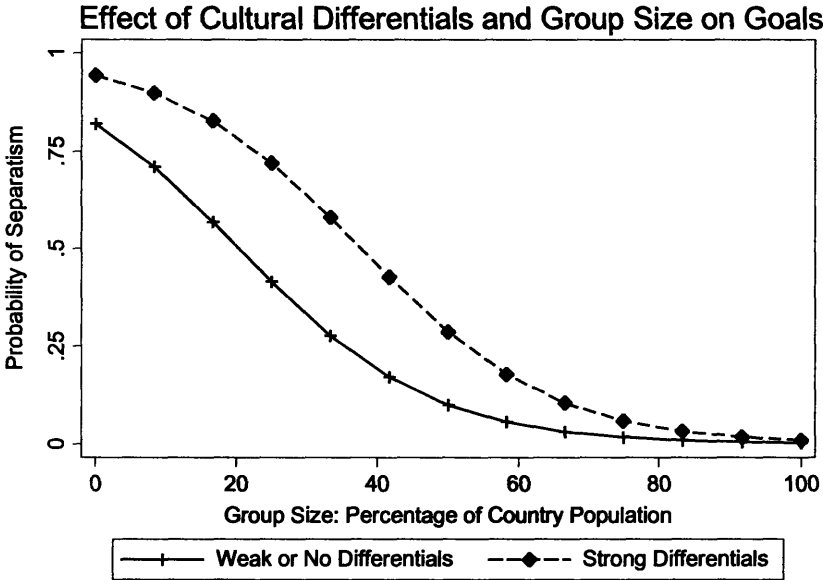


Figure 1 shows that, as one would expect, the probability of separatism decreases as the relative size of the rebelling ethnic group increases. The two different lines show, however, the dramatic effect of past autonomy on the relationship between group size and goals: across the range of rebelling group size, those groups that have had past autonomy are more likely to

<sup>30</sup> The Chechnyans are used only as an example. They are, of course, a separatist group.

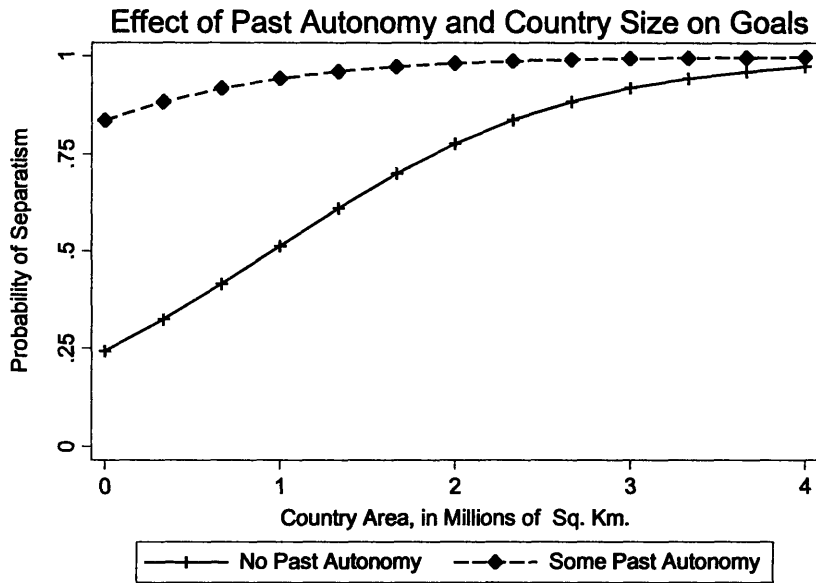
pursue separatism. It should be pointed out that the median value of relative group size for the rebellions in the dataset is 6 percent. Thus, most groups in the dataset fall in the range depicted toward the left side of this figure. Moreover, notice that the effects of autonomy are greatest in the middle of the range of group size. This makes sense when one considers the smallest and largest rebelling ethnic groups are more likely to have goals determined by feasibility: tiny groups have little choice but to pursue separatism, while large groups are more likely to be widely dispersed geographically and should therefore find state capture easier to pursue.

**Figure 2**



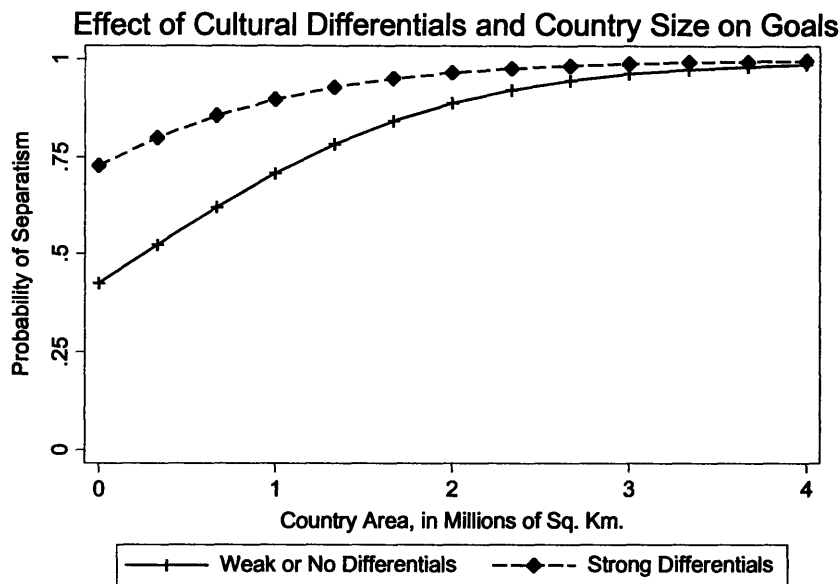
Similarly, Figure 2 shows the effect of cultural differences on the same relationship between group size and the probability of separatism. As with past autonomy, the existence of cultural differences increases the probability of separatism, especially toward the middle of the range of group size.

**Figure 3**



Figures 3 and 4 show the effect of past autonomy and cultural differences, respectively, on the relationship between country size and the probability of separatism. Alone, that relationship shows how rebelling groups are more likely to pursue separatism as the land area of the country they are rebelling against increases. But past autonomy and cultural differences have a dramatic effect on that relationship. Note that the median value of land in the dataset is about 0.7 million sq. km. Thus, as with Figures 1 and 2, the left side of Figures 3 and 4 depicts a relationship that is more representative of the cases analyzed than the right side.

**Figure 4**



It should also be noted that as relative group size and land area in the figures increase past the typical range of figures actually found in the dataset, the predicted probabilities derived by the statistical package become more speculative. Finally, recall that there are only two goals being analyzed here, state capture and separatism; so anything that decreases the probability of separatism increases the probability of state capture by the same amount. Thus, the figures could easily have shown the effects of group size, land, past autonomy, and cultural differentials on state capture instead of separatism, and the slopes of the lines in the figures would simply have been reversed.

Figures 1 through 4 go a certain way toward explaining the circumstances under which the effects of the legitimacy variables are greatest. A more precise understanding is available from the data, however. As noted above, we can generate the predicted probability that the dependent variable will take on a value for each of the models used. Recall from above that the



difference between Models II and IV is the addition of the legitimacy variables (autonomy and cultural differences) in Model IV. Thus, by comparing the different predicted probabilities, case by case, between the two models, we can achieve a more detailed understanding of the type of case for which the effect of the legitimacy variables on, say, state capture is minimal, typical, or maximal. The results show that the feasibility variables have the greatest affect in small countries, African countries, and countries without a majority ethnic group, suggesting perhaps that the effects of cultural differences and past autonomy on group goals is greatest when groups rebel against weak states.

### The Impact of Missing Data

It should be noted that missing values on any of the three measures<sup>31</sup> used to construct the four autonomy variables are for all practical purposes treated as codes of 0. This could prove problematic in the sense that cases of past autonomy might be underreported, and the autonomy indicators might reflect too little autonomy. Knowing only that about two-thirds of the cases are separatist, one can conclude that the systematic underreporting of past autonomy is likely to hurt efforts to link past autonomy to separatism. That is, a randomly chosen missing data point, which for practical purposes is treated as 0, is more likely to belong to a case of separatism. This means we should probably have more confidence in any results linking separatism to past autonomy using the data described above.

However, knowing something about the distribution of these missing data, we can go a step further. There are 15 cases with missing data on at least one of the 3 autonomy indicators. Since separatist rebellions made up almost 65 percent of the cases in the dataset, one would expect about 65 percent of the cases with missing data to also be separatist, or about nine to ten

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<sup>31</sup> Again, the three measures are autonomy in the postcolonial state, autonomy under colonialism, and independence in the pre-colonial period.

cases out of the 15. However, separatist cases are actually over represented among the 15 cases with missing data: there are 13 such cases. Thus, were information to become available allowing for the replacement of missing data, the association between separatism and past autonomy as represented by the **autsum** variable is likely to be even more pronounced.

What about **autany**? Of the 15 cases with missing values on one or more of the autonomy indicators, 8 have an **autany** code of 0 and 7 have an **autany** code of 1. This means that for the 7 cases with an **autany** code of 1, replacing missing values with actual data will not have any effect on the coding of **autany**, because **autany** measures whether there was *any* past autonomy, and for these 7 cases we already know there was autonomy for at least one historical period, regardless of missing information about other historical periods. But for the 8 cases, replacing missing values is likely to strengthen the measurement of association between **autany** and separatism, because the goal of 6 of these 8 cases is separation. That is, there is a 75 percent (6 out of 8) chance that finding previously missing information about past autonomy for a randomly chosen case among these 8 will bolster the case made here about the relationship between autonomy and goals. Knowing these details about the missing data, we should have even greater confidence that past autonomy is an important predictor of the goals of rebellion.

## V. Conclusion

When ethnic groups rebel against state rule, group notions of legitimate political outcomes play an important role in determining the goals of rebellion. The cross-national quantitative analysis presented here supports this conclusion, showing that cultural differences between the ruling group and the rebelling group, and the rebelling group's history of autonomous rule, each significantly increase the probability that goals will be separatist rather than aimed at capturing the state. Moreover, the magnitude of these effects can be dramatic.

The analysis also shows that while the relative feasibility of state capture versus separatism plays an important role in determining goals, for the many cases in which feasibility issues are not overwhelming, a space opens for the role of historically- and culturally-constituted grievances to take over. Most importantly, the chapter offers a model which, by bringing grievance and feasibility variables together, successfully predicts goals in close to 90 percent of the cases in the dataset.

The finding that the effects of grievances are greatest in weak states should not detract from the importance of this study's focus. After all, many states are weak. In terms of two of the feasibility variables analyzed here—land area and relative group size—most of the cases of rebellion fall in a range where legitimacy plays an important role. In this sense, the Chechnyans in Russia are an aberration—a case where the rebellion's goals might be easily predicted knowing only information about the feasibility variables. Also, the relative feasibility of goals is not a static phenomenon, and is clearly not fully captured by the feasibility variables listed above. Potentially rebelling groups might find that the feasibility of different goals changes over time according to factors not analyzed here at all, and therefore the importance of the perceived legitimacy of goals may grow as a result. Finally, the relationship between feasibility and grievances itself is important to understand.

Having established that, across a wide range of cases, grievances and perceived legitimacy play an important role in determining group goals, the next two chapters illustrate the mechanisms underlying this relationship. Chapter three examines the separatist rebellion fought by Eritrean nationalists against Ethiopia from 1961 to 1989. It focuses on the rhetoric produced by Eritrean rebels to show the effects of both past Eritrean autonomy and cultural differences between Eritreans and the ruling ethnic group of Ethiopia on the decision to pursue separatism.

Chapter four offers a case study of the state capture rebellion fought by the Tigrayan ethnic group against the Ethiopian state. It focuses on the effects of both Tigray's historic integration into a wider Abyssinian cultural and political environment, and of more recent Tigrayan involvement in national Ethiopian political movements, on the political objectives developed by the Tigrayan rebels. These objectives sought to achieve nationalist goals by liberating Tigrayans within the existing Ethiopian state structure, rather than by separating Tigray from it.

## A Note on the Case Studies

The previous chapter offered evidence across a wide range of cases supporting the theory developed in chapter one, showing that the best explanation for the goals of ethnic rebels incorporates factors that shape the grievances ethnic groups hold against the state. The theory proposed that past autonomy and cultural differences affect the content of grievances ethnic group members hold, and therefore how group members perceive the legitimacy of different political objectives rebel organizations can pursue. Those groups that had political autonomy in the past, and that have major cultural differences with the country's dominant group, will look favorably on attempts to reclaim that lost political status, and will see their differences as legitimating the idea of self rule. On the other hand, those groups that have been politically integrated into the state, and that have fewer cultural differences with the state's dominant group, are more likely to look favorably on political claims that recognize existing state borders and structures. Chapter two showed that across a wide range of ethnic civil wars, rebellions launched by ethnic groups that had once possessed political autonomy, and that had major language and religious differences with the state's dominant group, were significantly more likely to be separatist, while rebellions launched by ethnic groups that had never had autonomy, and that were culturally similar to the state's dominant group, were significantly more likely to be aimed at capturing the state.

Chapters three and four offer case studies of two civil wars in Ethiopia, one separatist and one revolutionary, in order to detail the mechanisms whereby political autonomy and cultural differences affect rebel group goals. Whereas chapter two established an empirical relationship, the case studies delve into the reasons that relationship exists. Chapter three examines the origins of the Eritrean separatist rebellion against Ethiopia that was fought from 1961 to 1989,

explaining how cultural differences between members of the early Eritrean rebel movements and Ethiopia's dominant Amhara ethnic group, as well as Eritrea's long history of autonomy, both played an influential role in establishing the separatist nature of Eritrea's rebellion. Chapter four provides a case study of the Tigrayan rebellion against Ethiopian rule. For part of the time that Eritreans were trying to separate from Ethiopia, Tigrayan nationalists fought to take over the Ethiopian state, ultimately winning power in 1989. The chapter examines the intellectual origins of the Tigrayan rebellion, focusing on how long-standing cultural and political ties between Tigrayans and Amharas, as well as the more recent integration of Tigrayan elites into Ethiopian society, influenced the revolutionary ideas developed by the Tigrayan nationalist movement.

The two chapters draw upon several sources. They include a variety of original documents produced by dissident Eritrean and Tigrayan groups, as well as rhetoric attributed to rebel group members by contemporary observers. The chapters also draw on papers produced by the Italian colonial and the British military administrations, reports of the two international commissions sent to investigate the situation in Eritrea following World War II, and formerly classified documents produced by U.S. and British government personnel in Eritrea and Ethiopia up through the early 1970s.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Creating Difference: Past Autonomy, Cultural Distinctions, and Eritrean Separatism**

#### **I. Introduction**

This chapter argues that the political autonomy Eritrea enjoyed under three successive administrations, as well as major cultural differences between Eritrea's Muslim community and Ethiopia's dominant ethnic group, together helped shape the separatist nature of the rebellion that broke out against Ethiopia in 1961. The chapter begins by offering a brief review of Eritrea's history. It then describes Eritrean autonomy prior to its 1962 incorporation into Ethiopia, detailing the characteristics of separate rule in the areas of government administration, education, and the military under Italian colonialism, the British occupation during and after World War II, and during the ten year period when Eritrea and Ethiopia were federated together. The chapter then details how the mostly-Muslim Eritrean groups that formed the early rebel movements and Ethiopia's Amhara ethnic group are culturally distinct from one another.

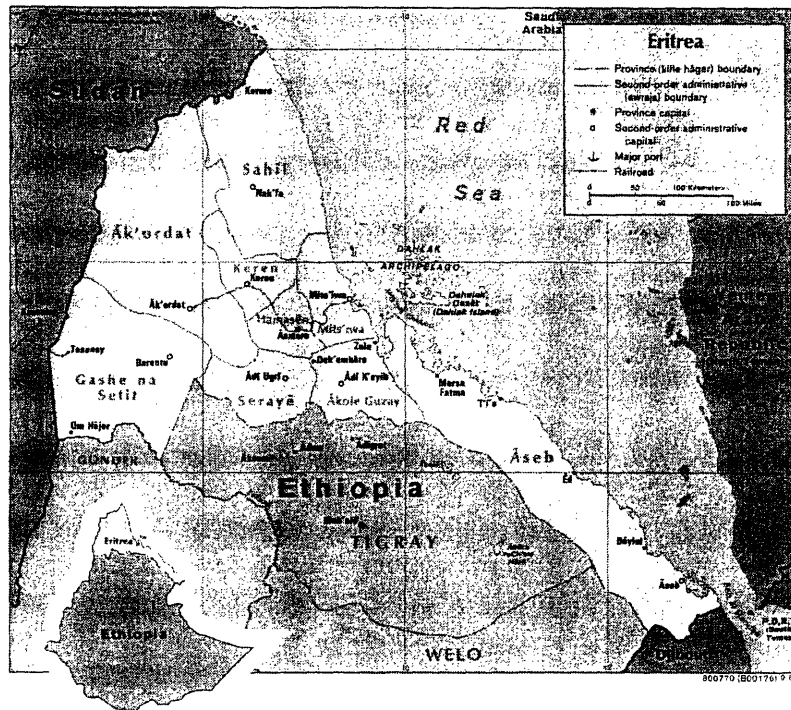
Putting these factors together, the bulk of the chapter examines the mechanisms by which past autonomy and cultural differences shaped the goals of Eritrea's rebellion. Past autonomy is linked to the formation of popular opinion and decisions by early Eritrean nationalists to pursue separatism in two ways: first, past autonomous institutions led directly to later Eritrean support for separatism by emphasizing certain types of differences between Eritreans and Ethiopians. These differences boosted the perceived legitimacy of self determination. Second, the dismantling of autonomous institutions by Ethiopia during the Federal period, 1952-1962, and the unfulfilled expectations of future autonomy promised by UN Resolution 390(V) of 1950,

which instituted Federalism, fostered even additional support for separation by Eritreans, since the desire to reclaim what was once held, or to claim that which was promised, was widely seen as legitimate. Cultural differences are shown to play a similar role in emphasizing difference with the ruling group of Ethiopia, and therefore legitimizing the idea of separating politically from that group. Looking at these factors together, the chapter offers broad support for the theory presented in chapter one, that cultural differences and past autonomy shape rebel political objectives by affecting ethnic group grievances, and as a result the legitimacy with which those objectives are viewed by ethnic group members.

## B. Brief History

Eritrea's location on the Red Sea coast made it a strategic prize sought by several different powers over time, including the Ottoman Turks in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and Egyptians and Italians in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, politics in the area of Northern Ethiopia that contains today's Eritrea could best be described as feudal, and at times anarchical, with various nobles competing with one another for local power. Into this scene stepped the Italians, and Eritrea's current borders represent the furthest Italy extended its control after it began expanding from its original foothold at the port of Assab in 1885. Eritrea became an official colony of Italy in 1890 and remained so until 1936, when Italy used Eritrea as a staging ground to invade Ethiopia. From 1936 until 1941, when Italy was driven from East Africa by the British military, Eritrea, with parts of Ethiopia's Tigray province appended to it, constituted one of the six provinces of Italian East Africa. After the war, Britain assumed the administration of Eritrea for the next 10 years, though its British Military Administration (BMA).





British rule was a wartime exigency, and was never meant to be permanent. Based on a provision of the 1947 Allied-Italian peace treaty, the disposition of Italian colonial possessions fell jointly to the four major Allied powers: the Soviet Union, the UK, the United States, and France. A Four Power Commission of Inquiry meant to supply the foreign ministers of these states with advice on Eritrea's future visited the territory from November 1947 to January 1948. During this time Commission members surveyed local opinion, and as a result stimulated the division of Eritreans into political groups advocating opposing visions of the territory's future. Most of Eritrea's Christian population supported union with Ethiopia, while the various Muslim communities advocated a variety of solutions, most of which opposed Ethiopian rule.

Because the Commission was ultimately unable to reach consensus, the question of Eritrea's future was referred to the United Nations, which, initially unable to make a decision itself, sent a second commission to Eritrea in February 1950 to once again gather local opinion on the ex-colony's future. In December, 1950, the UN finally voted that Eritrea would enter into

a federation with Ethiopia, with the latter assuming control over foreign affairs, but the former given a certain measure of self-rule. Details of the measure are provided below.

Federation between Eritrea and Ethiopia was established in 1952. In 1962 the federal arrangements were abrogated by a unanimous vote of Eritrea's legislative assembly,<sup>1</sup> whose members are thought by most observers to have been in the pocket of Ethiopian authorities, and Ethiopia assumed direct control over Eritrea. During the intervening decade, the government of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie with the collusion of a compliant Eritrean legislature slowly dismantled bits and pieces of the federal arrangement. Ethiopian government measures stimulated the formation of the first major Eritrean rebel organizations, the Eritrean Liberation Movement (ELM) in 1958 and the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), in 1961. Both organizations proclaimed as their goal the creation of an independent Eritrean state.

By the early 1960s the ELF had surpassed the ELM as the primary Eritrean insurgent organization, and it continued in this role throughout the decade and into the early 1970s. It was primarily a Muslim organization drawing support mainly from the areas of Western Eritrean bordering Sudan, although its Christian membership, particularly at top levels, grew throughout the decade. The insurgency grew from launching minor hit and run attacks on Ethiopian police and military units stationed in rural areas to threatening the province's larger towns and ports by the end of the 1960s. By this time the Eritrean rebellion had become the most pressing domestic problem for Haile Selassie and his government. The 1960s were generally marked by growing Ethiopian repression of Eritreans, within Eritrea as well as in Ethiopia proper. Eritrean trade unions were banned, political prisoners became more common, and Eritrean students at the

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<sup>1</sup> Circumstances surrounding this event are murky, and some believe a vote was never actually held, only an announcement to the legislature by the Emperor's representative to Eritrea. This is certainly the view of Eritrean nationalists. See Eritrean Liberation Front, *The Eritrean Newsletter* No. 29 (November 1, 1978), 9.

university in Addis Ababa became targets of harassment, particularly as some high-level Christian Eritrean politicians defected to the rebel side.

In 1974 the elderly Haile Selassie was deposed in a military coup. After consolidating power, the Marxist junta that replaced him ratcheted up the military pressure on the Eritrean rebels, with increasing levels of Soviet support as the decade went on. Partly as a result of defections from the pro-Ethiopian Eritrean administration, spurred by Ethiopian repression, and a resumption of support from radical Arab regimes following a cut-off in aid after the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the Eritrean separatists grew in strength during the 1970s, and were for the first time able to take and hold major towns for extended periods of time. From the late 1960s the ELF faced competition from the offshoot Eritrean Liberation Front-Popular Liberation Front (ELF-PLF), and a bloody civil conflict between these two groups lasted well into the next decade. Eventually, however, the ELF-PLF, which became the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front (EPLF), was victorious, and this organization led Eritrea to independence after finally defeating the Ethiopian military in Eritrea in 1989.

The international political environment in which the early Eritrean insurrection took place was one of Cold-war tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as of continuing Arab-Israeli hostilities. At the time the ELF and ELM began their rebellion in the early 1960s, the conservative Christian monarchy of Haile Selassie was a staunch US ally, and had developed close relations with Israel as well. The US government had an ongoing military assistance program with the Ethiopians, and maintained an important electronic eavesdropping post at Asmara. Israeli support was more circumspect, but stories of Israeli military advisors and even troops helping the Ethiopian armed forces in Eritrea abounded. Naturally, then, the Muslim-dominated rebel movements turned to the Arab world for support, particularly focusing

on radical leftist regimes like those in Iraq, Syria, and Algeria. The Arab states apparently saw their relationship with the rebels as a means of opening a separate, if somewhat peripheral, front against Israel, and even as Christian Eritreans began assuming leadership positions in the organizations, they would frequently establish offices in Baghdad or Damascus.<sup>2</sup> As noted above, the military government that replaced Haile Selassie gained Soviet support in the mid 1970s, but none of the Eritrean rebel groups turned to the United States as a result, continuing to draw aid and arms from available sources in the Arab world.

## **II. Autonomous Eritrea**

One of the main contentions of this dissertation is that past autonomy shapes the goals of ethnic rebellions by making separation appear legitimate in the eyes of a population. If ethnic group members accept separation as *deserved* because of a past history of self-rule, elites are more likely to choose separation as a goal of any rebellion they attempt to launch. As a consequence of its past autonomy, Eritreans shared experiences of government that distinguished them, positively in their view, from the people living south of the political boundary separating Eritrea from Ethiopia. This section details those experiences in three time periods—under Italian rule until 1941, under British rule until 1952, and under federation with Ethiopia until 1962. Section Four below will make the link between these experiences and feelings among Eritrean elites and the broader population that separation was the most legitimate political objective to pursue.

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<sup>2</sup> The fact that Arab support did not wane as the Eritrean movements reduced the Islamic emphasis of their rebellion presents some evidence that the early rebel focus on cultural differences with Christian Ethiopians was not merely an instrumental means of gaining outside support. In fact, these feelings were expressed long before the creation of any actual rebel organizations. Moreover, the first such groups went to great lengths to convince the United States to support their cause.

## A. Italian Rule

Eritrea was first administered as a separate political unit in the 1880s, when Italy consolidated its rule there. To be sure, Eritrea under Italy was not autonomous in the sense of possessing self-rule. Italian governors were locally paramount and took their orders directly from Rome, and Eritreans played no role in government decision-making. Very few Eritreans even worked for the Italian administration in anything other than the most menial positions for most of Italian rule, and only in the later parts of it were Eritreans able to enter the government as even low-level functionaries.

However, the more than 50 years of Italian administration had a great impact on the lives of its Eritrean subjects in a number of ways not experienced by Ethiopians. Traditional local rulers were incorporated into the official government apparatus and put on the government payroll, exercising legislative, executive, and judicial powers on behalf of the Italians. Further, during this period Eritreans were subject to the laws and administration of the Italian colonial authority. For instance, Italian judicial rules subjected Eritreans to Italian law in any case involving an Italian citizen. After the 1936 invasion of Ethiopia, Eritreans became subject to a civil legal system distinct from other Ethiopians, even though both were now ruled by Italy.<sup>3</sup> Eritreans were not divided in this regard by religion, whereas Muslim and non-Muslim Ethiopians were subject to different civil law regulations.<sup>4</sup> In 1938, Italy made both Tigrinya (the language spoken by most of the central Eritrean highlanders) and Arabic (spoken by only a small minority of Eritrean Muslims, but seen by Muslims as a religious language) official

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Embassy, Rome to Dept. of State, June 6, 1936, "Administration of Justice in Ethiopia," NA2, 865D.04/1. Italian-established appeals courts had jurisdiction over the whole of Italian East Africa, however. See U.S. Embassy, Rome to Dept. of State, December 1, 1936, "Judicial System of Ethiopia," NA2, 865D.04/6.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Embassy, "Administration of Justice in Ethiopia."

languages of the colony.<sup>5</sup> The effects of Italian administration on the outlook of later Eritrean dissidents will be discussed in detail below in Section Four.

While schooling for non-European Eritreans was for the most part limited under Italian administration to primary education<sup>6</sup> (though there were some exceptional cases in which Eritrean students were sent abroad),<sup>7</sup> the language of instruction was Italian, at least until the 1936 invasion. According to the British, Italian more than any other language was the working language of Eritrea at the time the British took over.<sup>8</sup> Ibrahim Sultan, one of the most well-known pro-independence leaders from the 1940s onward, corresponded with foreigners in Italian.<sup>9</sup> After the invasion the language policy for education was changed, but differences between Eritrean and Ethiopian students remained—an Italian decree of November, 1938 states that education in Eritrea was to be conducted in Tigrinya and Arabic, while, for instance, Amharic was to be the language of instruction in Ethiopia's Amhara province.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, while the number of Eritreans participating in the Italian educational system was low at first, hovering in the low hundreds until the early 1920s, from that point onward participation increased dramatically, to some 3,600 pupils by 1937,<sup>11</sup> and almost 4,200 by 1938-

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<sup>5</sup> Official languages were those in which official acts, laws, decrees, or regulations that by law had to be published in local dialects were to be written. See enclosure in William Phillips, Rome to Dept. of State, January 30, 1939, "Organization of Italian East Africa," NA2, 865D.01/577.

<sup>6</sup> Palmer to Henderson et al., Mar. 22, 1948, "Four Power Commission of Investigation Report on Eritrea," pg. 18. NA2, Entry # 0457.2, Subject File Regarding the Disposition of Former Italian Colonies, Box 4 (59/250/46/10/4), folder "FIC – Four Power Commission of Investigation G-6."

<sup>7</sup> H.F. Kynaston-Snell, Director of Education, BMA, "A Comparison of Education for Eritreans Before and Since the Eritrean Occupation," Aug. 26, 1947. NA2, RG 59, Entry # 0457.2, Subject File Regarding the Disposition of Fmr. Italian Colonies (59/250/46/10/4), Box 6, folder "Eritrea: Education".

<sup>8</sup> British Colonial Affairs Dept., Jan. 18, 1951, "Note on the Implications of the Resolution on Eritrea," Ref. 312/3/2. FO 1015/805, "Implications of UN Resolution on Federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia," File No. 312/3/2 (51).

<sup>9</sup> For an example, see attachment to George C. Moore, US Consul, Asmara to Edward W. Mulcahy, US Embassy, Athens, July 24, 1959. NA2, RG59, Entry 3109A, Box 5, folder "14E Federation with Eritrea—Developments 1959 & 1960".

<sup>10</sup> Enclosure in William Phillips, Rome to Dept. of State, January 30, 1939, "Organization of Italian East Africa," NA2, 865D.01/577.

<sup>11</sup> Roland Reinald De Marco, *The Italianization of African Natives: Government Native Education in the Italian Colonies 1890-1937* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1943), 49.

9, taught by “152 Italian teachers, 86 nuns and 27 Eritrean assistants.”<sup>12</sup> A student of Italian educational policy in Eritrea notes that one of its express purposes was to instill a sense of respect for “modern Roman civilization” and privilege at being ruled by Italy in the minds of students.<sup>13</sup> Another purpose of the school system was to create “future soldiers of Italy,” and school boys were enrolled in military-style youth groups called *pre-ascari*.<sup>14</sup> These and other Eritrean youth played an important role in Italy’s military campaigns in Africa. Eritreans began entering the Italian colonial army in the early 1900s, and between 1912 and 1932 some 4000 Eritrean soldiers were permanently stationed in Libya.<sup>15</sup> Some 50,000 Eritrean soldiers took part in Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia,<sup>16</sup> and were used for at least several more years<sup>17</sup> in operations against Ethiopian rebels fighting Italian rule.<sup>18</sup> Italy explicitly recognized Eritreans for their efforts against Ethiopia, and provided benefits to Eritreans as a result, as the official Italian proclamation in the box below attests.

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<sup>12</sup> Palmer to Henderson et al., Mar. 22, 1948, 18.

<sup>13</sup> De Marco, *The Italianization of African Natives*, 7-8 and 17-21.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 54-5.

<sup>15</sup> Tekeste Negash, *Eritrea and Ethiopia: The Federal Experience* (Uppsala, Sweden: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1997), 15-17.

<sup>16</sup> Negash cites 50,000 (*Ibid.*, 15-17), while Haile M. Larebo, *The Building of an Empire: Italina Land Policy and Practice in Ethiopia, 1935-1941* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 26, n. 97, cites 60,000.

<sup>17</sup> An April 1938 report notes at least three Eritrean battalions sent to quell the insurrection in Amhara Province. More are likely to have been sent to other areas. Chief of the British Air Intelligence Service, Cairo, “Summary of Recent Events in Italian East Africa,” Enclosure No. 1 in U.S. Legation, Cairo to Dept. of State, April 20, 1938, “Revolt Against Italian Rule in Ethiopia,” NA2, 865D.01/482. The British estimated that in early 1939 there were approximately 100,000 Eritrean, Somali, and Libyan troops in Ethiopia. Enclosure No. 1 in Gordon P. Merriam, Charge d’Affaires ad interim, Cairo, to Dept. of State, January 6, 1939, “Transmitting Copy of Memorandum by Vice Consul Jay Walker Relative to the Italian Position in North and East Africa,” NA2, 865D.00/41.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Legation, Cairo to Dept. of State, March 30, 1938, “Transmitting Memorandum of Vice Consul Jay Walker concerning Military Conditions in Ethiopia,” NA2, 865D.01/468.

At the beginning of the 16 [sic] year of the Fascist Era, recognizing the notable services of Eritreans and Somalis during the Ethiopian campaign, not only by contributing valorous troops to the conquest of the Empire, but also by working in every way for the final victory the Duce has ordered:

1. In all documents of the Government indigenes of Eritrea and Somalia are no longer to be designated as 'natives' but as 'Eritreans' and 'Somalis'.

2. Preference is to be given in employment in the local East African Government to those Eritreans and Somalis who have fought with the Italian Army or whose fathers have been killed in action.

3. Similar preference is to be given for appointment to the positions of 'chiefs' and 'notables' in Eritrea and Somalia.

4. An institute for assistance to Eritrean and Somali wounded veterans and a school for war orphans are to be created in Asmara and Mogadiscio.

5. The local Governments in East Africa are, up to the limits of their powers in the matter, to issue to Eritreans and Somalis applying there for licenses to carry on commerce, open cafés, restaurants, etc., carry on the trade of chauffeur, and engage in all other trades, without restriction.

6. An amnesty of exceptional importance is to be granted to Eritreans and Somalis.

The Duce has ordered the Viceroy, Marshal Graziani, and the Governor of Italian East Africa to bring to the knowledge of the Eritrean and Somali armed forces and the population, in the most formal manner, this recognition by the Fascist Government toward our two faithful countries bordering on the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

—Italian government statement carried in Italian press on Oct. 28, 1937

(U.S. Embassy, Rome to Dept. of State, Oct. 29, 1937, "Recognition by Fascist Government of Services of Eritreans and Somalis during Ethiopian Campaign," 865D.01/319)

In contrast, Italian forces in Ethiopia responded to continuing armed resistance throughout the country after 1936 with severe repression. In 1936 and into 1937, the Italians carried out mass killings of Ethiopians suspected of being rebels, and executed a number of Ethiopian dignitaries as well, including the Bishop of Dessie, Abuna Petros, and several nobles who had surrendered to Italian forces. After an attempt on the life of the Italian Viceroy, Marshal Graziani, a



wholesale massacre of Ethiopians in Addis Ababa by Fascist Italian blackshirts ensued.<sup>19</sup>

Thousands of executions were conducted as reprisals in the rest of the country in the following months. The general rebellion launched mainly by Amhara nobles and former officials of Haile Selassie's government waxed and waned over the course of the Italian occupation, but its existence stood in sharp contrast to the peaceful status of Eritrea, and Italian favoritism toward Eritreans, during this time.

Even Ethiopia's Tigray province, directly bordering Eritrea and comprised of Tigrinya-speaking Orthodox Christians just as the Eritrean highlands are, was specifically described by a contemporary newspaper account as being uncontrolled by the Italians at least two years after the invasion, with Italy maintaining only isolated garrisons near the Eritrean border.<sup>20</sup> In contrast, there are no reports at all about armed dissidence against the Italians in Eritrea. A British intelligence report describes the feelings of non-Amhara Ethiopians, who, the report says, were initially hopeful at the Italian overthrow of Amhara rule, but who turned against Italy and its "Colonial Troops," meaning Eritreans, Somalis, and Libyans, but likely mostly Eritreans, after repressive Italian measures were instituted.<sup>21</sup> The same report notes that by December 1937 Tigray was in open rebellion against Italian rule,<sup>22</sup> with most of the fighting likely taking place against Eritrean troops. During the time of this rebellion, 1937-38, the report specifically notes that Eritrea did not take part in the uprising.

The location of the anti-Italian resistance in Ethiopia proper but not Eritrea clearly reflected different perceptions of Italian rule by these two populations. Moreover, it is not

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<sup>19</sup> Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1991*, Second Edition (Oxford: James Currey, 2001), 170-1, and Anthony Mockler, *Haile Selassie's War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 174-7.

<sup>20</sup> *Egyptian Gazette* April 17, 1938, reprinted in U.S. Legation, Cairo to Dept. of State, April 18, 1938, NA2, 865D.01/481.

<sup>21</sup> Chief of the British Air Intelligence Service, Cairo, "Summary of Recent Events in Italian East Africa," Enclosure No. 1 in U.S. Legation, Cairo to Dept. of State, April 20, 1938, "Revolt Against Italian Rule in Ethiopia," NA2, 865D.01/482.

<sup>22</sup> Specifically, "the area north of Gondar."

unreasonable to assume that military service by great numbers of Eritreans against Ethiopians hardened feelings of difference between the two groups even further. Several authors have described the role of military service in fostering unity among diverse peoples and emphasizing difference with outsiders.<sup>23</sup> At the very least, mass participation in the Italian army provided a reservoir of support for the future Eritrean separatist groups, as many fighters in these groups were former Italian soldiers who had kept their weapons.<sup>24</sup> Hamid Idris Awate, credited with firing the first shots of the Eritrean revolution, was an ex-Italian soldier.<sup>25</sup>

#### B. British Military Administration, 1941-1952

The British Military Authority (BMA) took control of Eritrea from the Italians in 1941, and retained the basic form of administrative organization it found, creating five territorial divisions based on the former Italian Commissariati.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps because the British saw their position in Eritrea as temporary, they allowed Eritreans a much greater degree of self-rule than the Italians had. As the Italians had done, the BMA appointed and paid more than 200 local chiefs to govern tribes, villages, and the Eritrean sections of urban areas. These chiefs "...collect[ed] annual tributes, decide[d] civil cases...convey[ed] administrative orders, and in general maintain[ed] law and order."<sup>27</sup> Under the British, Eritreans also came to occupy positions first as administrative assistants to British divisional officers, and then as district administrators; that is, Eritreans became government officials responsible not just for the administration of traditional

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<sup>23</sup> See, for example, Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), 292-302, and Michael Howard, "War and Nations" in *Nationalism*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 254-257.

<sup>24</sup> Interview of ELF leader "Abu Khalid" in *Jeune Afrique*, June 23, 1970, translated and reprinted in attachment to A.A. Rabida, US Consul General, Asmara to Dept. of State, July 9, 1970, "ELF Leader Reviews Struggle in "Jeune Afrique" Interview." NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1970-73, Box 2257 (59/150/67/12/3), folder "Pol 13 3/2/70".

<sup>25</sup> John Markakis, *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 59.

<sup>26</sup> Two of the six Italian Commissariati, Keren and Agordat, were merged into the Western Province.

<sup>27</sup> Palmer to Henderson et al., Mar. 22, 1948, 8.

groupings like tribes, but also geographically in dozens of districts and sub-districts throughout the territory.<sup>28</sup>

Informal Eritrean councils advised the government-appointed chiefs and sub-chiefs and exercised legislative power over customary law.<sup>29</sup> Municipal authorities in the cities of Asmara, Massawa, Adi Ugri and Decamere were empowered to legislate local by-laws and produce budgets.<sup>30</sup> A 1948 report on government under the BMA noted that

[t]he highest posts open to natives are those of district or tribal chiefs and “coadjutori,” who advise European administrative officials. More Eritreans are being associated with the B.M.A. Sixteen have appointments equivalent to the former Italian “residenti”. There are 56 native police inspectors empowered to prosecute and responsible for urban sub-station and rural posts....Advisory appointive councils of Eritreans have also been set up in each administrative division.<sup>31</sup>

The BMA recognized the importance of allowing some degree of local representation and government for maintaining control. For example, according to the BMA, “...as a further contribution to security in this disturbed area [the lowlands], it is intended to bring the immigrant herdsmen under better control through the appointment of responsible agents by their communities of origin.”<sup>32</sup> Eritreans had additional roles in security under the BMA as well, with Eritreans staffing a police force as early as 1941,<sup>33</sup> and also working to protect the border with Ethiopia. The British established “...a chain of police posts along the Southern border linked by

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<sup>28</sup> See British Information Services, *A Handbook on Eritrea for the Use of Visitors and Tourists* (Eritrea: British Military Authority, undated), 22, and British Military Administration, Eritrea, “Report on the Administration of Eritrea: For the Period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 1948,” Dec. 31, 1948. NA2, Entry #0457.2, Subject File Regarding the Disposition of Former Italian Colonies, Box 4 (59/250/46/10/4), folder “Position Papers and Resolution”.

<sup>29</sup> Palmer to Henderson et al., Mar. 22, 1948, 8.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> BMA, “Report on the Administration of Eritrea,” 1948, 78.

<sup>33</sup> British Information Services, *A Handbook on Eritrea*, 22.

sections of armed tribesmen in selected villages” in order to combat bandits crossing into Eritrea from Ethiopia.<sup>34</sup>

British reforms gave also Eritreans a degree of judicial autonomy that Ethiopians never possessed. The BMA instituted 17 “Native Courts” with Eritrean judges, having jurisdiction in penal cases where non-Europeans were concerned and where Italian or British law was applicable, and in civil cases where customary law was applicable.<sup>35</sup> As examples of how frequently such courts were used, 77 civil and 707 penal cases were dealt with by Adi Ugri Court in 1948, with 58 civil and 248 penal cases tried by the Adi Quala Court that same year.<sup>36</sup> The Asmara and Hamasien Native Court tried 13,000 cases.<sup>37</sup> Sharia courts handled more than 5,600 cases that year involving Muslims.<sup>38</sup>

Importantly, the administrative and judicial systems created by the BMA differentiated Eritreans both from their Tigrayan cousins across the border as well as from Ethiopians more generally. Even though Eritrean involvement in the administration of the province under the British remained modest, it contrasted with a complete lack of popular participation in government in Ethiopia. There, a feudal system remained in place in most of the country, where a complicated multi-layered aristocracy appointed by the Emperor exercised almost complete executive as well as judicial power. In contrast, European law was applied in Eritrea under both the Italians and the British, and while only a small number of Eritreans practiced it, a substantially larger number had it applied to them. (This is not to make any kind of value judgment about the relative quality of European law versus Ethiopian law; it is only to preface a

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<sup>34</sup> BMA, “Report on the Administration of Eritrea,” 1948, 78.

<sup>35</sup> Palmer to Henderson et al., Mar. 22, 1948, 8.

<sup>36</sup> BMA, “Report on the Administration of Eritrea,” 1948, 80.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

later argument that Eritreans *viewed* their having practiced European law as differentiating themselves favorably from Ethiopians. See below.)

Without exaggerating the extent of Eritrean autonomy under the BMA, it can safely be said that Eritreans exercised many more legislative and executive responsibilities during the ten-year period of British rule than ever before. Additionally, educational opportunities for Eritreans were expanded under the BMA in ways that further differentiated Eritreans from the population of Ethiopia, where post-elementary education was extremely rare. By the end of 1947 there were 59 government schools, with 158 teachers (of whom 154 were Eritreans) and more than 5,250 students, two middle schools with instruction in English, and one teachers training college in Asmara.<sup>39</sup> By 1950 the British claim to have enrolled 8,000 Eritrean pupils and to have increased the number of elementary schools to 74.<sup>40</sup> The British instituted local committees made up of parents and elders to oversee each school.<sup>41</sup> A BMA education official noted that no Eritrean community desired Amharic to be the language of instruction (or for that matter even taught as a second language),<sup>42</sup> and as a result under the BMA instruction remained in Tigrinya, Arabic, or both. English classes were offered as well. As of 1947 the BMA produced seven textbooks in Tigrinya.<sup>43</sup> Some 250 Eritrean students were enrolled in the English Institute of Asmara in 1947-8.<sup>44</sup> One hundred seventy eight Eritrean teachers were employed by the BMA as of January 1947.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, the ten-year BMA period continued, and in many ways accelerated, the trend begun under Italian rule of creating political, legal, and administrative institutions that were distinct

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>40</sup> British Information Services, *A Handbook on Eritrea*, 36.

<sup>41</sup> Kynaston-Snell, "A Comparison of Education for Eritreans..."

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., Addendum.

<sup>43</sup> Kynaston-Snell, "A Comparison of Education for Eritreans..."

<sup>44</sup> BMA, "Report on the Administration of Eritrea," 1948, 100.

<sup>45</sup> Kynaston-Snell, "A Comparison of Education for Eritreans..."

from those in existence in Ethiopia, and fostering Eritrean participation in those institutions. Over several decades this trend resulted in growing differences between Eritreans and Ethiopians. As will be shown below, Eritreans placed great stake in these differences, and they played an important role in shaping the direction of the rebellion launched by Eritrean nationalists ten years after the British administration ended.

### C. The Federal Period, 1952-1962

United Nations Resolution 390(V), adopted December 2, 1950, federated Eritrea with Ethiopia, gave the “Eritrean Government” legislative, executive, and judicial powers “in the field of domestic affairs,” and in addition specifically assigned to Eritrea the powers to collect taxes, maintain a police force, adopt its own budget, and levy taxes within Eritrea to support that budget.<sup>46</sup> It assigned to the Eritrean government customs duties collected on goods originating from or destined for Eritrea. It also gave to residents of Eritrea “the right to freedom of opinion and expression...” and “the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.”<sup>47</sup> The federal period affected later Eritrean feelings of deserving self rule, in two ways. Like the autonomy experienced under the British and the Italians, the political institutions put in place during the federal period differentiated Eritreans from Ethiopians. But in addition, because the document instituting federalism bore the stamp of approval of the international community through the United Nations, and because most of the institutions that were supposed to have been put in place under federalism were either ignored or had their power taken away by the Ethiopian authorities, there was a general sense among Eritreans of deserving to attain a political status they were once promised, but which was never fulfilled.

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<sup>46</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Fifth Session, Resolution 390, “Eritrea: Report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea; Report of the Interim Committee of the General Assembly on the Report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea,” Dec. 2, 1950.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, paragraph 7, sections d and f, respectively.

In principle the UN resolution was based on the recommendations of a commission of inquiry that had visited Eritrea in the early 1950s to ascertain the political wishes of the local population. This commission, and an earlier one sent by the victorious powers after World War II, stimulated the division of Eritreans into political groupings. The two commissions, along with most contemporary observers, agreed that most of Eritrea's Christian population desired full union with Ethiopia, while Muslims opposed this. A Christian political party advocating the accession of Eritrean to Ethiopia, called the Unionist Party, was formed with Ethiopian assistance.

Resolution 390(V) empowered the BMA to convoke an Eritrean Assembly to consider and approve an Eritrean constitution. The BMA did so, holding elections in March, 1952, and the constitution the assembly approved that July, ratified by the Ethiopian government in August, reflected the democratic principles Resolution 390(V) insisted it have, with, for example, an elected legislature choosing a Chief Executive by majority vote.<sup>48</sup> This constituent assembly became Eritrea's legislature under Federalism, and was initially split roughly evenly between Unionists and non-unionists. Non-unionists were a diverse group that included several mainly Muslim parties and a small anti-union Christian party. These had advocated a number of positions, ranging from complete and immediate independence to international trusteeship. No party had advocated federation. Thus, their entreaties to the international community for some solution apart from political union with Ethiopia having failed, most of the anti-unionist parties nonetheless had decided to work within the political framework established by Federation. After Haile Selassie ratified the Eritrean constitution in the fall of 1952, federation between Eritrea and Ethiopia began.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., paragraph 12.

From the beginning Ethiopian officials considered federation a necessary but unpleasant fiction that was to be maintained solely for the benefit of an international audience, a compromise that had to be made in order to avoid a less favorable vote in the United Nations. In 1955, the Emperor's representative in Eritrea is famously quoted as saying, in reference to Eritrea, that "there are no internal or external affairs....The affairs of Eritrea concern Ethiopia as a whole and the Emperor."<sup>49</sup> A Federal Council made up of Eritrean and Ethiopian representatives, which was supposed to have been the highest decision-making body in Federated Ethiopia, was, in reality, powerless and rarely met. Despite guarantees of democracy enshrined in the UN resolution and the Eritrean Constitution, the federal period was marked almost from the beginning by encroachments on democratic politics. In 1956 legislative elections, the first held under Federalism, anti-Unionist candidates were typically harassed into not running.<sup>50</sup> Prominent opponents of the government began to be jailed for peaceful political activity. As early as the spring of 1953, the only remaining newspaper still critical of Ethiopia, The Muslim League's *The Voice of Eritrea*, was closed.

During this time, one piece after another of the autonomous Eritrean political system was dismantled, and symbols of autonomy were removed. In the mid 1950s official government speeches began appearing in the press in Amharic, rather than Tigrinya.<sup>51</sup> In 1955 the elected head of the Eritrean government was replaced by a more pro-Ethiopian Unionist, with the replacement of the head of the Legislative Assembly coming soon afterwards. Reports of bribery of Eritrean legislators by the Ethiopian government were widespread, many originating

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<sup>49</sup> Markakis, *National and Class Conflict*, 94, and repeated frequently elsewhere.

<sup>50</sup> Negash, *Eritrea and Ethiopia*, 116.

<sup>51</sup> Alemseged Abbay, *Identity Jilted or Re-Imagining Identity: The Divergent Paths of the Eritrean and Tigrayan Nationalist Struggles* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1998), 83.



from pro-Ethiopian American sources.<sup>52</sup> (Years later, one American official described the “zeal with which Ethiopian authorities rigged elections for the...Eritrean Assembly” [under federalism].)<sup>53</sup> Also in 1955, a new Ethiopian constitution, several years in the making, was finally promulgated, making no mention at all of federation.<sup>54</sup> In November of that year the Eritrean flag was replaced by the Ethiopian flag, a decision reversed only after Muslim League pressure.<sup>55</sup> But the Ethiopians and pro-Union Eritreans succeeded in permanently removing the Eritrean flag four years later. In 1957, in violation of the Eritrean constitution, Tigrinya and Arabic were dropped as official languages in favor of Amharic. In 1959 Ethiopian law was formally applied to Eritrea for the first time.<sup>56</sup> In 1960 the seal of the government was altered, with the name changed from “Government of Eritrea” to “Eritrean Administration.”

With the formal ending of federalism in 1962, many more changes were implemented. Eritrean government departments were forced to begin reporting to ministries in Addis Ababa. “A whole layer of courts” was eliminated.<sup>57</sup> Following the end of federation, the chief Ethiopian authority in Eritrea was given the title of Deputy Governor General, implying that the Emperor reserved for himself the title of Governor General. Previously the chief administrator of Eritrea was an elected Eritrean official present in Asmara.

Thus, the federal period was marked by the gradual loss of autonomous political institutions in Eritrea, as well as a number of symbols of autonomy. As will be shown below, the

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<sup>52</sup> See, for example, James K. Penfield to Murphy, Sept. 10, 1959, “Rumored Annexation of Eritrea by Ethiopia. NA2, RG59, Entry 3109A, Box 5, folder “14E Federalism with Eritrea Developments 1959 & 1960.”

<sup>53</sup> Samuel R. Gammon, U.S. Consul General, Asmara to Dept. of State, July 29, 1965, “1965 Parliamentary Elections in Eritrea.” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1964-66, Box 2151 (59/250/6/33-34/7-1), folder without label.

<sup>54</sup> Markakis, *National and Class Conflict*, 94.

<sup>55</sup> Negash, *Eritrea and Ethiopia*, 113.

<sup>56</sup> Markakis, *National and Class Conflict*, 94.

<sup>57</sup> Hugh K. Campbell, U.S. Consul, Asmara to Dept. of State, Feb. 15, 1963, “New Administrative Structure for the Governate-General of Eritrea.” NA2 RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1963, Box 3902 (59/250/5/16/7), folder “Political Affairs & Rel Pol 15”.

loss of symbols of autonomy received at least as much attention in the literature later produced by Eritrean rebels as the loss of real institutions. Moreover, dissidents went to great lengths to frame the revocation of these institutions and symbols as violations of either UN Resolution 390(V) or the Eritrean Constitution,<sup>58</sup> again emphasizing the idea of *deserving* a promised yet unfulfilled political status.

### III. Cultural Differences

Chapter two shows statistically that cultural differences between a rebelling group and the ruling group significantly increase the probability that a rebellion will be separatist. Here I briefly explain the cultural relationship between Eritreans and Ethiopians. Below, the chapter takes up how cultural differences influenced the grievances, and therefore the ideology, of the Eritrean separatists. The anti-Ethiopian rhetoric produced by Eritrean rebel groups was often framed in terms of cultural difference, with the “alien” nature of Amhara rule emphasized.

Eritrea’s central plateau, on which the capital Asmara sits, comprises the northern part of what has historically been called Abyssinia. This territory stretches south from Eritrea through the central highlands of Ethiopia, down through the area of the country where Addis Ababa lies today. The next chapter defines and further describes Abyssinia, but briefly, the Christians who make up the majority in this central part of Eritrea can be described as comprising the northernmost members of the Abyssinian population. They share language, religion, and many cultural traits, including traditionally a sedentary, agricultural way of life,<sup>59</sup> with the Tigrayan-speaking Christians who also comprise the majority population in Ethiopia’s Tigray province directly to

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<sup>58</sup> See, for example, Eritrean Liberation Front, “Eritrea: At the Face of Ethiopian Invasion,” undated, 7. NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1963, Box 3902 (59/250/5/16/7), folder “Political Affairs and Rel – Pol 23 Internal Security”, which points to the removal of the national flag and emblem and the prohibition on the official use of Tigrinya and Arabic as violations of the Eritrean constitution, which Ethiopia ratified.

<sup>59</sup> Palmer to Henderson et al., Mar. 22, 1948, “Four Power Commission of Investigation Report on Eritrea,” 5 and 7. NA2, Entry # 0457.2, Subject File Regarding the Disposition of Former Italian Colonies, Box 4 (59/250/46/10/4), folder “FIC – Four Power Commission of Investigation G-6.”

the south. Christian Eritreans also share each of these attributes except language with the dominant Amharic-speaking group that occupies the central part of Ethiopia. Abyssinians are a Semitic people, and while both Tigrinya and Amharic derive from the ancient Semitic language Ge'ez, they are mutually unintelligible.

Eritrea's other ethnic groups correspond traditionally with its geography. The country is divided into West and East by the central highlands. To the west lie the Baraka lowlands that border Sudan, and to the east and southeast the coastal plains that descend to the Red Sea. The Baraka lowlands in the west are populated mainly by the Tigre-speaking<sup>60</sup> Beja group, Muslim nomads most of whom converted from Christianity in the 19th Century. Until reforms instituted by the British Military Administration in the 1940s, these pastoralists lived in a feudal society in which some 90 percent of the population was serfs. The coastal plains in the north and east are populated mainly by another and distinct group of Muslims called the Danakil, or Afar. Several other small groups, most of whom are Muslim or followers of traditional religions, populate other pockets of territory within Eritrea. The British administration gave the following figures for ethnicity and religion among the Eritrean groups in 1952.<sup>61</sup>

Group	Christian	Muslim	Pagan	Total
Tigrinyan	<b>487,000</b>	37,000	-	524,000
Tigre	7,000	<b>322,000</b>	-	329,000
Baria and Kunama	3,000	31,000	7,000	41,000
Danakil	-	33,000	-	33,000
Saho	2,000	64,000	-	66,000
Balain	<u>11,000</u>	<u>27,000</u>	-	<u>38,000</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>510,000</b>	<b>514,000</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>1,031,000</b>

<sup>60</sup> Tigre is not to be confused with Tigrinya. They are related but distinct languages.

<sup>61</sup> Taken from G.K.N. Trevaskis, *Eritrea: A Colony in Transition: 1941-52* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1960), 132-3.

While the various Muslim groups speak a variety of languages, most recognize Arabic as a religious language uniting these diverse communities, and several of these groups, particular those near the border with Sudan, consider themselves Arabs or Arab-descendants. Given the international political environment in which the Eritrean rebellion took place, this had several important implications.

Thus, Eritrea is comprised of a number of diverse Muslim groups, plus a relatively homogeneous Christian community in the central highlands. Ethiopia under both Emperor Haile Selassie and the military junta that overthrew him in 1974 was dominated by the Orthodox Christian Amhara ethnic group. All Eritrean Muslims therefore differed both religiously and linguistically from the ruling Ethiopian group, while for Eritrean Christians the distinction was one of language only. Muslim Eritreans, who made up the vast majority of the early Eritrean separatist groups, could claim to possess an entirely different cultural tradition than the one that dominated in Ethiopia.

#### **IV. Effects of Autonomy & Cultural Differences on Early Eritrean Dissidence**

Having shown the numerous ways Eritreans experienced separate government from Ethiopians under three successive administrations, and how both of the largest communities in Eritrea differed culturally from the Amhara rulers of Ethiopia, this section explores the effects these differences had on the political attitudes of early Eritrean dissidents. The general argument this section puts forward is that by emphasizing differences between Eritrea and Ethiopia, past autonomy and cultural distinctions increased the justification for pursuing separation in the minds of those contemplating rebellion. The argument assumes there is a generally-accepted norm legitimizing self determination, according to which every separate people deserves to rule itself. But the precise application of the norm clearly hinges on which groups consider

themselves separate peoples. I argue that the cultural and political distinctions described here help create those feelings of difference that lead groups to believe they deserve to be separate from the polity to which they are attached.

I do not argue that feelings of difference lead to separatist rebellions, only that they lead to a desire for political autonomy. That goal can be pursued peacefully or violently. Indeed, prior to the Eritrean insurrection, elites attempted to maintain or reclaim autonomy from Ethiopian authorities through the normal political process in place at the time. Only when these ambitions were stifled did Eritrean nationalists turn to violence. In addition, as chapter two shows in a broader context, the effect of past autonomy and cultural differences on the perceived legitimacy of separation or state capture is not the exclusive force affecting the choice of rebellion; rather, these effects work in conjunction with other factors that shape the relative feasibility of different goals. Here it is worth asking how Eritreans and Tigrayans compare in terms of the variables chapter two showed affecting the relative feasibility of different goals. Of course, the Eritrean and Tigrayan rebellions scored the same for the country size and majority variables because they were rebelling against the same state. Ethiopia's 1.1 million sq. km. is just under the dataset's mean of 1.4 million sq. km, and the country does not have a majority ethnic group. The remaining feasibility variable that was significant in the models presented in the chapter two is relative group size. Here the two groups are again similar: Tigrayans make up about 10 percent of Ethiopia's population, and Eritreans about 7.5 percent. The mean for the dataset as a whole is 13.8 percent. So, the values for Eritrea and Tigray on these opportunity variables were not so extreme as to preclude the influence of the grievance-based factors this chapter examines.

This section illustrates how past autonomy legitimized the *idea* of separation in the eyes of Eritreans in the years leading up to the outbreak of violence. It did so in two ways. First, to the extent that Eritreans experienced governmental institutions that were distinct from those operating in Ethiopia, these experiences tended to reinforce a sense of deserving to be separate from Ethiopia. These feelings often, but not always, took the form of contrasting perceptions of the more “advanced” European forms of government Eritreans experienced with the more “backward” and “feudal” Ethiopian administration. To the extent that past autonomy was seen by Eritreans as reinforcing differences between themselves and Ethiopians, it increased the perceived legitimacy of a separatist movement. Second, Eritrean dissidents felt keenly both what they saw as the unkept promises of federation with Ethiopia as well as the dismantling by the Ethiopians of those pieces of autonomous government Eritrea possessed when federalism began in 1952. Grievances created by the revocation of autonomy show, simply, that those holding such grievances place value in reclaiming what was once theirs. These grievances were widely expressed by both elites and the broader public in Eritrea in the 1950s and early 1960s, prior to the initiation of armed conflict. Finally, this section also shows how the cultural differences described above were used by Eritrean elites to emphasize the distinctions between Eritreans and Ethiopians as two separate and distinct peoples, and therefore to legitimize the notion of separation.

#### A. Past Autonomy

The perceived modernizing effects of Italian and then British rule over Eritrea were seized upon by opponents of Ethiopian rule as early as the late 1940s and throughout almost 30 years of Eritrean rebellion to emphasize the incompatibility of supposedly backward Ethiopian administration with “modern” Eritrea. The relative backwardness of Ethiopia vis-à-vis Eritrea is

emphasized repeatedly in dissident<sup>62</sup> literature and propaganda, and the link between European rule and the supposedly more advanced state that resulted in Eritrea is made explicit. That professions of this link were heartfelt is all the more believable because of the excoriating treatment Italian colonialism and British administration received generally from Eritrean nationalists. Italian rule was typically condemned as self serving and its policies as racist. The British were accorded harsh treatment for the proposal they once forwarded to partition Eritrea between Sudan and Ethiopia. In dissident propaganda of the 1960s, European rule was seen as one episode in a longer history of invasion and occupation by outsiders that included and culminated with Abyssinian invaders from the South.<sup>63</sup> Despite these negative perceptions of the European powers that ruled Eritrea, Eritrean nationalists still saw European rule as having advanced Eritrea in relation to Ethiopia, making the former more deserving of self rule.

As early as 1947, the Moslem League of Eritrea wrote of "...not wishing to leave [Eritrea] tied to a nation or people still in a primitive state..." in rejecting the idea of being annexed to Ethiopia.<sup>64</sup> A U.S. source paraphrases the pro-independence *Eritrea Independenta* newspaper as arguing in 1949 that "...Ethiopia [is] economically and socially inferior [to] Eritrea [and] therefore unfit [to] be entrusted with [the] mission [of] leading Eritreans to [a] higher

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<sup>62</sup> Since no armed independence movement existed until 1961, any of the expressions made before then were, of course, prepared by groups that were not at the time rebel organizations. But there is a clear connection, both in terms of personnel and message, between these groups and the rebel movements that succeeded them.

<sup>63</sup> The following passage, looking back to events of April 1941 when British forces defeated the Italians at Asmara, is typical and instructive: "In the evening the victors [the British] as well as the vanquished Italians feasted together in a great banquet at Albergo Ciano, for after all they were of the same nature—imperialist forces serving the same purpose for their respective masters. As for the Eritreans, it was a mere change of a master in a long stretched colonial rule, which started with the Ommayads in the 7<sup>th</sup> Century." Eritrean Liberation Front, *The Eritrean Newsletter*, No. 34 (April, 1979), 19.

<sup>64</sup> "An official translation of the decisions of the Moslem League of Eritrea as received by B.M.A., Eritrea, January 1947." Enclosure in Addis Ababa to Secretary of State, February 20, 1947, "Moslem League of Iritrea [sic]," NA2, 884.014/2-2047.

living standard and education.”<sup>65</sup> An ELM booklet from the early 1960s addressed to the United Nations laments that

[t]he disparity between a small but disciplined and well ordered State as Eritrea, and a big, caotic [sic] and medievely [sic] feudal State as Ethiopia [was not] sufficient in itself to persuade the Honourable Delegates that the concept of their federal union was unjust and unworkable.<sup>66</sup>

The document asks whether it was not

...illogical and absurd...to expect that the Emperor, even willingly, would change in an instant the backward, centuries-old traditions, customs, way of thinking and living of the peoples of Ethiopia in order to conform them with the civilized way of living of the Eritrean people.<sup>67</sup>

In a comparison of the state of civil rights in Eritrea and Ethiopia, the authors’ disdain for the Ethiopian mindset is apparent:

No Ethiopian in his right mind would...dare to mount a soapbox in the middle of the piazza in Addis Abeba and call for the resignation of a public official on any ground. No Ethiopian, however educated, would dare to write a letter to a newspaper [criticizing] a Government official, or even Government policy, and no newspaper would print such a letter if it received one. It is not a case of brutal oppression by the police of potentially dangerous political elements....It is simply a case [of] there not existing, as yet, a sufficiently developed [sic] public opinion to take any real interest in the exercise of civil rights, an exercise utterly foreign to the tradition and history of the people.<sup>68</sup>

A decade later, an ELF document echoed this sentiment: “Ethiopia itself, which miserably [sic] lack[s] the technical and financial means to develop its own potentials [sic], is naturally unable to improve the economic situation in Eritrea.”<sup>69</sup> The idea of the relative advancement of Eritreans vis-à-vis Ethiopians was so widespread as to have been repeated even by pro-Ethiopian

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<sup>65</sup> Merrell, Addis Ababa, to Secretary of State, Aug. 26, 1949, No. 176. NA2, 865D.9111 RR/8-2649.

<sup>66</sup> Eritrean Liberation Movement, “Colonialist Ethiopia against the United Nations and Eritrea,” undated, pg. 6. Enclosure to Rogers B. Horgan, First Secretary, U.S. Embassy, Cairo to Dept. of State, July 3, 1964, “Eritrean Dissidents,” NA2, RG59, Subject Numeric File, 1964-66, Box 2150 (59/250/6/33-34/7-1), folder “Pol 13-3 Ethnic National Minorities”.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 10-11.

<sup>69</sup> Eritrean Liberation Front, “Eritrea: History Geograpthy [sic] Economy,” unknown date (c. 1970/1973), pg. 51. NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1970-73, Box 2258 (59/150/67/12/3), folder “Pol 30.”



Eritreans and some Ethiopian officials themselves. For example, an Ethiopian official, loyal to the Emperor, is quoted in 1969 as saying that "...the Eritreans, having had a taste of democracy in the 1950s, remember it and are better able to judge the 'true incompetence' of their rulers than are other provinces."<sup>70</sup> The (Amhara) Governor General of Eritrea remarked in 1965 that

...Eritrea as a result of a half a century of Italian colonialism had reached a much higher state of development than the rest of the Empire. Consequently, Eritreans did not wish to be dragged down to the level of the other provinces but desired rather that the standards of the rest of Ethiopia be raised to meet those of Eritrea.<sup>71</sup>

While the Governor General's final thought was perhaps wishful thinking about Eritreans' concern with the rest of the country, it is telling how he acknowledges the widespread idea of institutional differences between Eritrean and Ethiopia.

Eritrean dissidents never praised Italian or British rule, but were simply cognizant of the changes to Eritrean society, positive and negative, brought by European administration as well as the contrast those changes brought out between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The following passage, an analysis by the ELF of labor and employment in Eritrea under Federalism, illustrates the perception of Ethiopia being unable to realize the potential that European rule gave Eritrea.

The Italians and half-castes used to provide Eritrea with artisans, technicians, professional men and entrepreneurs. They have continued to do so throughout the Federation but in a lesser degree, as few Eritreans could obtain the chance for vocational and technical training. The bulk of the urban population of Eritrea who totals [sic] about half a million principally lives in employment and domestic service.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Dej. Fessehazion Haile, Provincial Councilor, and John F. Campbell, American Consul, Asmara, March 28, 1969, "IEG Official Pleas for Greater 'Democracy,'" Enclosure to M.E. Jackson, U.S. Consulate, Asmara to Dept. of State, March 28, 1969, "Memorandum of Conversation," NA2 RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2076 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder "Pol - Political Affairs and Rel 1967".

<sup>71</sup> Remarks by Eritrean Governor General Asrate Kassa as reported in Edward M. Korry, U.S. Ambassador, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, Apr. 14, 1965, "Asrate Kassa's Views on Eritrean Problems." NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1964-66, Box 2152 (59/250/6/33-34/7-1), folder "Pol 23-8 1/1/64".

<sup>72</sup> Eritrean Liberation Front, "Eritrea: History Geography [sic] Economy," 60.

That is, positions of “professional men and entrepreneurs” existed because of the colonial past, but Ethiopians would not allow Eritreans to fill them, or were not able to establish the conditions whereby Eritreans could fill them.

As noted above, emphasis was often placed on changes to Eritrea brought on by European administration. For example, a letter from two top ELF leaders to US President Johnson notes that

[i]n Eritrea, a decade of British administration and a [greater] degree of industrialization rendered it more receptive to the concepts of organized labour unions, student unions and other social organizations. But with the coming of the Ethiopians they were all dissolved and forbidden.<sup>73</sup>

In Marxist terms typical of those employed by the leftist rebel movements, the ELF contrasted the state of development in Eritrea with that of Ethiopia, which it saw as lagging a century behind.

At the end of the Italian rule in April 1941, the Eritrean society found itself relatively different from the primitive socio-economic formations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Though still ill-defined, the modern classes were to some extent distinguishable.<sup>74</sup>

In addition to changed economic conditions, Eritrean nationalists saw British rule, as well as the UN-designed federal system, as having to a certain extent given Eritreans enlightened political and educational institutions that further differentiated them from Ethiopians. In contrast to the actions of the Ethiopian authorities, “[t]he Eritrean press enjoyed complete freedom during the ten years of British Administration,”<sup>75</sup> notes an ELM pamphlet. With federation, Ethiopia stifled what had been a swiftly growing educational system developed under the British, according to

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<sup>73</sup> Eritrean Liberation Front, Damascus, to U.S. President Lyndon Johnson, Feb 13, 1967, “The Problem of Eritrea and the Ethiopian Emperor’s Visit to U.S.A.,” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2072, (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder “Pol 13 1/1/67.”

<sup>74</sup> Eritrean Liberation Front – Foreign Information Centre, *The National Democratic Revolution Versus Ethiopian Expansionism* (place of publication unknown, 1979, 10).

<sup>75</sup> ELM, “Colonialist Ethiopia...,” 44.

ELF propaganda: “Being a colonial and backward state, the Ethiopian government retarded educational progress.”<sup>76</sup> The ELM connected the poor state of education in Ethiopia to “...the long tradition of imperial rules and the pervasive oppression of individual initiative and thinking still associated with it, which surrounds the Ethiopian from birth.”<sup>77</sup>

As noted above, one of the main sources of Eritrean discontent against Ethiopia was the perception that the Ethiopian government did not keep promises regarding Eritrean autonomy it had made by ratifying United Nations Resolution 390(V), and that it revoked many of the institutions of autonomy Eritrea had already possessed on the eve of federation. In the eyes of dissidents, Eritrean autonomy gained an important degree of legitimacy from the UN imprimatur. Dissident literature repeatedly quotes the UN Representative for Eritrea, Bolivian diplomat Eduardo Anze Matienzo, on the subject of the abrogation of federation: “As the Federal Act is an international instrument, the regime established under that act cannot be altered without the concurrence of the General Assembly.”<sup>78</sup>

Thus, in the dissident literature from the early 1960s onward, great attention was paid to publicizing each individual move the Ethiopians made to reduce Eritrean autonomy during federation that violated the UN resolution: the appropriation of customs revenue, the dissolution of labor unions and political parties, the suppression of press freedoms, the ignoring of Eritrean court rulings that went against Ethiopia, the removal of symbols of Eritrean self-government, etc.<sup>79</sup> The title of an ELM booklet from around 1964 is indicative: “Colonialist Ethiopia Against

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<sup>76</sup> Eritrean Liberation Front, “Eritrea: History Geography [sic] Economy,” 567.

<sup>77</sup> Eritrean Liberation Movement, “Colonialist Ethiopia...”<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> Eritrean Liberation Front, “Eritrea: At the Face of Ethiopian Invasion,” 2.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 2-4, offers a litany of these charges against Eritrea, but they are widely found in rebel publications. See also Eritrean Liberation Front-Foreign Information Centre, *The Eritrean Revolution: 16 Years of Armed Struggle, September 1, 1961 – September 1, 1977* (Beirut: ELF-Foreign Information Centre, undated).

the United Nations and Eritrea.” As late as 1977 the ELF-PLF saw the benefit of publishing an edited volume of the Report of the UN Commission for Eritrea written decades earlier.<sup>80</sup>

The following passage, part of a letter sent to the UN Secretary General in August, 1963, by four leading Eritrean nationalists, is indicative of complaints against the loss of Eritrean autonomy to Ethiopia.

Today, the Eritrean people represent the most oppressed of all the African peoples still under foreign yoke. Their democratic and modern Constitution prepared and approved by the U.N.O. itself, accepted and officially ratified by Emperor Haileselassie and, finally, approved by the Eritrean people through their National Assembly, has been abolished by the Emperor, their local government, which was based on democratic principles, and National Assembly dissolved, all their free and democratic Organisations and Institutions brutally suppressed and their laws, language as well as judicial and administrative systems replaced by those of feudal Ethiopia.<sup>81</sup>

Rebels also made a link between the failure to find redress through normal, peaceful political channels and the need for armed struggle.

The popular [indignation] against the Ethiopian interferences in the affairs of the Eritrean Government and its gradual erosion of the “federation” reached its peak. The peaceful struggle was growing to a higher form—armed struggle.<sup>82</sup>

This logical chain, that loss of autonomy led to peaceful protest, which, having failed, resulted in armed struggle, is emphasized repeatedly in dissident literature.<sup>83</sup>

Could the grievances expressed in dissident group propaganda simply have been post hoc excuses used to justify an anti-Ethiopian rebellion, rather than true indicators of feelings regarding the loss of autonomy? The evidence suggests otherwise. Most of the early leaders of

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<sup>80</sup> ELF-PLF, Report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea, Vol. 1, Reprinted with a Preface by the Eritrean Liberation Front-The People’s Liberation Forces, September 1977.

<sup>81</sup> Political Committee of the Eritrean People’s Legal Representatives Abroad to UN Secretary General U Thant, Aug. 22, 1963. NA2, RG59, Subject Numeric File, 1963, Box 3902 (59/250/5/16/7), folder “Political Affairs and Rel – Pol 13-9 Nationalist Organizations”.

<sup>82</sup> Eritrean Liberation Front – Foreign Information Centre, *The National Democratic Revolution...*, 31.

<sup>83</sup> See, for example, Eritrean People’s Liberation Front, *Selected Articles from EPLF Publications (1973-1980)* (Rome, Italy, 1982), ii; EPLF, “Why We are Waging a Struggle,” *Vanguard* (Jan., 1973), reprinted in *Selected Articles*, 28-9; and Eritrean People’s Liberation Front, “National Democratic Programme of the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front, Adopted by the First Congress of the EPLF on Jan. 31, 1977,” 8-9.

the ELF and ELM, the two most prominent Eritrean secessionist groups in the 1960s, initially participated in the federation with Ethiopia, and some were even once staunch Unionists. Only after they experienced the revocation of autonomous institutions at the hands of the Ethiopian government did they flee to oppose the union by force. These leaders included Woldeab Woldemariam, who ran for a seat in the first Eritrean legislature under federalism and later was a key figure in both the ELM and ELF; Tedla Bairu, who was actually the first Chief Executive of Eritrea under federation, and who later joined the ELF; Ibrahim Sultan, an early independence leader prior to federation who was nonetheless elected to the Eritrean legislature in the 1950s, but who fled Eritrea in 1959 to speak abroad on behalf of the rebel groups; and Idris Mohamed Adum, President of the Eritrean Assembly under federation who later was the top military commander of the ELF. Rebel group claims that autonomy was first sought through peaceful means have more than a ring of truth to them. In the early 1950s members of the Muslim League fought from within the legislature against proposals that would have reduced Eritrean autonomy, and in fact won some victories, if symbolic—as noted above, in 1955 an early attempt to replace the Eritrean flag with the Ethiopian one was reversed after pressure from the ML.<sup>84</sup>

Many other early ELF and ELM members defected from lower-level government jobs during the 1960s as well. That is, Eritreans at all levels worked in, and later abandoned, federation as its powers declined. Others might have attempted to leave but were caught by Ethiopian forces first. In June 1963, the Ethiopian Army surrounded and killed Eritrean police Commissioner Tedla Ogbit, who until then had been widely seen by Eritreans as selling out to Ethiopian authority, but who was said to have “...soured on the Ethiopian regime, and especially

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<sup>84</sup> Negash, *Eritrea and Ethiopia*, 113.

the tactics used to eliminate Eritrea's autonomous status..."<sup>85</sup> The same day, Ethiopia arrested many top police officials, and temporarily took custody of Deputy Governor General Tesfaiohannes Berhe.

The pattern of popular dissidence also suggests a link between the loss of autonomy and the desire to reclaim it. In July 1962, only months before the federation was to be dissolved, a U.S. diplomat summed up the effects of Ethiopian government policy.

The various derogations of Eritrea's sovereignty have given rise to much ill feeling in Eritrea. There is a wide-spread impression that Ethiopia's sole aim is to assimilate Eritrea and make it the fourteenth province of the Empire. Thus such measures as controlling the Chief Executive and the legislature and allowing no Eritrean opposition all have the same end in mind. Eritreans also resent the fact that they are allowed no control over education although this was a right guaranteed to the Eritrean Government according to the constitution. Such further measures as control of the police and the stationing of numbers of Ethiopian troops in Eritrea all seem to the Eritreans as measures designed to keep a tight rein on their territory.<sup>86</sup>

Although public expressions of dissent were rare, those that occurred were frequently in reaction against Ethiopian measures reducing Eritrean autonomy. There was a strong public reaction in the summer of 1961 to an announcement that the Eritrean government would be running a deficit in the following fiscal year, because the issue was linked to the refusal by Ethiopia to hand over what Eritreans considered to be their fair share of customs revenues from the port of Massawa.<sup>87</sup> Beginning in late May, 1962 there were student demonstrations throughout Eritrea, some violent, calling for Eritrean independence. These demonstrations were sparked by rumors that the Eritrean legislature was being bribed by Ethiopia to vote for full

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<sup>85</sup> Richard G. Johnson, U.S. Consul, Asmara to Dept. of State, July 5, 1963, "Monthly Summary of Events—June, 1963." NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1963, Box 3900 (59/250/5/16/7), folder "Political Affairs and Rel, Pol 2-2 Political Summaries."

<sup>86</sup> Sewell (RAF/NE), "Eritrean Restlessness in the Ethiopian Federation," Draft, July 11, 1962, pp. 9-10. NA2, RG 59, Entry #3109A, Box 5, folder "Eritrea (Union and Separatist Movement 1962)".

<sup>87</sup> Matthew Looram, US Consul, Asmara to Dept. of State, August 30, 1961, "Eritrean Assembly Developments—Signs of Resistance to Asfaha Government and H.I.M." NA2, RG59, Entry #310A, Box 5, folder "14E Federation with Eritrea – Developments 1959 & 1960".

integration.<sup>88</sup> “Students who demonstrated on the streets May 26 [1962] ... reportedly shouted in favor [of] Eritrean independence, jobs ([a] widespread notion is that Ethiopians have taken too many Government jobs in Eritrea) and against Ethiopia.”<sup>89</sup> That same week there were serious student demonstrations “in almost every town of any size in Eritrea,”<sup>90</sup> with displays of the Eritrean flag.<sup>91</sup> More and larger demonstrations followed the formal ending of Federation that autumn.

## B. Cultural Differences

*We are being ruled by foreign oppressors who have imposed alien political and cultural institutions upon us.*<sup>92</sup>

As noted above, Eritrea is split roughly evenly between Christians and Muslims, though Muslims are divided into several different language groups. It is telling, however, that reports prepared by the international commissions investigating political sentiment in Eritrea prior to a decision on its future in the late 1940s noted that nearly all early opposition to union with Ethiopia came from Muslims, who feared their interests would not be looked after by the Christian-dominated Ethiopian Empire. Importantly, this opposition came not just from Muslim politicians, who could see their personal interests at risk with Eritrean political integration into Ethiopia, but from large segments of the population as well. For instance, the Four Power Commission that visited Eritrea after World War II noted that former serfs of the Tigre ethnic group,<sup>93</sup> who had been

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<sup>88</sup> Sewell (RAF/NE), “Eritrean Restlessness in the Ethiopian Federation,” Draft, July 11, 1962, p. 12. NA2, RG 59, Entry #3109A, Box 5, folder “Eritrea (Union and Separatist Movement 1962)”.

<sup>89</sup> Matthew Looram, Consul, Asmara to Ambassador [Addis Ababa?], May 28, 1962, “Eritrean Student Demonstrations.” NA2, RG 59, Entry # 3109A, Box 5, folder “Eritrea – Union & Separatist Mvt. 1962”.

<sup>90</sup> Matthew Looram, Consul, Asmara, to Ambassador [Addis Ababa?], June 1, 1962, “Student Agitation in Eritrea.” NA2, RG 59, Entry # 3109A, Box 5, folder “Eritrea (Union & Separatist Mvt. 1962)”.

<sup>91</sup> Matthew Looram, Consul, Asmara to Ambassador [Addis Ababa?], May 31, 1962, “Student Unrest in Eritrea.” NA2, RG 59, Entry # 3109A, Box 5, folder “Eritrea (Union & Separatist Mvt) 1962”.

<sup>92</sup> Eritrean People’s Liberation Front, “Why We are Waging a Struggle,” *Vanguard* (Jan., 1973), reprinted in EPLF, *Selected Articles from EPLF Publications (1973-1980)* (Rome, 1982), 29.

<sup>93</sup> A large majority of this population had been serfs.

released from their obligations by the British administration, feared Ethiopia would reinstate their feudal bonds if Eritrea acceded to Ethiopia.<sup>94</sup> (The small minority of Muslim nobles in the West favored union with Ethiopia for precisely the same reason.) Another observer noted the “...fears of [the] Saho people near Addi Caieh that Ethiopians would not accord religious freedom to Muslim Pastorals and Muslims would be restricted from seasonal migration to [the] highlands.”<sup>95</sup>

All of the major Eritrean rebel groups of the 1960s were Muslim-dominated, both in terms of leadership and rank-and-file,<sup>96</sup> and to such an extent that prominent Christian defectors to the movements were seen by observers as tokens as late as 1969.<sup>97</sup> The cultural differences described above clearly played a role in generating Muslim unease about rule by Christian Amhara Ethiopians throughout the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. Moreover, rebel group rhetoric frequently emphasized Ethiopian government policies of “Amharization” in Eritrea, particularly with regard to the forced use of the Amharic language in Eritrean schools.<sup>98</sup> The headmaster of a school in Agordat, a largely Muslim area, remarked in February 1963 to a U.S. official about his students that “[t]o qualify [for a university education] they must learn Amharic; in their linguistic environment, this is practically impossible. It was evident that such cultural-professional

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<sup>94</sup> Palmer to Henderson et al., Mar. 22, 1948, “Four Power Commission of Investigation Report on Eritrea,” 45. NA2, Entry # 0457.2, Subject File Regarding the Disposition of Former Italian Colonies, Box 4 (59/250/46/10/4), folder “FIC – Four Power Commission of Investigation G-6.” Ibrahim Sultan, the most well known advocate of independence at the time, had been a spokesman for the Tigre serfs of the western lowlands. Markakis, 64.

<sup>95</sup> Addis Ababa to Secretary of State, No. 174, Aug. 25, 1949. NA2, 865D.01/8-2549.

<sup>96</sup> Estimates of Christian membership in these movements hovered around ten percent. See, for example, Memorandum of Conversation, Sheikh Saleh Gulay and Samuel R. Gammon, U.S. Consul General March 8, 1967, “Conditions in Eritrea.” Enclosure to Gammon to Dept. of State, March 16, 1967, “Conversation with a Prominent Moslem About Eritrean Conditions.” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2074 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder “Pol 18 1/1/67”.

<sup>97</sup> US Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, June 18, 1969, “An Assessment of The Eritrean Liberation Front.” NA2, RG59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2072 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder “Pol 13 1/1/67”.

<sup>98</sup> Eritrean Liberation Front, “Eritrea: History Geografhy [sic] Economy,” 57.



problems as this kept local enthusiasm low with regard to unification with Ethiopia.”<sup>99</sup> Rebel groups often took to making “sons of the soil” type arguments against the settling of Ethiopians in Eritrea, government policies of admitting more Ethiopian students to Eritrean schools, etc.<sup>100</sup> Ethiopian-built schools were seen to be “...centres for diffusing Amharic propaganda and the Ethiopian ‘culture.’”<sup>101</sup>

Propaganda frequently took on a simple racial dimension, being directed against Amharas, who were seen as incompetent, yet inherently and dangerously expansionist.<sup>102</sup> Eritrean dissident propaganda frequently referred to Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie as “the emperor of Shoa”<sup>103</sup> and the Ethiopian government as “the Shoa Government.”<sup>104</sup> This was a particularly damaging rhetorical charge Eritreans could levy because it pointed to the narrowly ethnic basis of Haile Selassie’s government in the southern Amhara region of Shoa, and ridiculed the notion propagated by him that Ethiopia was really one nation.

The perception of Amhara-Eritrean cultural differences was so widespread as to be accepted even by pro-Union Eritrean Christians. As an example, in 1947 one Unionist Eritrean politician expressed the view that Eritrea should be federated with Ethiopia, saying that

...Eritrean Copts [Orthodox Christians] are by race and religion Ethiopians and...they felt a close affinity toward their neighbors to the South. There was no question in his mind about the paramount interest of Ethiopia in Eritrea. Of all

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<sup>99</sup> Richard G. Johnson, American Consul, Asmara, to Dept. of State, Feb. 5, 1963, “Field Trip to Western Eritrean Lowlands: Officials Acknowledge Existence of Moslem Dissidence but Discount Seriousness.” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1963, Box 3902 (59/250/5/16/7), folder “Pol Affairs & Rel Pol 26-1 Counter-Insurgency”.

<sup>100</sup> Eritrean Liberation Front, “Eritrea: History Geography [sic] Economy,” 58.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>102</sup> There are innumerable examples of this type of rhetoric, one being U.S. Consulate, Asmara to Dept. of State, Dec. 8, 1966, “New ELF or Somali Propaganda Initiative,” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1964-66, Box 2152 (59/250/6/33-34/7-1), folder “Pol 30 Defectors and Expellees”.

<sup>103</sup> S.R. Gammon, US Consul, Asmara to Dept. of State, December 8, 1966, “New ELF or Somali Propaganda Initiative.” NA2, RG59, Subject Numeric File, 1964-66, Box 2152 (59/250/6/33-34/7-1), folder “Pol 30 Defectors and Expellees”.

<sup>104</sup> Jackson, US Consul General, Asmara to Dept. of State, March 22, 1968, “Tedla Bairu Broadcast.” NA2, RG59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2074 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder “Pol 23 1/1/68”.

possible solutions he could see none as being workable unless the principle of Ethiopian supremacy be given first consideration.<sup>105</sup>

Nevertheless,

[h]e thought Eritreans were more capable of ruling themselves than the Amharas and spoke emphatically against importing Amhara officialdom into Eritrea. He knew something of the “Amhara ruling race” from having lived in Addis Ababa for a number of years, and he thought that it would be a mistake to impose their inefficiency on Eritreans who, though also lacking in educated classes, had a larger percentage of literates than Ethiopians.<sup>106</sup>

As with autonomous institutions, the effects of cultural differences on Eritrean support for separation was more than a post-hoc justification for rebellion on the part of Eritrean elites. Perceptions of the importance of cultural differences were widespread and held before rebellion erupted. They affected feelings about the legitimacy of separation by reinforcing the idea that Eritreans and Ethiopians were separate peoples. Together, past autonomy and cultural differences oriented opinion among Eritreans toward maintaining or reclaiming political autonomy vis-à-vis the Ethiopians, who were viewed not just as different, but as unworthy rulers. This proclivity toward autonomy was demonstrated in the peaceful political activities of two generations of Eritreans, and only tilted toward violence when Ethiopian authorities began removing autonomous institutions.

## V. Conclusion

Could one argue that the evidence presented above—that Eritrean nationalists were angry at the loss of autonomy at the hands of Ethiopians, and found Ethiopians unworthy of ruling Eritrea because of cultural differences—legitimized *rebellion* in the eyes of Eritrean dissidents, rather than separatism? If so, we would be left with our original problem—why one type of rebellion

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<sup>105</sup> William H. Beach, U.S. Consul, “Notes on a Visit to Eritrea,” undated. Enclosure of Felix Cole, U.S. Legation, Addis Ababa to Secretary of State, March 20, 1947, “Conditions in Eritrea,” NA2, 865D.00/3-2047.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

rather than another was pursued. But the evidence suggests otherwise. First, autonomy is something that can be peacefully pursued, so it does not follow that anger at the loss of past autonomy was simply a justification for rebellion. Indeed, autonomy *was* peacefully pursued. This dissertation argues that past autonomy and cultural differences affect a general proclivity toward inward- or outward-oriented politics, and only in conjunction with other factors, including the ease of maintaining an insurrection, can we begin to think about when rebellions will occur.

Second, in general, past autonomy and cultural differences both emphasize *differences* between Eritreans and Ethiopians. According to the norm of self determination, distinct peoples deserve to rule themselves. To the extent that past autonomy and cultural differences emphasized the distinctiveness of Eritreans vis-à-vis Ethiopians, these factors support the legitimacy of separation, not merely rebellion in general. Third, complaints about a lack of autonomy or about the reversal of autonomy provide direct evidence that past autonomy shaped the content of the grievances Eritreans held against the Ethiopian state, as the theory presented in chapter one predicts. Moreover, the rhetoric about autonomy preceded the outbreak of rebellion and continued throughout it, and did not merely follow afterwards as a justification for it.

Perhaps the existence of autonomy in the Eritrean case, because it preceded rebellion so closely, more strongly supports the hypothesis that the choice of rebellion is determined by opportunity. I do not argue that feasibility played no role, and in fact the feasibility effects of past autonomy are evident in the Eritrean case: at the time the Eritrean rebellion started, autonomous institutions were either in place or had only recently been removed, and were very familiar to many elites involved in the insurrection; clearly such institutions could have helped consolidate a successful separatist revolt. However, dissidents pointed strongly over many years

toward the effects of the much more distant Italian and British administrations. Moreover, there is a continued emphasis on describing the revocation of autonomy and the unfulfilled Ethiopian promises regarding autonomy as *unfair*. That is, the dissertation proposes that having been ruled separately in the past increases the legitimacy of separation in the eyes of potential rebels. If autonomy is seen as deserved because it was once held (the hypothesis put forward here), one can predict that the revocation of autonomy will be viewed as unjust. As predicted, there is a great deal of evidence that such revocations by the Ethiopian government were viewed as unfair, and not just by politicians, but by the general public as well.

The next chapter examines the intellectual origins of the state capture insurrection launched by Tigrayan rebels in 1975. Just as this chapter illustrates the mechanisms whereby past Eritrean autonomy and cultural differences between Eritreans and Ethiopians shaped the content of the grievances Eritreans held against Ethiopia, and therefore the direction the Eritrean rebellion took, the next chapter looks at the effects of Tigrayan political *integration* into the Ethiopian state, and cultural *similarities* between the early Tigrayan rebels and Ethiopia's dominant Amhara group. It shows how these factors both oriented Tigrayan nationalism toward the Ethiopian state rather than away from it, and helped shape the state capture ideology of the early Tigrayan rebels.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Pathways to the Center: Tigrayan Nationalism, Pan-Ethiopian Ideals, and a State Capture Revolt**

#### **I. Introduction**

This chapter examines the ideological influences on the state capture rebellion launched by the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) against Ethiopia in the mid 1970s. In contrast to Eritreans, Tigrayans did not have a history of autonomy, and had a close cultural and political relationship with the Ethiopian state and its dominant Amhara group. The chapter argues that this relationship framed the political orientation of Tigrayans squarely toward the center. As a result, Tigrayan political grievances focused not on the right to self-rule, as in the Eritrean case, but rather on the rightful position of Tigrayans within a unified Ethiopian state. Two examples of the relationship are detailed below, along with their effect on the objectives pursued by the TPLF: the role Tigray played in an Abyssinian culture that is closely linked to the Ethiopian state, and the participation of Tigrayans in an Ethiopian-wide student movement whose ideology strongly influenced the TPLF's early political program.

Tigray is Ethiopia's northernmost province, situated adjacent to the now-independent state of Eritrea. In 1975, one year after the coup that replaced Emperor Haile Selassie with a Marxist military junta called the Derg, a small group of Tigrayans, mostly former university students, founded the TPLF. This core group began mobilizing support among the mainly peasant population of Tigray for overthrowing the Derg regime in Addis Ababa, some 250 miles to the south. With the Ethiopian army distracted by its own struggle for power in Addis Ababa,

the continuing Eritrean rebellion, and, later, by the Somalia incursion into the Ogaden in 1978, the TPLF strengthened its presence within Tigray, defeating three other rebel groups operating in the province. By the late 1980s the group had gained control of the whole province from government forces and had begun moving south. In 1989 TPLF troops, now leading a multi-ethnic umbrella organization called the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), marched on the capital of Addis Ababa and removed the Derg from power. Through the EPRDF, the TPLF has been the dominant force in Ethiopian politics ever since.

Unlike Muslim Eritreans, who maintain both linguistic and religious differences with Amhara Ethiopians, the vast majority of Tigrayans (including all those who formed the TPLF) share religion with most Amhara, though their languages are different and mutually unintelligible. But most importantly, Tigray represents a key component—the core, it could even be argued—of the Abyssinian civilization shared by both Amharas and Tigrayans, in a way that Eritrea, even the Eritrean highlands populated by Tigrinya-speaking Christians, does not. The heyday of Abyssinian civilization would be recognized by Tigrayans and Amhara alike as having occurred during the time of the Axumite Empire, which was centered in Tigray. This history, combined with the political integration of Tigray within Ethiopia in modern times, allows Tigrayans to see themselves as rightful inheritors of the Abyssinian tradition, in competition with those they consider to be the usurping Amhara to the south. Thus, just as the last chapter explored the effect of past autonomy and cultural differences on the propensity of a rebellion to be separatist, this chapter explores how *integration* and cultural *similarity* influenced the ideological orientation of the TPLF rebellion toward the center.

In the case of Tigray, the effects of political integration and cultural similarity are closely tied to one another. As I will show, the common adherence by both Tigrayans and Amharas to

the Ethiopian Orthodox religion, the common belief among members of both communities in the historical legend laid out in the *Kibre Negest*, and the common veneration of the Axumite empire and its symbols, all acted as a glue that held the two communities within the same loose political system, even during the periods of history when they were not ruled under a common polity.

A different sort of integration between Tigrayans and Amharas can be identified in the twentieth century. For many centuries land degradation in the north has forced economic migration among Tigrayans toward the more prosperous southern Amhara lands.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, a lack of higher educational opportunities in Tigray forced a whole generation of Tigrayan students, including most of the early leaders of the TPLF, to pursue university studies in Addis Ababa, where they joined students of other ethnic groups in an important political movement that has come to be known as the Ethiopian Student Movement. It focused on issues of national scope and saw the issue of ethnicity in Ethiopia through a Marxist lens emphasizing national unity as the ultimate objective. Sections III and IV of this chapter explore the strong influence this movement had on the ideology developed by the TPLF.

The chapter begins with a history of the relationship between Tigray and the Amhara-dominated lands to its south that together form what has traditionally been called Abyssinia. It focuses on the extent these areas have been integrated together, not only politically, but religiously and culturally as well. It then explores a more modern form of integration, the “migration” of Tigrayan students to Addis Ababa for university education in the 1960s and early 1970s. The chapter examines the Ethiopian student movement that came close to dominating national politics during this time, and the ideology it developed. The chapter concludes by examining how the historical/cultural integration and the academic integration shaped the

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<sup>1</sup> Evidence that this migration continued well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century can be found in U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, Jan. 6, 1972, “Political and Economic Observations on Tigre Province,” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1970-73, Box 2256 (59/150/67/12/3), folder “Political Affairs and Relations”.

grievances held by Tigrayan nationalists, as well as the program put forward by the TPLF. Both forms of integration oriented the political objectives of Tigrayans toward the Ethiopian state rather than away from it.

## **II. Tigray, the Ethiopian State, and Abyssinian Culture: A Brief History of Integration**

This section examines how Tigray has historically been integrated into a common, though loose, political system along side the Amhara lands to its south, as well as how Tigrayans and Amharas share a cultural tradition in which Tigray can claim to have played a central role. It does so by looking at the history of interaction between Tigrayans and Amharas from the time of the Axumite Empire to the end of Haile Selassie's rule in 1974. The present chapter examines "integration" (that is, a particular set of interactions between central and peripheral areas) as a concept meant to imply the opposite of autonomy, but in doing so it also calls into question the objectivity of the ideas of center and periphery. As will be shown below, the history of Tigray suggests that center and periphery are more flexible concepts, that integration can mean a particular set of relations joining an area and the people who inhabit it to the center, but also a shared perspective that the center is located in what might otherwise, or later, be described as a peripheral area. That is, while Tigray certainly would be considered a peripheral area today, possessing as it does a marginal political and economic position within the state, out-migration, relative poverty, etc., in the shared history of both Tigrayans and Amharas it once unequivocally formed the "center." Moreover, and as a result of that history, its people maintain aspirations to reclaim that central position. So, whereas traditional conceptions of center and periphery might lead one to expect that the political ideology of a group associated with a territory would reflect



that territory's current status as central or peripheral, the argument presented in this chapter shows the importance of the *perception* of centrality long after the reality has changed.

The cultural tradition of Abyssinia is shared by both Tigrayans and Amharas, but it is also one in which Tigray and Tigrayans can be said to have played a central role. It is made up of three inter-related components, each of which will be explored below: the historical memory of the Axumite Empire, which dominated what is now northern Ethiopia and the Red Sea Basin in the first few centuries AD, and was centered in the city of Axum, located in present-day Tigray; the shared membership between Amharas and Tigrayans in the Ethiopian Orthodox religion, including the perceived threat of surrounding Muslim and pagan peoples and the important role the Church played in providing a cultural link between various Ethiopian states across both space and time; and finally, the shared popular tradition, codified in the holy book the *Kibre Negest*, of the descent of the Ethiopian people from the union of the biblical King Solomon and the Ethiopian Queen of Saba [Sheba].

The idea of the historical continuity of an Ethiopian state defined by this Abyssinian culture flies in the face of historical accounts. In fact, it is a testament to the strength of the idea of Abyssinia that it has survived so many centuries of disunity and warfare among the various principalities that emerged following the decline of Axum. The brief history that follows shows how the memory of Axum, the myth of descent in the *Kibre Negest*, and particularly the Church hierarchy, helped produce the idea of a continuous Ethiopian state, one in which both Amharas and Tigrayans were considered core members.

Around the first century AD, the small state of Axum, centered around the city of the same name in Ethiopia's Tigray province, came to be the strongest local state in northern Ethiopia. It eventually grew in strength and reach to become a powerful empire, forcing tributes

from neighboring states and even from the western coast Arabia across the Red Sea.<sup>2</sup> Hundreds of years later, Axum would come to be seen by both Tigrayans and Amharas as representing the glory days of Abyssinian culture, as well as the pinnacle of Abyssinian power. These images contrasted sharply with the hundreds of years of political weakness, instability, and feudal competition among the various states that followed it until a single Ethiopian polity was finally reconstituted at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The area around Axum in Tigray contains “a cluster of places celebrated in local lore for having been associated with the legend of Makeda [the Queen of Sheba] and Solomon”<sup>3</sup> that will be discussed below. The most important of these is the Church of St. Mary in Axum, which is said to still contain the original Old Testament Ark of the Covenant that was spirited out of Jerusalem by the son of Makeda and Solomon, Menelik I.

The ancient homeland of the Tigrean people [Axum] thus possesses a particularly intimate relationship with the two central symbolic complexes that undergird the traditional Ethiopian political order: Solomonic genealogy and Monophysite Christian authority.<sup>4</sup>

Axum for Amharas and Tigrayans is like Rome for Italians today, or ancient Greece for modern Greeks: a symbol of power and high civilization, one that is revered in modern traditions, literature, etc. Importantly, the symbols of Axum and the lore of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon associated with those symbols are venerated by both the Amhara and Tigrayan communities. Even while the language of the citizens of Axum, Ge'ez, has died out as a spoken language—replaced by its descendents Tigrinya in the north and Amharic in the south—it survives as the liturgical language of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church today, used in services attended by both Amharas and Tigrayans, and is also in religious texts shared by both communities.

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<sup>2</sup> Harold G. Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 6.

<sup>3</sup> Donald N. Levine, *Greater Ethiopia: The Evolution of a Multiethnic Society* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 109.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

As Axum rose to the height of its power from around the mid 4<sup>th</sup> century, it was also becoming a Christian kingdom, one of the first few Christian states in the world. After it disintegrated, the area saw many small competing principalities, with the most powerful of these rulers coronating himself as Emperor over the others, with the blessing of the Church hierarchy. In Ethiopia's feudal society, any prince with royal blood had the potential to become emperor, but to actually achieve that goal required the Church's blessing.

It was the coronation and the Church that gave [the princes] actual legitimacy as Emperors. The emphasis in the coronation was on the religious element. "May you, by your prayers, preserve your faith unshaken and unconquerable." The oath involves the maintenance of "the Orthodox religion, the laws of the Empire, the integrity of the territories of the country...", in that order. It was buttressed by the presentation of the sword of justice, the sceptre and the ring. Most important was the anointing with the holy oil, which together with the imperial blood of Solomon, rendered the person of the Emperor sacred...<sup>5</sup>

Like the blessing of the Orthodox Church, the symbolism of Axum remained important in legitimating the rule of Ethiopian emperors. Hundreds of years after the decline of Axum, several Ethiopian rulers found the symbolism important enough to travel to Axum for coronation, even those whose actual seats of power were based elsewhere.<sup>6</sup> "According to Ethiopian tradition, the sole survivor of Aksumite royalty...fathered a line of descendants who eventually 'restored' the Solomonid [Solomonic] Dynasty in 1270."<sup>7</sup>

This "restoration" took place with the rise of a small Christian dynasty in Shoa (the Ethiopian province that today holds the capital of Addis Ababa), launched by Yikunno Amlak, who took the throne in the late 13<sup>th</sup> Century with the name Tesfa Iyesus, "Hope of Jesus."<sup>8</sup> This

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<sup>5</sup> Patrick Gilkes, *The Dying Lion: Feudalism and Modernization in Ethiopia* (London: Julian Friedmann, 1975), 26.

<sup>6</sup> See Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 24, and Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, 111-2, where he notes that "...the symbolic importance of the idea is shown by the frequency and lavish care with which descriptions of the proper rites of coronation at Aksum appear in court chronicles and other Ethiopic writings over many centuries."

<sup>7</sup> Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, 71-2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

dynasty became known as the Solomonic dynasty after the biblical King Solomon, but only after the new rulers latched on to the culture described above.

As a usurper, the new [Shoan] monarch encountered considerable resistance, and, in order to win over Tigray with its many Axumite traditions, he and his supporters began to circulate a fable about his descent from King Solomon and Makeda, Queen of Saba [Sheba], a genealogy that, of course, gave him traditional legitimacy and provided the continuity so honored in Ethiopia's subsequent national history.<sup>9</sup>

The genealogy that legitimized the Solomonic Empire was formalized and written down by Tigrayan Christian monks in the early 14<sup>th</sup> Century, in Ge'ez, in a text called the *Kibre Negest*.<sup>10</sup> It told the story of the union between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, which produced a son, Menelik I, who, according to the legend used to support the idea of Ethiopian historical continuity, was "...the first in a line of divine kings extending to the last emperor, Haile Selassie..."<sup>11</sup>

...the work...is suffused with patriotic feelings and serves from first to last to glorify the land of Ethiopia and proclaim a proud Ethiopian identity. Several passages praise the country in a characteristically Ethiopian manner. The *Kibre Negest* repeatedly compares Ethiopia with Judah, a land flowing with milk and honey, a land of undisputed attractions; but whenever the comparison is made, Ethiopia appears the fairer.<sup>12</sup>

The *Kibre Negest* helped sustain the idea of a continuous Ethiopian state as well as the idea of the legitimacy conferred by the title of Emperor over that state.<sup>13</sup> Importantly, the *Kibre Negest* formalized what had been a popular oral tradition for a long time before the Solomonic usurpation, originating perhaps in Jewish legends from a South Arabian kingdom that was under Axumite control in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 16.

<sup>10</sup> Levine suggests that whether the *Kibre Negest* was written with the intention of legitimizing the Solomonic order is open to some question. *Greater Ethiopia*, 95.

<sup>11</sup> John Sorenson, "History and Identity in the Horn of Africa," *Dialectical Anthropology* 17:3 (1992), 229.

<sup>12</sup> Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, 101.

<sup>13</sup> Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 18-19.

<sup>14</sup> Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, 100.

For its part, the Solomonic empire was feudal and decentralized, with power between the center and often rebelling neighboring tributaries varying over time. Although the empire would expand its power to rule over peoples, particularly in the south, who would not be considered “Abyssinian,” many of the more or less independent states around the core of the empire were very much part of this cultural tradition. Upon the death of an emperor (*negus*), a king (*ras*) of one state in the core area would compete with one or more rivals for the title of *negus*, which would be claimed through a combination of military strength and blessing from the Orthodox church hierarchy.

The Solomonic Empire was weakened by wars with neighboring Muslim states in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> Century, and shrunk in size from invasions by Turks from the north later that century and Oromos from the south in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>15</sup> For the next few hundred years the monarchy steadily weakened vis-à-vis the local nobility, to the point where “...the Solomonic empire slowly devolved into an insubstantial, if persistent, concept.”<sup>16</sup> The mid-18<sup>th</sup> to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century is called the Age of the Princes [*zamana masafent*], a period of complete decentralization, feudal rule, and warfare. Toward the end of this period, several relatively large principalities emerged, one of whose rulers, Dej. Kassa of Tigray, had himself declared Emperor Yohannes IV in 1872 in a ceremony at Axum’s Church of Mary, “following ancient rituals last used for Fasilidas in 1632. The latter had gone to the ancient capital to reclaim Ethiopia’s heritage of unity and to demonstrate his devotion to tradition and faith. The new emperor’s intent was identical, and throughout his reign he worked faithfully to reintegrate Ethiopia.”<sup>17</sup> Yohannes’ actions demonstrated the continued importance of the Abyssinian traditions linked to Axum and the Orthodox church for both Tigrayans and Amharas.

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<sup>15</sup> Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 37-8.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

Yohannes' empire was not centralized; there were still local rulers with autonomous power within historical Abyssinia, the most powerful of which was probably Shoa, ruled by a king who took the name Menelik II after the son of Solomon and Sheba. Parts of the Eritrean coast were under Egyptian rule at the start of Yohannes' reign, and in 1855 Italian troops landed at the port of Massawa on the Red Sea, launching a presence that would have enormous consequences for the region for the next century. But among the rulers of the nominally subject Abyssinian principalities surrounding his state, Yohannes' title as Emperor came to be widely accepted. His early success in consolidating power stemmed partly from his ability to successfully frame several Egyptian incursions into Ethiopian territory in the 1870s as part of an epic struggle between Christianity and Islam, as a result drawing thousands of troops to his cause from all parts of the empire.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the fact that Ethiopia was, for many centuries, an arena of competition between Christianity and Islam went a long way toward strengthening the bonds between different Christian peoples in the region.<sup>19</sup> Yohannes, moreover, while Tigrayan, and a symbol of Tigrayan nationalism to some a century later, clearly saw himself as Ethiopian and his role as that of an Ethiopian emperor. The court language and the language of official documents during his reign was Amharic. His strong anti-Muslim and pro-Christian stance was intended to unify his Christian subjects, Tigrayans, Amharas, and others, and to a large extent it succeeded.

In the late 1880s, Menelik II turned against Yohannes after having been urged to do so by Italy, which had designs on northern Ethiopia.<sup>20</sup> Yohannes died shortly thereafter in battle with Sudanese Mahdists, and the Shoan Menelik proclaimed himself emperor, negotiating a treaty with the Italians that precipitated Italian moves into the Eritrean/Tigrayan highlands. The Tigrayan reaction to Menelik's move demonstrates the continued sense of attachment Tigrayans

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 74-5.

<sup>19</sup> Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, 44.

<sup>20</sup> Marcus, *A History of Ethiopia*, 85-7.

felt toward the idea of a unified Abyssinia, even as Abyssinian power had shifted toward their Amhara rivals. Menelik "...became the object of Tigrayan charges that he had sold out to the Italians."<sup>21</sup> One author who has examined the writings of Tigrayan intellectuals notes how

...the themes of many letters and poems [of Tigrayan elites at that time] are those of severe criticism [of Menelik] for having surrendered Eritrea and for having negotiated with the Italians over the borders. Many passages are likewise very anti-Italian and against foreign oppression in general. They stress the need for unity, independence, sovereignty of the Ethiopian state.<sup>22</sup>

Only a few short years after the death of the only Tigrayan emperor in generations, and the ascension to the throne of their Amhara rival, Menelik, members of the Tigrayan nobility generally chose not to align themselves with the primary power opposing Menelik at the time—the Italians in Eritrea—but to instead harshly criticize Menelik for coming to terms with the Italians and ceding what they saw as Ethiopian territory. "Tegrean intellectuals of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century recognized themselves inside the Ethiopian State, free, independent."<sup>23</sup> Tigrayan participation in the sort of religious nationalism that had flowered in Ethiopia for centuries, and which allowed Yohannes to call forth Amharic-speaking Christian soldiers not even under his own control to fight Muslim invaders, was available to them because of the ties to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Abyssinian culture more broadly they shared with the Amhara. To the Tigrayan elite, being both Ethiopian and Tigrayan meant status, a certain place of high regard within Abyssinian culture. Each of the three pillars of Abyssinian culture originated in what is now Tigray, among people now called Tigrayans. Axum is very much a living city in Tigray

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>22</sup> Irma Taddia, "In Search of an Identity: Amhara/Tegrean Relations in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century," in *Proceedings of the Eleventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa, April 1-6 1991, Vol. I*, ed. Bahru Zewde et al. (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, 1994), 274.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

today. The Christian Orthodox religion spread through Ethiopia first from the north. And the *Kibre Negest* was written by Tigrayan priests under the orders of a Tigrayan noble.<sup>24</sup>

As noted above, the Ethiopian story calls into question common assumptions about center and periphery. The shift in power to the southern Amhara lands was the culmination of several centuries of what might be called a mobile center, where the geographical seat of power moved to whichever principality happened to be the home of that era's strongman. There was never a city that housed anything like a permanent Ethiopian court, from which the Tigrayans could feel excluded any more than any other group. Instead, if the idea of a "center" existed at all, it was Axum that continued to represent that idea, being the city that spawned the notion of an Abyssinian national polity in the first place.

In 1896 Menelik, having consolidated power to a large degree and ruling a state that more or less conformed to the present borders of Ethiopia, defeated the Italians at Adwa, a town in Tigray, the first time a full European colonial army had been defeated by indigenous troops. Pride in the victory was important not just for future Ethiopian nationalism,<sup>25</sup> but for Tigrayans as well because of the location of the battle. In 1899 Ras Mengesha, a hereditary prince in Tigray related to the former emperor Yohannes, led a rebellion that Menelik eventually put down, but not without consequences for the consolidation of Amhara rule over Tigray. The victorious Shoan ruler felt compelled to distribute power in the province to other relatives of Yohannes. Ordinary people in Tigray, and not just the nobility, continued to feel loyal to the idea of a leading Tigrayan role in Ethiopia. In 1892 an Italian observer noted, "[i]t is clear that in Tigray Menelik's authority counts for nothing; the leaders, clergy, soldiers and peasants

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<sup>24</sup> Levine, *Greater Ethiopia*, 100.

<sup>25</sup> Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1991*, Second Edition (Oxford: James Currey, 2001), 81-4.



recognise no other authority than that of Yohannes, now personified in ras [Mengesha].”<sup>26</sup> Prior to World War II, “Tigreans were always active politically, but always as proud Ethiopians participating in an all-Ethiopian power game and as contenders to its supremacy.”<sup>27</sup> Politics in Tigray before WWII was dominated by political rivalries between the province’s leading families. “[A]ll throughout this period, the competing Tigrean chiefs aspired to no more than imperial recognition and military support for internal dominance over Tigre itself. Some of them tried occasionally to derive support from the neighboring Italians, but always as participants in Ethiopian politics and never seriously in the name of Tigrean separatism.”<sup>28</sup>

In 1928 a Shoan prince, Ras Teferi Makonnen, was named King of Shoa by the Ethiopian Empress Zawditu, and upon her death a year later proclaimed himself Emperor, with the Church’s support, assuming the name Haile Selassie (“Power of the Trinity”). Haile Selassie’s primary objective was creating a centralized, modern state and curbing the power of local nobles throughout the empire. In this endeavor he had the least amount of success in Tigray, where instead he arranged marriages between two of his children and the children of the two most powerful Tigrayan princes, both descendants of Yohannes, and more or less abandoned efforts to impose central control over the northern province for the remainder of the pre-World War II period.

When Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1936 with the help of one of these princes, Haile Selassie fled the country, only returning to the throne with British assistance in May, 1941. Two years later a revolt called the *woyene*<sup>29</sup> spread throughout most of Eastern Tigray, and was beginning

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<sup>26</sup> L. Bellini, translated by and quoted in Taddia, “In Search of an Identity...”, 269.

<sup>27</sup> Haggai Erlich, “Tigrean Nationalism, British Involvement and Haile-Selassie’s Emerging Absolutism – Northern Ethiopia, 1941-1943,” *Asian and African Studies* 35 (1981), 197.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

<sup>29</sup> After the TPLF appropriated the term for its own rebellion, the 1943 revolt came to be known as the First Woyene. TPLF opponents also use the term to disparagingly refer to the present TPLF-controlled government.

to infect the Western portion when it was finally subdued.<sup>30</sup> According to the typology developed in chapter one, the *woyene* would be characterized as combining elements of both political and constitutional challenges to the state. Tigrayan peasants rallied against the resumption of tax collection by the central government,<sup>31</sup> and the poor quality of government administration. Nobles saw the revolt as an opportunity to resist the “legal abolition [by the central government] of customary tributes and services” from the peasantry,<sup>32</sup> and also as a means of preserving Tigrayan prerogatives vis-à-vis Shoans within Ethiopia.<sup>33</sup> That is, the revolt was fundamentally one about preserving traditional, conservative rights within the Abyssinian sphere, particularly maintaining the power of the Tigrayan nobility descendant from Emperor Yohannes,<sup>34</sup> and indeed even restoring the Tigrayan dynasty over Ethiopia.<sup>35</sup> There were no attempts to establish the type of Tigray-wide political institutions one would expect to accompany a separatist movement. Indeed, the rebels appealed to the main pillars of the broad Abyssinian culture described above to motivate followers. The leader of the *woyene*, Haile Mariam Redda, made a pronouncement during the rebellion that stated:

...Our governor is Jesus Christ,  
Our shepherd, Haile Mariam.  
The assembly is our government  
And our flag that of Ethiopia  
Our religion is that of Yohannes IV,  
Catholics and Protestants leave our country.  
People of Tigre, follow the motto of *Weyane*...<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> This is a controversial point, but it is suggested by the growing area (from East to West) targeted by anti-rebel pamphlets dropped from British airplanes. See Gebru Tareke, *Ethiopia: Power and Protest. Peasant Revolts in the Twentieth Century* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1996), 121, and particularly Gilkes, *The Dying Lion*, 189. At stake in this question is the extent to which the rebellion represented the aspirations of Tigrayans generally, or only the minority populations that dominated the Eastern parts of the province.

<sup>31</sup> FO 371/J4780/1/1, Nov. 22, 1943.

<sup>32</sup> Tareke, *Ethiopia: Power and Protest*, 92 and 97.

<sup>33</sup> See Addis Ababa Telegram No. 762, Sept. 25, 1943, FO 371/J4041/1/1, and Gilkes, *The Dying Lion*, 188.

<sup>34</sup> Several sources note the rebels' expressed desire to be ruled by Ras Seyoum, even though he officially stood by the Emperor during the revolt. See for example Addis Ababa Telegram No. 762, Sept. 25, 1943, FO 371/J4041/1/1.

<sup>35</sup> Tareke, *Ethiopia: Power and Protest*, 116.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

It is a testament to the strength of Abyssinian culture in Tigray that the Ethiopian government appealed so strongly to the exact same culture used to motivate the rebels in an attempt to bring them back into the fold. Leaflets dropped from British warplanes over Tigray in October, 1943 written in Amharic and Ge'ez and signed by the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, praise Haile Selassie for having defended Ethiopia's "independence and religion" against the Italians, and read further:

Anyone who transgresses my spiritual advice and fights against his government and his flag shall be counted like Judas who sold his master....By the authority given to me from God I excommunicate those (who do not give up their evil ways) and they cannot be buried in the churchyard.<sup>37</sup>

That both the government and rebels referenced a common set of cultural and historic issues to influence the 1943 revolt indicates just how powerful the common idea of Abyssinia was for these different communities.

The *woyene* was quickly put down with the help of British artillery and air power, but it had a lasting effect on the emperor's plans to bring central control to the province. Haile Selassie abandoned the idea of appointing Shoan outsiders to run Tigray, appointing Ras Seyoum as governor-general in 1947<sup>38</sup> (in which position he remained until his death in 1960, when he was replaced by his son, Ras Mengesha Seyoum, who held the position until the 1974 revolution). Shoan lieutenants were appointed from Addis to keep tabs on Ras Seyoum, but the traditional nobility was more or less returned to power. By the time of his overthrow Haile

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<sup>37</sup> FO 371/J4484/1/1, Oct. 29, 1943.

<sup>38</sup> After initially leading the defense against the Italian invaders, Ras Seyoum returned to cooperate with the Italians after his family had been captured and the emperor had fled the country. See Tareke, *Ethiopia: Power and Protest*, 97. Nevertheless, he was not viewed as a traitor the way Haile Selassie Gugsa was, particularly since he switched sides again and helped the British fight to remove Italy from Ethiopia. Haile Selassie Gugsa was imprisoned for some two decades after Emperor Haile Selassie returned to the throne.

Selassie's push for administrative centralization was implemented to the least extent in Tigray.

After 1947, Tigray

...was given an extremely free hand. It has paid land tax according to the tribute system which means that the Tigreans themselves decide who pays what. The great majority of the *awraja* [district] governors and those in lesser positions were appointed on the recommendations of [Ras Seyoum], or after 1960, of his son *Ras Mengesha*, and have been Tigreans from the extended ruling family.<sup>39</sup>

But Tigray was not autonomous in any conventional sense. There were no provincial political institutions, the rulers were formally dependent on the Emperor for their power, and, most importantly, the scope of the Tigrayan rulers' ambitions were bounded not by any territorial borders, but by Ethiopia's hierarchical feudal system, the apex of which was located in Addis Ababa. Thus, by the late 1960s, observers were not only describing Ras Mengesha as the absolute political power in Tigray,<sup>40</sup> but also as a power in his own right in national Ethiopian politics, several going so far as to predict him to be a potential contender for the Ethiopian throne after the aging Haile Selassie passed on.<sup>41</sup>

To sum up, the history of Tigray's relationship with Ethiopia is one of integration, which I broadly define as a system of shared political experiences and cultural characteristics.

Tigrayans saw themselves as different from other Ethiopians, but within a common context in which both Tigrayans and Amhara could claim leadership of a long and venerated Abyssinian tradition. In addition to the 1943 *woyene*, Haggai Erlich reminds us that in the last hundred

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<sup>39</sup> Gilkes, *The Dying Lion*, 191.

<sup>40</sup> Hall, U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, Oct. 16, 1968, "Visit to Makale and Environs— Tigre Province," NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2071 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder "Pol 2 1/1/68".

<sup>41</sup> According to an American interlocutor, the chief of staff of the Ethiopian armed forces in 1968, General Iyassu Mengesha, described Ras Mengesha as having "...as much claim to the throne as the Crown Prince in view of his descent from Emperor Yohannes." U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, June 12, 1968, "Memorandum of Conversation with Lt. General Iyassu Mengesha, Chief of Staff, IEMF, NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2073 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder "Pol 13-3". See also U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, Jan. 6, 1972, "Political and Economic Observations on Tigre Province, NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1970-73, Box 2256 (59/150/67/12/3), folder "Political Affairs and Relations," which also describes Ras Mengesha as a potential challenger to the throne.

years, Tigrayan leaders had at least two good opportunities to seek independence from Ethiopia, rejecting this option each time.<sup>42</sup> First, Ras Alula, Emperor Yohannes' deputy who, following the Emperor's death, "...spent the following five years (1889-1894) in a relentless effort to maintain Tigre's independence from Shoa,"<sup>43</sup> finally swore allegiance to the Amhara Emperor Menelik in 1894 instead of allying with the Italians to the north; and Ras Seyoum similarly pledged fealty to Haile Selassie in 1941, despite what looked at the time to be a promising opportunity to lead an independent Tigray with British help.<sup>44</sup> Both leaders had cooperated with foreign powers against the Ethiopian emperor before pledging their loyalty. But this cooperation

...did not stem from a separatist instinct or a modern sense of Tigrean nationalism. Rather, it was always a means of obtaining promotion at home within the framework of the traditional Ethiopian power game. Taking money and arms from the Italians usually aimed at maintaining support and creating a nuisance in the eyes of Addis Ababa. In a way, it was a sophisticated variation of [banditry] in the higher power echelon, namely—obtaining power by not serving superiors properly but through becoming a greater annoyance. Indeed the ultimate goal of the Tigrean chiefs co-operating with the foreigners was to eliminate local rivals in order to be recognized as Tigre's *negus* by Ethiopia's emperors.<sup>45</sup>

Similarly, another observer notes that "[t]here have been some incipient national feelings [among the Tigrinya-speaking Christian community of Eritrea and Tigray], notably in 1943, but they have been weakened by the far longer attachment of the areas to the empire, the common religion, and the fact that the tradition of the empire is a joint Amhara/[Tigray] one..."<sup>46</sup> The

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<sup>42</sup> Haggai Erlich, "Ras Alula, Ras Seyum, Tigre and Ethiopia's Integrity," in *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Vol. 1*, ed. Taddese Beyene (Addis Ababa, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, 1988), 361-365.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 362.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* While the British finally opted to side with Haile Selassie and support a unified Ethiopia, a strong strand of official British opinion in the early 1940s was in favor of pursuing a different option, which was to cede the Muslim part of Western Eritrea to Sudan, and to form an independent Tigray from the Eritrean highlands and the existing Ethiopian province of Tigray.

<sup>45</sup> Haggai Erlich, "Tigre in Modern Ethiopian History," in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, University of Lund, 26-29 April, 1982*, ed. Sven Rubenson (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, 1984), 328.

<sup>46</sup> Gilkes, *The Dying Lion*, 178.

direct impact of this common tradition on the latest Tigrayan nationalist revolt, launched by the TPLF in the 1970s, will be explored below.

### III. The Ethiopian Student Movement

The previous section showed how in 1975, when the first TPLF cadres began recruiting support for a state capture revolt against the Ethiopian state, they had the advantage of a long history of Tigrayans identifying themselves as inheritors of a broad *Ethiopian* historical tradition, even as they saw themselves as distinct from, and even superior to, the Amhara group that has dominated Ethiopian politics in more recent times. Following on this theme, the next two sections discuss a more recent example of Tigrayan integration into the Ethiopian state: lacking higher educational opportunities at home, a generation of elite Tigrayan students<sup>47</sup> in the 1960s and early 1970s enrolled at Haile Selassie International University (HSIU) in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, where they participated in what has come to be known as the Ethiopian Student Movement. This movement dominated student life in Ethiopia during the time, and also played a large role in national politics, becoming an increasingly powerful dissident voice on the national stage throughout the 1960s. This current section examines the student movement and the ideology it produced, particularly its approach to the relationship of Ethiopia's various ethnic groups to one another and to the state.

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<sup>47</sup> More than any other ethnic group, perhaps, Tigrayan students given the opportunity to study at the university in Addis Ababa were members of the elite of their province, a fact with implications for the importance of the historical-cultural ideas linking Tigrayans to the Ethiopian state discussed in the previous section, since these ideas tended to benefit the elite (e.g., the nobility and the Church hierarchy) more than the average person. From 1963-8 only 2 percent of those who qualified for university admission in Ethiopia came from Tigray. John Markakis, *National and Class Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 251. From 1967-8, the percentage of children aged 7-12 enrolled in government primary schools for the country as a whole averaged 8.5, for Addis Ababa and Eritrea 33.5 and 18, respectively, and for Tigray less than 6. Randi Rønning Balsvik, *Haile Selassie's Students: The Intellectual and Social Background to Revolution, 1952-1977* (East Lansing, MI: African Studies Center, Michigan State University, 1985), 6.

Following this, the chapter demonstrates the intellectual continuity between many of the major ideas developed by the student movement and the ideological stances taken up only a few years later by the TPLF. It will show that despite differences, the student movement and the TPLF shared several important ideological components, including a Marxist framing of ethnic issues<sup>48</sup> that saw pan-ethnic working- and peasant-class emancipation as the ultimate objective of a just political struggle. I argue that these shared ideas are evidence that the student movement was a strong influence on the TPLF. More generally, though, this part of the chapter presents additional evidence that integration shapes the direction of ethnic rebellions toward the center. Just as the cultural similarities and shared historical experiences between Tigray and the rest of Ethiopia described above are one form of integration, the academic migration of Tigrayan students to Addis Ababa and their participation in the student movement is another. Both were important with regard to influencing the focus of the Tigrayan rebellion.

#### *Overview of the Ethiopian Student Movement*

Here I briefly review the composition of the student movement and its development into a national political force. In a country where such a small percentage of the population received higher education, Ethiopian university students in the 1960s represented a super-elite strata of Ethiopian society. Moreover, they were repeatedly told by Ethiopian authorities that they were the future leaders of the country. Many observers attest that, as a result, Ethiopian university students during this period were seen by others, and considered themselves, an elite preparing to assume power either within, or, more often as time went on, instead of, the feudal system presided over by the ailing emperor. “[V]irtually all students share the same frustrations regarding the regime,” wrote an American observer in 1968, “and believe that they as an

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<sup>48</sup> This contrasts sharply with the ideological framework adopted by all the major Eritrean rebel groups, which viewed the Eritrean struggle plainly as an anti-colonial one. See Chapter Three.

educated class have a special responsibility to promote action on national problems...<sup>49</sup> Shortly after HSIU was created in 1961, university students began organizing groups that took to addressing issues of national importance, as will be discussed below. It has been suggested by a number of authors that student dissidence emerged from the inability of these educated classes that saw themselves as the *rightful* inheritors of political power to actually penetrate the ranks of the elite under Haile Selassie, which continued to be occupied by the nobility.

With few exceptions, younger educated persons performed technical and administrative functions subordinated to the political roles entrusted to retainers and members of the aristocracy.<sup>50</sup>

Unemployment among the ranks of university graduates was very high, fueling the level of frustration regarding national politics.<sup>51</sup>

Importantly, the centuries-old cultural connection between Amharas and Tigrayans discussed in the first part of this chapter was in evidence within the student movement. One observer aptly described the clash between students and the regime as “a fight between age groups within the Amhara-Tigre family.”<sup>52</sup> While the leadership of student groups was multi-ethnic, “...many of the well known student leaders of the time such as Tilahun Gizaw, Berhane-Mesqel Redda, Meles Tekle, etc. came from Tigray.”<sup>53</sup> Among students, a much clearer line divided Eritreans from other Ethiopians. One former HSIU student of the late 1960s remembered self-segregation by Eritreans, not Tigrinya-speakers, in the campus cafeteria.<sup>54</sup> In June 1967 there was a fistfight at the Prince Bede Mariam Laboratory School in Addis Ababa

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<sup>49</sup> U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, April 27, 1968, “Addis Ababa Student Demonstrations, 1968,” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2075 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder “Pol 23-8”.

<sup>50</sup> Kiflu Tadesse, *The Generation: A History of the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party. Part I: From the Early Beginnings to 1975* (Trenton, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1993), 18.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>52</sup> U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, April 27, 1968, “Addis Ababa Student Demonstrations, 1968,” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2075 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder “Pol 23-8”.

<sup>53</sup> Alemseged Abbay, *Identity Jilted or Re-Imagining Identity: The Divergent Paths of the Eritrean and Tigrayan Nationalist Struggles* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1998), 98.

<sup>54</sup> Fentahun Tiruneh, interview by authors, Washington, DC, February 18, 2004.



between Eritrean and other students, and a boycott of April 1967 student demonstrations by Eritrean students.<sup>55</sup> Regarding the fight, “[a]ccording to the University Reporter the clash was between Eritreans and the other major group at the school, the Shoa Amharas. However, other sources indicate that once the fracas began the lines became the Eritreans against everyone else.”<sup>56</sup> Eritreans aside, most of Ethiopia’s constituent ethnic groups mixed freely in the large student organizations.

Within the multi-ethnic milieu of the student movement, student organizations throughout the 1960s began to raise issues of national importance beyond campus- or student-specific problems. Particularly as other segments of society became involved in student-led strikes and protests in Addis Ababa in the late 1960s,<sup>57</sup> the regime responded with repressive measures. These included arrests, beatings and sometimes killings<sup>58</sup> by the security forces, the imprisonment of students in work-camps, and in 1972 the expulsion of roughly half the students from the main branch of the university.<sup>59</sup> Such measures were met almost uniformly with increased student militancy and action. For Haile Selassie’s regime, student agitation became perhaps the second most pressing domestic problem, behind only the growing Eritrean rebellion. The growth in the importance of the student movement from being simply a thorn in the side of the government to becoming a real national problem is clearly reflected in a number of self-satisfied essays in student publications in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

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<sup>55</sup> U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, June 20, 1967, “Eritrean/Ethiopian Enmity Flares Among Secondary Students,” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2072 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder “Pol 13-2”.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Student pamphlets routinely targeted the general population, and not just students specifically. See Balsvik, *Haile Sellassie’s Students*, 248.

<sup>58</sup> The most famous example is the murder of student leader Tilahun Gizaw, presumably by government agents, in 1969.

<sup>59</sup> U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, April 7, 1972, “The Student Conundrum: A Long View,” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1970-73, Box 2257 (59/150/67/12/3), folder “Pol-14”.

While the center of student activity was the university in Addis Ababa, the student movement also had an important effect on secondary school students in the provinces, including Tigray. Secondary schools around the country often responded to HSIU demonstrations with sympathy strikes and demonstrations of their own.<sup>60</sup> Interestingly, while student strife spread from university students in the capital to secondary students in most parts of the country, including Tigray, Eritrean secondary school students were for the most part not affected.<sup>61</sup> The integration of provincial students into the country's centralized higher education system resulted in the flow of information and ideas from the center to the provinces, including Tigray, in several ways. For instance, a "national service" requirement implemented in 1964, which forced university students to work for a year in the provinces, was apparently used by dissident leaders to "foment disorders in the country's secondary schools."<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the Marxist literature that inspired the student movement was translated and then distributed by students to their home

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<sup>60</sup> See, for example, Hall, U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Secretary of State, Mar. 12, 1969, "Student Demonstrations," NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2072 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder "Pol 13-2 1/1/69," which details such a sympathy strike in Tigray in March, 1969. Another example is contained in Asmara to U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa, 31 January, 1973, "Continued Student Strike," NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1970-73, Box 2257 (59/150/67/12/3), folder "Pol 13 3/2/70." Although strikes and demonstrations by secondary school students appeared to be less overtly political, they sometimes took on a political character, or even an ethnic one, even when the ostensible targets of the student actions were school related. For example, protests over the implementation of fees to take exit examinations became inflamed when rumors started that the government was only charging the fees to Tigrayan and Eritrean students. See U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Secretary of State, 5 Dec., 1972, "Secondary School Troubles," NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1970-73, Box 2257 (59/150/67/12/3), folder "Pol 13 3/2/70." In Tigray, Ras Mengesha was, on at least one occasion, personally involved in attempting to persuade striking students to return to class. See Asmara to U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa, 8 Dec., 1972, "Asmara Student Unrest," NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1970-73, Box 2257 (59/150/67/12/3), folder "Pol 13 3/2/70."

<sup>61</sup> A review of hundreds of US diplomatic memos from Asmara and Addis Ababa from the 1960s reveals dozens dealing with student strife in Addis Ababa and a number of Ethiopian provinces, including Tigray, but very few incidents in Eritrea that were tied to the broader Ethiopian student movement. Instead, Eritrean secondary school demonstrations and strikes were almost invariably associated with support for the Eritrean secessionist movements.

<sup>62</sup> U.S. Dept. of State, Director of Intelligence and Research, *Intelligence Note* 129, Feb. 27, 1969, "Ethiopia: Will the Students Push their Luck?," NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2072 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder "Pol 13-2 1/1/69". One author specifically notes how many university students purposefully used their service year to spread revolutionary ideas to secondary students in remote areas. See Balsvik, *Haile Sellassie's Students*, 145.

towns throughout Ethiopia, including Tigray, while they were on school vacations.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, while home on break university students in Tigray would agitate locally, particularly targeting local secondary school students.<sup>64</sup> The transfer of ideas generated by the Ethiopian student movement from the center to Tigray is yet another consequence of the integration of Tigray into the Ethiopian state described in this chapter.

### *The Scope of Student Movement Politics*

From the early 1960s, student activism at HSIU, and later at secondary schools in Addis Ababa and throughout the country, quickly evolved beyond campus-specific issues like the quality of dormitories and cafeteria food and demands for the dismissal of professors deemed to be tough graders, to encompass issues of national scope. In the early- to mid-1960s, students were disorganized and their demands, while growing broader, included a hodgepodge of different issues that lacked any central unifying theme or coherent ideology. Students marched in support of a failed coup in 1960, and ridiculed the regime with a “series of satirical poems” at a 1962 graduation ceremony as well as during oratorical contests in 1963 and 1964.<sup>65</sup> A 1964 report on university students found a number of national issues to be the main targets of students’ discontent, including government corruption and the general lack of economic development. That same year, a congress of the National Union of Ethiopian University Students (NUEUS) demanded, among other things, land reform, improved rights for rural tenants, the development of savings and credit institutions for farmers, foreign investment, tax reform, the founding of a

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<sup>63</sup> John Young, *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia: The Tigray People’s Liberation Front, 1975-1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 77, note 50.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>65</sup> U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, April 20, 1964, “The University Student of Ethiopia,” NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1964-66, Box 2150 (59/250/6/33-34/7-1), folder “Pol 13-2 Students Youth Groups”.

representative parliament, and the expansion of vocational schools, and also dealt with issues such as unemployment, beggary, and prostitution.<sup>66</sup>

To the extent that nationalism was displayed at demonstrations, it was a pan-Ethiopian, patriotic form of nationalism, as when the now-famous student demonstrations against a fashion show at the university in 1968 (rumors were that female students would be displaying mini-skirts) were used to attack the introduction of foreign, and particularly American, elements into Ethiopian culture.<sup>67</sup> When on-campus demonstrations spilled out into the city, U.S. interests and symbols in Addis Ababa were frequent student targets. One author sees the Ethiopian patriotism that marked early student forays into national issues as resulting from the fact that the campus authorities who were the original targets of student discontent in the late 1950s and early 1960s were disproportionately foreign.<sup>68</sup>

From the mid-1960s onward, however, the increasing prevalence of Marxism among student activists, as well as the formation of several large student unions, provided an important ideological coherence to the movement generally.<sup>69</sup> The U.S. embassy in Ethiopia, which, as one can imagine, followed the rise of the Marxists within the student movement quite carefully, laments that "...the dominance of the Marxists on campus dates from December, 1966, when a referendum prepared the way for the establishment of the University Students Union of Addis Ababa (USUAA), under their complete control."<sup>70</sup> The particular timing may be debated, but

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<sup>66</sup> Balsvik, *Haile Sellassie's Students*, 126-7.

<sup>67</sup> M.E. Jackson, Asmara to U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa, April 11, 1968, "Governor General Discusses Student Demonstrations," NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2075 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder "Pol 23-8".

<sup>68</sup> Balsvik, 81-91.

<sup>69</sup> In addition to the university and secondary school unions, a country-wide student organization called the Haimanote Abew Ethiopian Student Association was formed in the late 1950s and was in existence at least through the early 1970s. Like all other such groups, this organization also became politicized, focusing on Ethiopiawide issues. See U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa, to Dept. of State, Jan. 14, 1972, "Ethiopian Youth Movements," NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1970-73, Box 2257 (59/150/67/12/3), folder "Pol-14".

<sup>70</sup> U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa, to Dept. of State, April 27, 1968, "Addis Ababa Student Demonstrations, 1968," NA2, RG 59, Subject Numeric File, 1967-69, Box 2075 (59/150/65/8/2-3), folder "Pol 23-8".

reading through student materials, there is no question that by 1967 or 1968, Marxist views almost completely dominated published student thought. The forty-one pages of resolutions passed by the 1967 NUEUS Congress

...claimed that “a dramatic turn” had taken place in the Ethiopian student movement: The enduring purpose had been established to identify with the general mass of the Ethiopian people. Marxist analytical concepts had decidedly influenced student thought. The resolutions characterized Ethiopian society as having “two major class forces. An overwhelming majority of peasants opposed to a very backward and decadent aristocratic and religious group...” [and noted that] “we are in the epoch of maturing feudalism.”<sup>71</sup>

Slogans taken up by marching students became more manifestly socialist toward the end of the decade as well, epitomized by “Land to the Tiller” marches in the late 1960s.

Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* became the most important ideological source for Ethiopian political student activists. They also drew inspiration from the writings of Lenin, Marx, Engels, Mao, Che Guevara, and such western leftist periodicals as the *New Left Review* and *Monthly Review*.<sup>72</sup>

From around this time adhering to socialist doctrine became almost a litmus test of respectability within the main student publications.

Thus, from about the mid 1960s, the Ethiopian student movement coalesced around two broad, unifying themes: first, that the problems toward which students, as future leaders, should focus their energies were *national* problems affecting all Ethiopians; and second, that Marxism was the proper ideology needed to attack these problems. An early issue of the main student publication (titled, appropriately enough, *Struggle*,<sup>73</sup>) contains an article that sums up the student view of their own movement at that time.

The student of today is in a peaceful revolt. He has fully understood that he constitutes the reservoir from which future political leaders will be drawn. He has

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<sup>71</sup> Balsvik, *Haile Sellassie’s Students*, 175-6.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 173-4.

<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, many of the articles are in English. Particularly after ethnicity began to emerge into the consciousness of activist students in the mid to late 1960s, English became a neutral medium of expression, a language that was not associated with any one of Ethiopia’s constituent ethnicities in particular.

realized that he is the national [cadre] and tomorrow's leader of the Ethiopian people who will undoubtedly assume their position among the already advanced people of the world....He has realized the key national problems, the source of all social evils and has theorized on how to combat it. In his immediate demands he has raised his voice against inhuman treatment and exploitation, in support of domestic rights and the socio-economic demands of the oppressed peasantry.<sup>74</sup>

A typical *Struggle* commentary focuses on the Ethiopian population broadly, describing the newly formed USUAA as "...an organization where the modern Ethiopian student would train himself to love his people, prepare himself to integrate with the broad masses of the exploited peasantry and to lead these people to a better life."<sup>75</sup> The commentary goes on to warn, about critics of USUAA, that "...[t]he postures of organized groups must be evaluated purely from the point of view of national interest and [the] well-being of the Ethiopian people. Any manifestation of foreign interests shall not be tolerated. Nor should any divisive attitudes escape our attention."<sup>76</sup> In addition, by the end of the 1960s Marxist terminology had become almost ubiquitous in student publications. The debate between Tilahun Tekele and other students over which approach to Ethiopia's nationalities problem was more correctly Marxist, described below, is a case in point. As with most other articles published in the student press by the late 1960s, this debate assumed the reader believed Marxism held the answers to the country's problems, and made no attempt to debate, or even to explicitly dismiss, non-Marxist positions.

The advent of Marxism as the unifying ideology of the student movement is also important because its appearance came about roughly at the same time as a growing awareness among students of the importance of ethnicity in Ethiopian politics. Thus, as ethnic "self-help"

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<sup>74</sup> *Struggle* 2:2 (April 3, 1967), 11.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

organizations sprung up around Addis Ababa in the mid-1960s,<sup>77</sup> as students began organizing small cultural groups based on ethnicity, and as the Eritrean secessionist movement came to become the dominant issue in Ethiopian domestic politics in the late 1960s, student views on all these issues were filtered through a Marxist lens. The next section discusses how students addressed “the nationalities question,” and forms the final basis for understanding the ideological link between the student movement and the TPLF, and therefore also for understanding how the “academic integration” of Tigray with the rest of Ethiopia shaped the particular views held by early TPLF leaders toward the Ethiopian state.

### *The Student Movement and the “Nationalities Question”*

For most of the 1960s the student movement studiously avoided the question of ethnicity and the role it played in Ethiopian politics. The 1967 NEUES congress described above passed numerous resolutions, not one of which, according to a summary of the proceedings published in *Struggle*, touched on the issues of ethnicity or nationality.<sup>78</sup> Only a short time afterwards, however, ethnicity became one of the central concerns in student movement publications. This section focuses on two of the most influential essays produced by the student movement on the subject of ethnicity in Ethiopia. Two points should be taken from these works. First, as ethnicity began to be discussed openly in student publications, these discussions frequently referred to a joint Amhara-Tigrayan domination of Ethiopia’s other groups, a reference that reflects the historical/cultural integration reviewed above; second are the common ideological themes shared by the student movement and the TPLF only several years afterwards. A comparison of student

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<sup>77</sup> U.S. Embassy, Addis Ababa to Dept. of State, June 17, 1965, “Problems of National Unity; the Increase of Tribal Organizations,” NA2, RG59, Subject Numeric File, 1964-66, Box 2150 (59/250/6/33-34/7-1), folder “Pol 18 Provincial, Municipal and State Government”.

<sup>78</sup> *Struggle*, 2:2 (April 3, 1967), 2-6.

movement and TPLF materials shows a striking intellectual continuity between the two movements, the practical result of this modern example of Tigrayan integration into Ethiopia.

A single, groundbreaking article written in *Struggle* in 1969 by a student named Wallelign Mekonnen,<sup>79</sup> titled “On the Question of Nationalities in Ethiopia,” broke the taboo against openly discussing ethnicity.<sup>80</sup> Prior to his article, the only mentions of ethnicity one would find in student publications were calls for national unity and warnings against “tribalism.”<sup>81</sup> Wallelign is self-conscious of the fact that his is the first open piece of writing on the nationalities question within the student movement.<sup>82</sup> His article set a standard, and is frequently cited by later authors, whether they favor or oppose his views. “On the Question of Nationalities in Ethiopia” is striking for four reasons, which relate both to the argument presented above that Tigray has been historically integrated into Abyssinian Ethiopia and to the ideology later developed by the TPLF. First, the article recognizes that Ethiopia is not one nation, but rather comprises many nationalities. Second, it takes the position that to the extent there is anything like an “Ethiopian” nationality, it is synonymous with the Amhara-Tigrayan culture discussed in the first part of this chapter.

...[I]n Ethiopia there is the Oromo Nation, the Tigray Nation, the Amhara Nation, the Gurage Nation, the Sidama Nation, the Wellamo Nation, the Adere Nation, and however much you may not like it the Somali Nation. This is the true picture of Ethiopia. There is of course the fake Ethiopian Nationalism advanced by the ruling class and unwillingly accepted and even propagated by innocent fellow travelers. What is this fake Nationalism? [Is it] not simply Amhara and to a certain extent Amhara-Tigre supremacy? Ask any body what Ethiopian culture is? Ask any body what Ethiopian language is? Ask any body what Ethiopian music is? Ask any body what Ethiopian religion is? Ask any body what the

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<sup>79</sup> Wallelign was killed by Ethiopian forces later that year when he and several others tried to hijack an Ethiopian Airlines plane from Addis Ababa.

<sup>80</sup> Wallelign Mekonnen, “On the Question of Nationalities in Ethiopia,” in Ethiopian Students Union of North America, *Newsletter* 1:3 (March 1971), 9-13 [originally published in *Struggle*, the newspaper of the University Students’ Union of Addis Ababa.]

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, “Resolution of the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Union of Ethiopian Students in Europe,” *Challenge* 6:1 (August, 1966), 23.

<sup>82</sup> Wallelign goes so far as to claim that no discussions, even private ones, had taken place on this issue before 1968.



'national' dress is? It is either Amhara or Amhara-Tigre!!.... To be a "genuine Ethiopian" one has to speak Amharic, to listen to Amharic music, to accept the Amhara-Tigre religion, Orthodox Christianity and to wear the Amhara-Tigre Shamma in international conferences....In short to be an "Ethiopian", you will have to wear an Amhara mask (to use Fanon's expression).<sup>83</sup>

The author goes on to describe Tigrayans as the "junior partner" of the Amharas in the economic and cultural subjugation of the other nationalities.<sup>84</sup>

Third, from a Marxist perspective, Walleign's article recognizes both class and national contradictions. Fourth, and most importantly, the article, speaking in the name of progressive forces, claims that supporting nationalist movements is "correct," in Marxist terms, so long as such movements are led by socialists. Thus, he condemns Eritrean separatism for being led by bourgeoisie elements, who, if successful, "...will only wind up replacing one 'master' over the masses with another."<sup>85</sup> But in general, support should be given to a nationalist movement, even a secessionist movement,

...as long as [it is] led by the progressive forces—the peasants and the workers, and has [as] its final aim the liberation of the Ethiopian [masses] with due consideration to the economic and cultural independence of all the nationalities. It is the duty of every revolutionary to question whether a movement is socialist or reactionary not whether a movement is secessionist or not. In the long run Socialism is internationalism and a Socialist movement will never remain secessionist for good."<sup>86</sup>

Note how the author's support for nationalist movements is offered with the qualification that secession should not be the ultimate goal. Moreover, Walleign writes that "...when the degree of consciousness of the various nationalities is at different levels, it is not only the right but the duty of the most [conscious] nationality to first liberate itself and then assist others in the

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<sup>83</sup> Walleign Mekonnen, "On the Question of Nationalities in Ethiopia," in Ethiopian Students Union of North America, *Newsletter* 1:3 (March 1971), 10. [originally published in *Struggle* 5:2 (Nov. 17, 1969)].

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 11

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

struggle for total liberation.”<sup>87</sup> As will be seen below, these ideas closely foreshadow those developed by the TPLF several years later.

The year after the Wallelign article appeared, a long essay was published in the journal of the Ethiopian Students’ Union of North America (ESUNA)<sup>88</sup> under the pseudonym Tilahun Takele<sup>89</sup> titled “The National Question (‘Regionalism’) in Ethiopia.”<sup>90</sup> Tilahun’s essay goes even further than Wallelign’s in presenting arguments in support of nationalist movements within Ethiopia. The article is in part an answer to the negative reaction that followed the Wallelign essay, in which ethnically-based movements came under harsh criticism. Self-determination was called “a reactionary subterfuge” by one author,<sup>91</sup> while another decried the “fatuous preoccupation with ethnicity.”<sup>92</sup> For many critics of the idea of supporting nationalist movements, the problem of ethnicity was a vestige of feudalism that would be solved simply by overturning the feudal order; this, therefore, should be the objective of “progressive” Ethiopian forces.<sup>93</sup> Tilahun’s article disputes this and other similar claims, and together the Tilahun and Wallelign essays sparked an important reversal in the way the student movement handled the question of ethnicity in Ethiopia. The themes these two articles introduced, which were later taken up by other student authors, would come to play an important role in the political program developed by the TPLF a few years later.

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>88</sup> Note that there were strong connections between Ethiopian student groups at home and abroad, with members of the latter returning home to influence the former. See Paul B. Henze, “Retrospective on Opposition to the Derg,” in *Ethiopia in Broader Perspective, Vol. I: Papers of the XIIIth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Kyoto, 12-17 December 1997*, ed. Katsuyoshi Fukui (Kyoto: Shokado, 1997), 153.

<sup>89</sup> Tilahun was the first name of a student leader assassinated in 1969, but the author of the article was Berhane Meskel, the future leader of the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party. The source of the information that Tilahun Takele was a pseudonym for Berhane Meskel is Fentahun Tiruneh, interview by author, Washington, DC, February 18, 2004.

<sup>90</sup> Tilahun Takele, “The National Question (‘Regionalism’) in Ethiopia,” *Newsletter* [Quarterly of the New York Chapter, Ethiopian Students Union of North America] 1:3 (March 1971), 14-56.

<sup>91</sup> Andreas Eshete, “The Problems of Regionalism and Religion: Some Theoretical Considerations,” *Challenge* 10:1 (Feb., 1970), 7.

<sup>92</sup> Hagos G. Yesus, “Problem of Regionalism in Ethiopia,” *Challenge* 10:1 (Feb., 1970), 22.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

In contrast to the reaction against Wallelign, and like the Wallelign article itself, the Tilahun essay recognizes Ethiopia as a multi-national state, and sees joint Amhara and Tigrayan oppression of other minorities. "...[T]he Amhara nation is the main national oppressor and the dominant nation...[and] the Tigrean nation is the junior partner of the Amhara nation in religious, and partly cultural oppression..."<sup>94</sup> At another point in the article the author implies that the Tigrayans and Amhara together make up a single nation.<sup>95</sup> The article presents itself as a debate between the position of the ESUNA, which had condemned secessionist movements as anti-revolutionary, and that of Lenin, which supported the right to self-determination. The article holds the October Revolution in Russia as a model, since it resulted in a state in which the constituent nationalities were truly free because: 1) the revolution was socialist, and 2) the nationalities were guaranteed the right to secession. As a result, the nations "...opted to remain in a voluntary union of free, equal and fraternal Soviet socialist republics."<sup>96</sup>

For Tilahun, socialist nationalist movements deserve support not merely because this is the right thing to do, but because such support practically benefits the ultimate goal of forming a socialist, unified, and multi-national state.

National consciousness of an oppressed nation degenerates to 'local nationalism' when it is persecuted and lacks support, understanding and sympathy from the so-called 'progressives' and the masses of the oppressor or dominant nation. And this state of affairs is certainly detrimental to the formation of a multi-national revolutionary organization as well as to the multi-national democratic republic we hope will be established in place of the present empire-state....<sup>97</sup> Separation, by reducing antagonisms between the working classes of the oppressor and

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<sup>94</sup> Tilahun Takele, "The National Question..." 45-6.

<sup>95</sup> In criticizing the ESUNA position that the people of Ethiopia constitute one nation, the author mockingly asks, "Unless [one of the ESUNA authors being criticized] plans to cast into a furnace all the peoples of Ethiopia (who speak more than 70 languages) and literally forge or mold a new superpeople, or exterminate all the non-Amhara or non-Tigrean peoples, we believe that Ethiopia will for long remain a multinational state, and not 'a...nation', even when the oppressive system is destroyed." The implication here is clear, that even in the author's view that Ethiopia is a multinational state, to him the Amhara and Tigray peoples together constitute a single nation.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 16-17.

oppressed nation, is in the interest of the working class of the oppressor nation as well, in addition to furthering the cause of proletarian internationalism.<sup>98</sup>

Virtually echoing part of the future TPLF program on the right of secession, Tilahun goes on to write,

...we believe that unless a unified revolutionary organization is established, neither feudalism, nor imperialism, nor national oppression can be abolished. On the other hand, we believe that no such organization can be established if it does not win the confidence of the various nationalities of the empire as well as of revolutionary cadres from the various nationalities; the organization can achieve these ends only if it fully recognizes and supports the RIGHT of the various nationalities (including the right of secession) and if it gives such guarantees...<sup>99</sup>

Importantly, supporting the right of secession was not equated with supporting individual secessionist movements; each had to be evaluated individually,<sup>100</sup> and the ultimate goal continued to be socialist revolution in Ethiopia as a whole. Further presaging future TPLF writing, the author argues that accepting the rights of nationalities to secede means also accepting that right for Eritrea's constituent nations,<sup>101</sup> a point that went a long way toward damaging TPLF-EPLF relations in the 1980s, since the EPLF, predictably, saw only a single Eritrean nation and not internal minorities.

The Wallalign and Tillahun essays represented a wholesale change in the way the Ethiopian student movement approached the question of ethnicity. Prior to their appearance, the issue was all but ignored by one of the most prominent political movements on the national stage. After their publication, however, ethnicity and the question of how to approach nationalist movements were frequent topics of published student discussion. Most importantly, however, these essays sparked the emergence of a consensus on several crucial points, including the recognition that Ethiopia was an amalgam of distinct nationalities, and that a proper approach to

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 48.

the nationalities problem required resolving the system of institutionalized ethnic domination. This had to take place before the emergence of a socialist Ethiopia, which would be formed by the voluntary unity of its constituent groups. The intellectual continuity between the student movement approach to Ethiopian nationalities and that adopted by the TPLF a few years afterwards is one of the subjects of the next section. This continuity reinforces the importance Tigrayan integration into the Ethiopian polity had in shaping the political objectives of the 1970s Tigrayan revolt.

#### **IV. “Integration” and the Ideology of the TPLF**

The ideology developed early on by the TPLF and used to motivate potential followers for a state-capture war against the Ethiopian state cannot be seen in a vacuum. The TPLF ideology was the intellectual heir of the idea that Tigray *belonged* somehow with Amhara-dominated Ethiopia,<sup>102</sup> even if the relative power arrangement between the two groups was not accepted. This idea was the product of at least two distinct examples of integration: the centuries-old political and cultural relationship between Tigrayan-speaking and Amharic-speaking Ethiopians based on the idea of an Orthodox Christian Abyssinia, and the more recent, direct participation of nearly all of Tigray’s elite youth, including the large majority of early TPLF leaders, in an educational environment dominated by the socialist Ethiopian Student Movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, whose ideology strongly favored the overthrow of the Ethiopian

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<sup>102</sup> According to several authors, early in its existence the TPLF, or several of its members, produced a manifesto calling for an independent Tigray. This document was apparently the work of a minority faction and was quickly repudiated by a TPLF congress, and in all of its subsequent materials the group renounces separatism and reiterates its claims to the center. Moreover, even this manifesto apparently saw separatism as only a stepping stone toward eventual socialist revolution. Young, *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia*, 99. This chapter does not deal with the manifesto for two reasons. First, it may never have represented more than the shortly held views of a minority within the organization. Second, extensive attempts to obtain a copy of the manifesto were unsuccessful. All of those I was able to contact who cite it in published works maintain that they have not retained a copy, and the official TPLF historian claims that copies are unavailable in the TPLF archives or from any other source in Ethiopia. Not being able to establish its importance, or even verify its existence, I do not believe it is appropriate to write about it, especially since so much other material on the group’s early ideology exists.

monarchy and its replacement by a socialist, multi-ethnic, democratic state. The specific links between both these forms of integration and the TPLF political program are explored below.

### *Academic Integration and TPLF Ideology*

By November 1975, the TPLF numbered about 100 people, most of them former students or teachers,<sup>103</sup> with "...the leadership...drawn disproportionately from the educated sons of the rich peasantry and the lower-middle local nobility."<sup>104</sup> Former university students in Addis Ababa played a prominent role in the TPLF's founding and organization, as well as in the development of its ideology, and included Meles Zenawi, Ethiopia's current Prime Minister and the party's leader for the past two decades, Aregowie Berhe, and Mahari Haile, the latter two members of the TPLF's first Central Committee. Sebhat Nega, another original Central Committee member and one-time Chairman of the TPLF, was an educational officer in the province before 1974.

This section will show a number of examples of intellectual continuity between ideology developed by the Ethiopian Student Movement and the program of the TPLF. One of the clearest concerns the relationship between class and national struggle. Recall that for the Ethiopian student movement from about the mid-1960s onward, adherence to the socialist goal of class revolution was sacrosanct;<sup>105</sup> thus the importance of resolving any theoretical contradiction between nationalist movements and orthodox socialist ideology, as demonstrated by the seriousness with which both the Walleign and Tilahun articles addressed the subject. Specifically, these essays recognized that national oppression required nationalist solutions, and

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<sup>103</sup> See Markakis, *National and Class Conflict*, 253, and Young, *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia*, 85.

<sup>104</sup> Young, *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia*, 84.

<sup>105</sup> The socialist ideology of the student movement was developed in opposition to the feudal order presided over by Emperor Haile Selassie. Of course, by 1975, when the TPLF was formed, the Ethiopian government was headed by an ostensibly-socialist military junta, the Derg. To escape the apparent contradiction of waging a socialist struggle against a socialist government, the TPLF came to label the Derg "fascist," in part because, in the eyes of the TPLF, the government continued to be based on Amhara domination, despite its outward appearance of being revolutionary, and also because it lacked a true "vanguard organization." See TPLF, *People's Voice* 2:4 (Oct. 1, 1979), 9.

that such solutions should be supported by socialists because ultimately their success was in the interest of a unified, socialist Ethiopia. The TPLF approached this topic in a way similar to both these two articles, recognizing Ethiopia first and foremost as a prison of nationalities, frequently mentioning, for example, the “oppressed nations” and “oppressed peoples” within Ethiopia.<sup>106</sup> The TPLF disagreed, of course, with the idea that Tigrayans constituted an oppressor nationality, going to great lengths instead to point out instances of Amhara oppression of Tigray, but generally the first TPLF writings reflected the earlier student movement concern with resolving national problems through national movements, but for socialist ends.

As good Marxists, and like a number of student movement authors before it, TPLF ideologues conceded that the nationalities problem derived from class contradictions.<sup>107</sup> But the TPLF argued that the “national contradiction” was more acute than class antagonisms within Ethiopia, and therefore required more immediate attention.<sup>108</sup>

Citing Mao’s dictum that in certain historical situations the national contradiction can become the principal one, the TPLF argued that although national subjection derives from class domination, [such class domination] is not necessarily resolved by class struggle. The Tigray nationalists maintained that fear and suspicion between the Amhara and other nations in Ethiopia had reached a point where national sentiment submerged class consciousness and made a joint struggle impossible. “The correct solution to the problem is national struggle which will have a class character against Amhara chauvinism and American imperialism” (*Woyeen* 1/2/76).<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> See eg., TPLF, *People’s Voice* 2:1 (June 1979), 2.

<sup>107</sup> For example: “Originating from class antagonism the contradiction between the oppressed Tigray and the oppressing Amhara nation, has continued for about nine decades in a state of silent War. Tigray, being in servitude, the forces of production were blocked from further development. Primitive methods of farming, feudal land holding system, the non existence of factories and industries, lack of social services, and the blockage of social progress was not accidental, but an action forced upon by the ruling classes.” TPLF, Foreign Affairs Bureau, Europe and the Americas Section, “Tigray in Struggle, Information Bulletin of the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front” (April 1981), 9-10.

<sup>108</sup> TPLF, “Resolutions Passed by the First Organizational Congress of the Tigray People’s Liberation Front, February 1979,” *People’s Voice* 2:2 (August 1979), 3.

<sup>109</sup> Markakis, *National and Class Conflict*, 254-5.

Thus, the avowedly Marxist TPLF was able to rhetorically support the idea of waging a nationalist struggle, rather than a pan-ethnic class-based fight. In an early communiqué, the TPLF relates class and ethnic struggles historically to show why class warfare was inappropriate in the Ethiopian context.

Ethiopian unity rests on the subjugation of the oppressed nationality by the oppressor nationality. As a result, there is now a deep and sharp national antagonism with a precedence of national consciousness over class consciousness. This has implied that the oppressed classes of the oppressed and oppressor nationalities cannot fight side by side against their class enemy. Under these conditions, the interests of democracy and socialism demand that the oppressed nationalities carry a new democratic revolution independently, for the sake of the oppressed classes of the oppressor nationality.<sup>110</sup>

As with the student movement before it, however, the TPLF showed repeated concern with demonstrating that its ultimate objective was class revolution within the broader Ethiopian context. In its First Organizational Congress, the TPLF passed a resolution specifically noting the role of the party in a broader, Ethiopian struggle it called the National Democratic Revolution.

...[T]he Congress reaffirmed that the T.P.L.F. will share its historic responsibility to enhance the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed and exploited peoples in Ethiopia. It further [recommended] the T.P.L.F. to heighten its all-round efforts to encourage the emergence of democratic organizations in the country and help them to adopt a genuine line of struggle.<sup>111</sup>

According to even its earliest propaganda, the TPLF believed that nationalist fights by all of Ethiopia's oppressed peoples, the goals of which were to be "self-determination" for each group, were the correct way to solve the country's problems, and most importantly as a means of solving the country's *class* problems.

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<sup>110</sup> Kiflu Tadesse, *The Generation, Part II: Ethiopia, Transformation and Conflict. The History of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993), 391.

<sup>111</sup> TPLF, "Resolutions Passed by the First Organizational Congress of the Tigray People's Liberation Front, February 1979," *People's Voice* 2:2 (Aug 1979), 3.



...[T]he national democratic struggle of the people of Tigray is against national oppression and class exploitation and for national self determination and liberation. Since a genuine national struggle is in essence a class struggle, the democratic struggle of the people of Tigray is...part and parcel [sic] of the democratic struggle of the oppressed peoples of Ethiopia.<sup>112</sup>

Moreover, the TPLF's idea about what Ethiopia would look like if all these nationalist movements acting in concert were successful virtually echoed Tilahun's Takele's 1970 essay. Like the student movement, the TPLF saw a voluntary, democratic union of Ethiopia's constituent nationalities.

The TPLF is a people's democratic front fighting for the national self-determination of the Tigrayan people and waging a people's democratic revolution. The TPLF is not fighting for secession. It is not against the *voluntary* unity of the five million Tigrayans with other nations and nationalities in the empire state.<sup>113</sup>

The party clearly differentiated between the forced unity of the country's constituent nations, which it claimed was the Derg's program, and genuine unity, which had to be of a completely voluntary nature.<sup>114</sup> Recalling the Tilahun article again, in practical terms the TPLF call for voluntary unity meant that all of Ethiopia's nations must be given the right of secession.

"[U]nity based on equality can't be accepted unless all national rights including the right to secede is [sic] fully granted to be implimented [sic] at any time."<sup>115</sup>

The T.P.L.F. firmly believes that destroying the malicious, parasitic and forced "unity" of the oppressed nations of the Empire state of Ethiopia can pave a way for a genuine and voluntary principled unity of willing nations and nationalities based on equality and mutual advantage for social progress.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> TPLF, "Tigray in Struggle," 10.

<sup>113</sup> TPLF, "Statement by the TPLF to the UN General Assembly, September, 1981," quoted in James Firebrace, "Tigray," in Minority Rights Group, Report No. 5, *Eritrea and Tigray* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1983), 18.

<sup>114</sup> TPLF, "The Derg Obstructs the Way to Democratic Unity," *People's Voice* 12:1-2 (Jan-June 1990), 2-3.

<sup>115</sup> TPLF, "Tigray in Struggle," 12.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

The link between the thinking of the Ethiopian student movement on the nationalities question as it evolved through the late 1960s, and the political tracts put forward by the TPLF on the same question is clear.

One might argue that links between the TPLF's ideology and the earlier student movement are merely coincidental (after all, many political movements in the developing world at this time were socialist), which would erode support for any causal connection between the academic integration of Tigrayans within Ethiopia and the goals of the TPLF rebellion. One could further argue that the TPLF's adoption of a socialist platform was more likely an instrumental strategy designed to gain support than it was a genuine reflection of the views of the organization's members, further eroding support for the causal argument. In fact, evidence suggests that the TPLF platform was neither coincidentally related to the earlier student movement nor designed for instrumental purposes. First, while it is true that many political movements at the time adopted a socialist program, the TPLF's complex blend of socialism and nationalism contained a number of elements that were unique to the Ethiopian context, particularly the notion that class struggle needed to be postponed (not eliminated, just put off) because of the historical domination of the Amhara ethnic group. Moreover, similarities between student movement and TPLF publications on ethnic and class relations in Ethiopia are so specific that they are highly unlikely to be coincidental, eg., the common support of the idea of a process whereby support for nationalist movements would help bring about a country-wide socialist revolution.

Second, the TPLF did not develop a socialist ideology for instrumental purposes. Within Tigray, the party's platform proved to be a hindrance, not a benefit, to mobilizing the province's

conservative and religious peasantry.<sup>117</sup> Nor did the TPLF shape its ideology to elicit outside support: at a time when the Ethiopian government against which the TPLF was fighting was growing closer to the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, instrumentality would predict that the TPLF would make overtures to the West. Instead, the party publicly adopted Albania as a model. In its publications, the Soviet Bloc and the West came under equally withering attack,<sup>118</sup> and the TPLF proudly broadcast the claim that it had been able to maintain independence from both the West and the East.<sup>119</sup> It is difficult to see how the TPLF derived any outside support at all from its ideological platform.

### *Historical Integration and TPLF Ideology*

If the TPLF ideology was so closely related to that of the student movement, was the former a mere extension of the latter? Was the TPLF really a nationalist movement at all, or was it simply an organization with a pan-Ethiopian ideology that happened to be based in Tigray with a primarily Tigrayan leadership? Evidence shows not only that the TPLF was clearly a Tigrayan nationalist movement, but also that the historical and cultural integration of Tigray into Ethiopia discussed at the beginning of this chapter had a strong influence on the rhetoric and state capture ideology the party developed. This evidence supports the idea developed in the first chapter of this dissertation that nationalist movements do not necessarily have to be secessionist.

Although the close relationship between the ideologies developed by both the student movement and the TPLF presented above show the profound influence the former had on the latter, the TPLF founders very clearly identified with the Tigrayan people and the Tigrayan

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<sup>117</sup> See Young, *Peasant Revolution*, Chapter Four, on competing forms of peasant mobilization in Tigray in the mid 1970s.

<sup>118</sup> See, for example, TPLF, *People's Voice* (February, 1982), 11.

<sup>119</sup> "Interview with Meles Zenawi, Secretary General of the TPLF," TPLF, *People's Voice* 12:1-2 (January-June 1990), 26.

nation. One author claims that “[m]any of [the TPLF founders] had deep historical roots, coming primarily from the ancient town of Adwa, where they had absorbed a keen sense of Ethiopian history from their families.”<sup>120</sup> Moreover, the precursor organization to the TPLF was the Tigrayan National Organization (TNO), which was formed to promote Tigrayan culture in the form of art, music, language, etc. But plenty of additional evidence derives from the same early TPLF documents that show the influence of student movement ideology.

Beyond the fact that typical TPLF writing explicitly describes the Tigrayan people as the group for whom the party is fighting, within the broader context of the Ethiopian revolution as described above,<sup>121</sup> the organization’s propaganda documents frequently reference past Tigrayan “heroes” and events meant to conjure up the idea of a long-running Tigrayan nationalist struggle against Amhara domination. In a 1979 TPLF pamphlet, under the heading of “Fascist Atrocities in Tigray,” the writer begins by referencing crimes supposedly committed against Tigray almost 100 years earlier by the Shoan Amhara Emperor Menelik.

In the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Menelik, under the guise of defence against the Italian colonizers, sent a huge army to Tigray without food and other necessary supplies. He instructed his feudal army to depend on the Tigrean people by plunder and pillage. He made it clear that the people of Tigray were no less the enemies of the Amhara regime than the colonizing force itself....Hence, the barbarous army marauded throughout Tigray...<sup>122</sup>

The primary lieutenant of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Tigrayan Emperor Yohannes, Ras Alula, who for a time was a major thorn in the side of Menelik’s ambitions in Tigray and the rest of northern

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<sup>120</sup> Henze, “Retrospective on Opposition to the Derg,” 156.

<sup>121</sup> For example: “...the victorious struggle waged by the T.P.L.F....was fought in defence of the Tigrean Revolution in particular [sic] and the Ethiopian peoples [sic] Struggles at large.” TPLF, *People’s Voice* 2:2 (August 1979), 2.

<sup>122</sup> TPLF, *People’s Voice* 2:4 (October 1979), 1.

Ethiopia, was venerated by the TPLF,<sup>123</sup> with the party even naming one of its army divisions after him<sup>124</sup> despite his noble pedigree.

An essay in another publication ostensibly about recent Derg military campaigns begins by describing the forced unification of Ethiopia under Menelik in the late 1800s as the basis for the current “national oppression.”<sup>125</sup> The first article goes on to glorify the 1943 *woyene* against Haile Selassie and criticize the brutal way in which it was put down. But most importantly, the author makes a clear rhetorical connection between the crimes of Menelik, the suppression of the 1943 *woyene*, and the contemporary fight against the Derg. “The fascist Dergue stepped into its ancestors [sic] shoes when it seized power by continuing the genocide against the people of Tigray.”<sup>126</sup> An essay marking the fifth anniversary of the TPLF’s founding is one of many containing the theme of a continuing national struggle.

...February 18<sup>th</sup>, 1975 is not the first time that the broad masses of Tigray rose up in arms against their enemies, but it is the continuation of the heroic and incessant struggle of our people in the past, the now and then, sometimes bright and sometimes dull revolutionary torch, carried from generation to generation illuminating the liberation-path. Our present struggle is the rebirth of ‘WOYENE,’ of 1943 – [the] struggle for self-determination: when the oppressed people of Tigray took up arms demanding an end to national oppression and exploitation by the Amhara ruling feudal clique.<sup>127</sup>

The Tigrinya name of the TPLF includes a key link to the revolution of 1943: *Hezbawi Wayane Harennat Tegray*,<sup>128</sup> and both the organization’s main newspaper and its combatants were named

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<sup>123</sup> For an example, see TPLF, *People’s Voice*, “National Struggle in Ethiopia,” [undated, possibly 1982], 7. See also Haggai Erlich, *Ras Alula and the Scramble for Africa, A Political Biography: 1875-1897* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1996), xiii.

<sup>124</sup> Alemseged Abbay, *Identity Jilted*, 193.

<sup>125</sup> TPLF, *People’s Voice* 2:5 (November 1979), 1.

<sup>126</sup> TPLF, *People’s Voice* 2:4 (October 1979), 1.

<sup>127</sup> TPLF, *People’s Voice* 2 [issue number not provided] (February 1980), 1.

<sup>128</sup> Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia*, 259.

after the *woyene* as well.<sup>129</sup> The theme of the TPLF walking in the footsteps of earlier Tigrayan nationalist fighters up to and including the *woyene* is one often repeated in party materials.

The TPLF made use of history even earlier than the 19<sup>th</sup> Century conflict between Menelik and Yohannes, focusing particular attention on Axum. Recall from earlier in this chapter that Axum represents the origin and center of Abyssinian culture, revered by both Tigrayans and Amhara alike. The Axumite period is venerated in an essay commemorating the fifth anniversary of the TPLF's founding.<sup>130</sup> Axum is not a symbol of past Tigrayan independence, but rather, for the TPLF, a symbol of (rightful) Tigrayan dominance within an Abyssinian state. The famous rock stele of Axum, dating from the heyday of the Axumite Empire, is depicted squarely in the center of the TPLF insignia. In response to the Derg bombing of Axum in 1988, the TPLF wrote that Axum is "the center of our history and the town that expresses our identity."<sup>131</sup> The use of Axumite imagery buttresses the case for a strong Tigrayan attachment to the historical/cultural idea of Abyssinia described above.

Moreover, in its propaganda materials, the TPLF venerates Abyssinian culture, stressing, of course, the prominent role Tigray and Tigrayans play within that culture. "The past history of Tigray is...ample evidence that shows...the Axumite civilization at its zenith in the 4th century A.D. was one of the leading civilizations of its time."<sup>132</sup> Meles Zenawi, Secretary General of the TPLF, talks of a proud three thousand year old Abyssinian history in an interview, explicitly noting that this history is shared by both the Amhara region of Shoa and those regions to its north, ie., including Tigray.<sup>133</sup> "From all the Abyssinians," notes another TPLF article titled

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<sup>129</sup> Alemseged Abbay, *Identity Jilted*, 195.

<sup>130</sup> TPLF, *People's Voice* 2 [issue number not provided] (February 1980), 2.

<sup>131</sup> TPLF, *Dimtsi Weyane Tigray*, April 8, 1989, quoted in Alemseged Abbay, *Identity Jilted*, 192.

<sup>132</sup> TPLF, *People's Voice*, Vol. II, no issue number given, (February 1980), 2.

<sup>133</sup> "Interview with Meles Zenawi, Secretary General of the TPLF," in TPLF, *People's Voice* 12:1-2 (January-June 1990), 26.

“National Struggle in Ethiopia, “the Tigreans played the bigger role in thwarting the European colonizers...”<sup>134</sup> In a letter to the United Nations, the party talks about the “glorious civilization” at Axum, and its “high degree of cultural and artistic life.”<sup>135</sup>

The links to the past offered in TPLF writings demonstrate two important ideas. First, that the party clearly presented itself rhetorically as a Tigrayan nationalist movement following a path of national resistance laid out by previous generations. Second, and most importantly, the rhetoric never frames past Tigrayan actions as fights for independence from Ethiopia. The current struggle is presented as a continuation of past efforts to escape illegitimate Amhara domination *within* the Abyssinian sphere. The young Tigrayan intellectuals who developed the TPLF’s early ideology came out of an academic environment that stressed socialist ideals and, ultimately, Ethiopian unity, but they were also products of a centuries-old tradition of Tigrayan integration within Ethiopia, one based on shared religion, veneration of a powerful ancient empire, and a common myth of descent with their Amhara rivals. This tradition is clearly reflected in TPLF propaganda. References to nationalism and history were seen by the TPLF as being particularly important to galvanize support among Tigrayan peasants,<sup>136</sup> demonstrating the importance of Tigrayan cultural and historical integration for mobilizing supporters. One author notes that the TPLF program of Tigrayan equality and ending Amhara domination struck a real chord with the local population, according to the Ethiopian governor of Tigray in the mid-1970s.<sup>137</sup>

## V. Conclusion

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<sup>134</sup> TPLF, “National Struggle in Ethiopia,” *People’s Voice*, undated, 2.

<sup>135</sup> TPLF, “Tigray Memorandum,” Presented by the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) to the 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly, September 1981, 1.

<sup>136</sup> Young, *Peasant Revolution in Ethiopia*, 100.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

The Tigrayan People's Liberation Front was a nationalist movement, one that used Tigrayan nationalism to motivate followers and participants for the war it launched against Ethiopia in 1975. This is amply documented in the propaganda produced by the organization and by the observations of those who have followed it. In the words of Alemseged Abbay, however, "[t]he puzzle here is that...ethno-regional nationalism...betrayed the conventional wisdom and expected logic of establishing an ethno-regional state."<sup>138</sup> As chapter one noted, nationalist struggles are almost always assumed to be fights for increased independence from a central government. That chapter discussed theoretically, and this present chapter shows empirically, how a nationalist movement that explicitly claims to represent the interests of a sub-group of the country's population, can, in fact, aim to take over, rather than separate from, an existing state.

Chapter one also put forward the hypotheses that a rebelling ethnic group is more likely to be separatist the greater the cultural differences are between it and the ruling group of the state, and the greater the degree of autonomy from the state the rebelling ethnic group has had in the past. Chapter two tested these hypotheses against a large number of ethnic rebellions, using religious and language differences as proxies for cultural difference, and measuring past political autonomy in a number of guises. Its conclusions supported both hypotheses: separatist rebellions were indeed significantly more likely than state capture rebellions to be launched by groups whose religion and language were different from those of the ruling group, as well as by groups which had been autonomous from the state in the recent past. Chapter three explores how cultural differences and political autonomy influenced the direction of the rebellion launched by Eritrean separatist groups in the early 1960s.

This chapter looks at the flip side of this same coin: the influence of cultural similarities, rather than differences, and integration with the center, rather than autonomy from it, on the

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<sup>138</sup> Alemseged Abbay, *Identity Jilted*, 1.



direction of rebellion in the Tigrayan case. Tigrayans and the Amhara ethnic group of Ethiopia share a common religion, a common descent myth, and a veneration of the Axumite empire as the origin of their common culture. Moreover, prior to the TPLF rebellion in the mid 1970s, Tigray was politically, or at the very least symbolically, integrated into the Ethiopian state for most of the past two thousand years, in the sense that Axum, located in Tigray, continued to represent a cultural center of the state even as political power shifted away from it geographically, and Tigrayan rulers continuously took part in the internal Ethiopian power game. As a result, Tigrayans came to think of themselves as just as deserving of ruling Ethiopia as the Amhara, if not more so, particularly after the reign of the Tigrayan emperor Yohannes in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

The most recent example of integration explored by the chapter is that of the participation of Tigrayan students in a national Ethiopian student movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The chapter shows that important elements of the early TPLF program relating class and national struggles within Ethiopia, and justifying the continued but voluntary unity of the country's constituent ethnic groups, had direct antecedents in the writings put forward by this movement. As with the integration of Tigray within a common Abyssinian culture, the more recent integration of Tigrayans within the Twentieth Century Ethiopian state helped stimulate certain grievances—Amhara domination, unfulfilled socialist ambitions—that shaped the direction of the TPLF rebellion toward the center.

Finally, as noted above, Ethiopian history makes us question the notions of center and periphery commonly used in the academic literature. Specifically, the present account challenges the idea that center and periphery are static concepts,<sup>139</sup> and undermines the idea that

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<sup>139</sup> Many authors have used the concepts of center and periphery in attempting to understand ethnic rebellions and nationalist movements more generally. See, for example, Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe*

generalizations can be made about groups that are “central” or “peripheral.” While the concept of an Ethiopian state has existed for almost two thousand years, no single province or city within Ethiopia could consistently be labeled the “center” of that entity. The present capital, Addis Ababa, was founded only in 1887. Since the decline of the Axumite Empire, the capital of Ethiopia has been whichever town the emperor (or the most widely accepted claimant to the throne when that title was contested), chose to make his home. These have included Axum, Gondar, Lalibela, and, only most recently, Addis Ababa. Even the region around Addis Ababa, the traditional province of Shoa,<sup>140</sup> gained domination over the Abyssinian state only relatively recently. And while for the past century or so Tigray certainly has possessed many of the characteristics commonly attributed to peripheral regions, the claims its nationalists can make over the Ethiopian state as a whole are unlike anything most scholars think of when it comes to peripheral areas.

Having examined how the political objectives pursued by rebelling ethnic groups are shaped by particular types of historical and cultural relationships between those groups and the state, the dissertation now turns to the implications of the discussion to this point for conflict management. The next chapter looks at academic and policy debates over arrangements to end civil conflicts, and applies insights about the political goals of rebel movements to these debates.

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*in British National Development, 1536-1966* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), and Peter Gourevitch, “The Reemergence of ‘Peripheral Nationalism’: Some Comparative Speculations on the Spatial Distribution of Political Leadership and Economic Growth,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 21:3 (1979), 303-22.

<sup>140</sup> The provincial name was changed after the TPLF took power in the early 1990s.

## Chapter Five

### Satisfying Group Goals Peacefully: Implications for Conflict Management

#### I. Introduction

This chapter discusses implications of the analysis to this point for understanding how ethnic civil wars can be ended through negotiations, and how peace can be consolidated following conflict. The existing literature on these subjects pays very little attention to how differences in rebel goals affect conflict resolution.<sup>1</sup> In contrast, this chapter argues that understanding how ethnic civil wars can be successfully negotiated, and how institutions that boost the long-term prospects of peace can be established following conflict, requires focusing on more than either the process of bargaining<sup>2</sup> or those factors like violence that are universal to

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<sup>1</sup> Zartman is an exception, noting that “[c]entralist and regional protests have different goals and hence are satisfied by different outcomes...” I. William Zartman, “Dynamics and Constraints in Negotiations in Internal Conflicts,” in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, ed. I. William Zartman (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 6. In separatist conflicts, he notes that “[s]olutions must be found through a formula that meets both the regional insurgents’ demands for self-determination and self-government and the national government’s demands for national integrity,” while in state capture conflicts, “...negotiations will find success only through a solution of power-sharing between groups presently monopolizing power and those presently excluded.” (25). Roy Licklider briefly suggests that state capture and separatist conflicts might require different solutions, but does not pursue this in any depth. “How Civil Wars End: Questions and Methods,” in *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End*, ed. Roy Licklider (New York: NYU Press, 1993), 15. Ian Spears recognizes that regional autonomy is sometimes more desirable than power sharing, but does not articulate the circumstances in which one is more appropriate than the other. “Understanding Inclusive Peace Agreements in Africa: The Problems of Sharing Power,” *Third World Quarterly* 21:1 (2000), 115. Ruth Lapidot, *Autonomy: Flexible Solutions to Ethnic Conflicts* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996), while conceding integration as a theoretical alternative to autonomy (173-4), fails to offer rules to decide when one is more appropriate than the other. Autonomy is seen as the lesser of two evils because groups being offered autonomy often “...generally [prefer] complete secession.” (203) Stephen John Stedman asserts that the appropriateness of individual conflict resolution policies is dependent on the context in which such policies are to be implemented, but focuses on contextual factors that make implementation more or less difficult, rather than on how such factors should change the nature of policies to be implemented. “Introduction,” in *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, ed. Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth M. Cousens (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 21.

<sup>2</sup> A large literature on negotiations concentrates on process, that is, on the tactics negotiators employ to achieve their desired result. These works treat the particular subject of negotiations as almost immaterial. See, for example, Dean G. Pruitt and Peter J. Carnevale, *Negotiation in Social Conflict* (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole, 1993), and Thomas C. Shelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980).

all such conflicts. The chapter finds that the practical difficulties of arriving at negotiated resolutions to ethnic civil wars are strongly affected by rebel group objectives. In addition, it argues that for efforts to end ethnic civil wars to be successful, they must take into account the political objectives of the combatants. Specifically, separatist conflicts should be resolved by granting autonomy to the rebelling group, while state capture conflicts should be resolved by instituting power sharing arrangements at the center. As will be shown below, this prescription is not a common one in the conflict resolution literature.

The discussion in this chapter is based on the idea, presented in chapter one, that state capture and secessionist conflicts are components within two broader “center-oriented” and “separatist” packages of political goals.<sup>3</sup> That is, broadly, the goal of a separatist rebel group is to increase its power relative to that of the state over a particular territory, and the goal of a center-oriented rebel group is to increase its power over the state itself. That the two types of conflict this dissertation analyzes are part of broader categories is important because it implies that the issues involved may be more amenable to compromise than one might otherwise predict. In particular, this chapter argues that autonomy presents a middle-ground solution that both a secessionist rebel movement and the government it is fighting may find acceptable, because autonomy satisfies the more general desire on the part of the rebel movement for greater self rule, while at the same time satisfying the state’s goal of maintaining territorial integrity and formal government authority over all parts of the country. Similarly, a rebel movement seeking the total capture of government institutions may accept a power-sharing compromise with the state. From the rebel movement’s perspective, such a solution amounts to steps in the right direction: toward greater say over central government policies. From the state’s perspective,

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<sup>3</sup> Center-oriented rebellions fight either to change specific government policies, to improve a group’s constitutional position within the state, or to completely take over the institutions of government. Separatist rebellions fight either for increased territorial autonomy, for outright secession, or to join a neighboring state.

power sharing arrangements may be acceptable if enough pressure is brought to bear by third parties, or if the alternative of total loss of power is seen as a likely possibility if the conflict is allowed to continue.

## **II. Negotiating Peace**

This section examines how the goals of combatants affect negotiations to end ethnic civil wars. It begins by describing the range of outcomes that can emerge from negotiations to end such conflicts. This range is directly related to the typology of group goals developed in chapter one. The section then argues that for a number of reasons, state capture rebellions should be more easily resolved through negotiation than separatist conflicts, though separatist fights may be more likely to draw in outside powers eager to see the conflict ended through negotiations. Finally, it looks at situations in which outside powers are patrons of rebel groups involved in peace negotiations. For a number of reasons, such patrons may be more supportive of the peaceful resolution of state capture conflicts compared to separatist conflicts. As it stands, the literature on negotiations tends not to theoretically distinguish different types of civil conflict. Rather, it generally focuses on elements that different negotiating situations have in common, typically examining the process of bargaining, and the effect of different negotiating tactics on outcomes.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, this section argues that because the goals of the participants in conflict change the dynamics of negotiation, these goals must play an important role in understanding how such conflicts can be ended without further bloodshed.

I take a proposition from the literature on bargaining as my point of departure, namely, that for a bargaining situation to exist a range of acceptable solutions must be available to both

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<sup>4</sup> Pruitt and Carnevale, *Negotiation in Social Conflict*, 7 and 194.

sides in the negotiations;<sup>5</sup> otherwise, of course, negotiations would be fruitless. Specifically, the different goals ethnic rebels pursue define that range of acceptable solutions. Chapter one suggests that rebel groups have broad interests in either increasing self rule over a particular piece of territory or increasing their power within the state. If groups could completely achieve their goals without cost, in most cases separatist rebels would secede and form a country of their own, and state capture rebels would completely remove the government from power and rule in its place. But the very fact that rebels are entering negotiations means that the total achievement of goals is not feasible. Rather, some sort of compromise with the government must be achieved. The two broad sets of political objectives this dissertation describes suggest the range of negotiable outcomes.

There is some evidence from the actions of rebel groups both before and during peace negotiations that group goals can best be described as falling within these broad categories. First, in researching the details of over one hundred ethnic rebellions while developing the dataset analyzed in chapter two, I found that while the stated goals of rebel movements often shift over time within the categories (e.g., between seeking autonomy and outright secession), they rarely if ever shift between the categories (moving from state capture to secession over time, for example). Second, when rebels and governments negotiate peace, solutions are usually found within the range of political objectives that I identify. A review of a dozen peace agreements negotiated largely between the parties to the conflict themselves<sup>6</sup> clearly shows that incorporating rebel goals within the spectrum of separatist and center-oriented objectives

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<sup>5</sup> Paul R. Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 40.

<sup>6</sup> That is, agreements that were not forced on the parties by outside powers.

described above is the rule, not the exception.<sup>7</sup> So, for example, an agreement between the separatist Aceh rebels and the Indonesian government calls for the “establishment of a democratic elected government in Aceh,”<sup>8</sup> while an agreement seeking to end the state capture civil war in Liberia calls for “promoting an all-inclusive participation in governance,” and those combatants who are not to return to civilian life are to be integrated into the Liberian armed forces.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, an analysis of Barbara Walter’s civil war dataset shows that when civil wars are resolved by negotiated agreement, those agreements are significantly likely to include some form of territorial autonomy if the rebellion was separatist ( $\chi^2=5.1$ ,  $pr=.02$ ).<sup>10</sup>

On the face of it, that autonomy is an appropriate solution for separatist conflicts and power sharing more appropriate for state capture conflicts might appear reasonable, even obvious. However, the perspective that solutions to ethnic violence should be tailored to the political goals of the parties involved is, surprisingly, not one widely shared within the conflict resolution literature. Rather, works on conflict resolution tend to focus on factors that are common to all conflicts rather than on what differentiates one from another. This chapter broadly argues that we should be wary of such theories. While important insights can be gained from them, relying on these types of general analyses alone is too likely to lead to poor, one-size-fits-all solutions, precisely because of the importance parties to conflict place on the specific

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<sup>7</sup> This finding is also evidence against the assertion that violence so hardens the positions of both sides that it makes conflicts into non-negotiable, all-or-nothing affairs. See Stephen John Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War: International Mediation in Zimbabwe, 1974-1980* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991), 18-20. Sometimes, of course, parties can only agree to a cessation of hostilities, and agreements also contain provisions dealing with issues other than post-conflict institutions, for instance, confidence-building measures, timing of implementation, etc. But when agreements move beyond cease-fires to include details of post-conflict institutions, goals as described here are typically incorporated.

<sup>8</sup> “Framework Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities,” Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, <http://www.hdcentre.org>.

<sup>9</sup> “Comprehensive Peace Agreement Between the Government of Liberia and the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) and Political Parties, Accra, 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2003,” United States Institute of Peace, Peace Agreements Digital Collection, [http://www.usip.org/library/pa/liberia/liberia\\_08182003\\_cpa.html](http://www.usip.org/library/pa/liberia/liberia_08182003_cpa.html).

<sup>10</sup> Barbara F. Walter, Civil War Resolution Dataset, <http://www-irps.ucsd.edu/academics/f-walter-data.php>.

political objectives they pursue. The critique offered here is important because even though the parties to conflict do typically recognize the need to incorporate group goals in negotiations, often conflict resolution is placed in the hands of outside powers. To the extent that the practices put in place by outside intervenors are theoretically grounded, getting the theory right remains critical.

Given the likely negotiating positions of both sides in ethnic civil wars, how should the different goals of rebel groups affect the negotiation process itself? There are a number of reasons to believe that state capture civil wars may be more amenable to peaceful resolution through negotiation. First, they may be more easily resolved because both sides in these conflicts recognize the need to live with the other after the conflict has ended.<sup>11</sup> Of course, when state capture rebels are very weak, the government has little incentive to negotiate, and when they are very strong the rebels have very little reason to negotiate, since in both situations one side sees an opportunity to completely define the post-conflict environment through force of arms. But if there is a reasonable chance that either side could be victorious in the end, peacefully defining rules by which the parties will live together after a conflict may become in the interest of all parties. In contrast, as separatists approach a level of strength at which victory appears possible, there becomes less to negotiate about, since the rebelling group and the ruling group would not have to live together if the rebel group is victorious.

Second, the incentives governments have to continue fighting or to negotiate are also critical to whether a civil war moves toward peaceful settlement. Because successful state capture movements are much more dangerous for governments, and the people who run them, than successful separatist movements, governments should be more willing to negotiate with

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<sup>11</sup> In this vein, state capture civil wars truly meet Licklider's definition of a conflict in which the participants must live together afterwards. See Roy Licklider, "The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945-1993," *American Political Science Review* 89:3 (September 1995), 681-690.



adversaries seeking to capture the state, all else being equal. Governments opposing state capture rebellions face the real possibility of being totally removed from power, with often deadly personal consequences for individual members of the ruling group.<sup>12</sup> State capture movements are also potentially more dangerous because they tend to attract allies from among other minority groups, and can therefore snowball in strength and quickly overwhelm the government. As described in chapter four, the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front in Ethiopia fought for about a decade and a half before it was able to exercise complete control over Tigray province. Little more than a year later, with the help of ethnic allies from other parts of Ethiopia, the group was in control of the capital, 250 miles to the south of Tigray, and ruling the entire country.

Another reason governments should be less likely to negotiate with separatists has to do with the norm of territorial integrity—governments, even those not facing such revolts themselves, tend to see separatist movements as illegitimate. Historically, “self-determination” has been seen as legitimate only in the context of anti-colonialism.<sup>13</sup> The Organization of African Unity (OAU) is most well-known for its stand against separatism, and this organization reiterated the norm of territorial integrity in 1993 in announcing its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (MCPMR).<sup>14</sup> The United Nations has repeatedly reaffirmed the principle of territorial integrity.<sup>15</sup> Even when third parties do not respect this

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<sup>12</sup> One of the primary motivating factors for political leaders in countries with violent politics, according to Steven R. David, “Internal War: Causes and Cures,” *World Politics* 49 (July 1997), 564. Barbara F. Walter also makes this point in *Committing to Peace: The Successful Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 13.

<sup>13</sup> James Busumtwi-Sam, “Redefining ‘Security’ After the Cold War: The OAU, the UN, and Conflict Management in Africa,” in *Civil Wars in Africa: Roots and Resolution*, ed. Taisier M. Ali and Robert O. Matthews (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 261-3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 268.

<sup>15</sup> Two United Nations General Assembly resolutions that affirm the norm of territorial integrity include “An Agenda for Peace,” A/RES/47/120 B, Sept. 20, 1993 and “Comprehensive Review of the Whole Question of Peace Keeping Operations in all their Aspects,” A/RES/48/42, Dec. 10, 1993.

principle, as the major powers clearly did not in allowing the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, governments facing revolts can be expected to exercise all of their power to delegitimize separatism, particularly governments of multiethnic states that have reason to fear the precedent-setting effects of giving in to separatists' demands.

However, as William Zartman notes about successful negotiations, “[t]o turn stalemate into reconciliation requires a policy of recognition and dialogue. This means, first, that the insurgency has to be recognized as a legitimate actor...”<sup>16</sup> In part because separatism is relatively taboo, governments should have a harder time recognizing the legitimacy of separatist rebels' claims than those of groups fighting for a share of power in the center. Because the demands of center-oriented rebels, or at least their stated demands, are less likely to violate major norms, they are seen as less extreme, and agreements are more likely to result when parties take less extreme positions to the negotiating table.<sup>17</sup>

These arguments challenge a number of other accounts that imply that separatist rebellions should be more easily resolved than state capture ones. For instance, a number of works assert that conflicts over divisible issues are much more easily resolved than conflicts over non-divisible issues,<sup>18</sup> and often view land—the issue in dispute in separatist fights—as much more unambiguously divisible than power at the center, which state capture rebels pursue. Additionally, the security dilemma, as it applies to internal conflict and conflict resolution, should predict more success for negotiating separatist as opposed to state capture rebellions, though for different reasons. The logic of the security dilemma suggests that the primary

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<sup>16</sup> I. William Zartman, “Conclusions: The Last Mile,” in *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, ed. I. William Zartman (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 335. For the role legitimacy plays, see 335-340.

<sup>17</sup> Pruitt and Carnevale, *Negotiation in Social Conflict*, 29.

<sup>18</sup> Pillar, *Negotiating Peace*, 24, specifically claims that civil wars are less negotiable because the issues being fought over are less easily divisible; also see Walter, *Committing to Peace*, Chapter 1.

obstacle to successful negotiation is security guarantees; therefore, both parties to a separatist conflict should be more willing to accept autonomy agreements because the separation entailed in such agreements enhances the security of both sides.<sup>19</sup>

In fact, Barbara Walter shows a strong, negative correlation between separatist wars<sup>20</sup> and successful negotiations.<sup>21</sup> Walter hypothesizes that the reason for her finding might be that parties' inability to work together, and therefore to negotiate with one another, leads to the desire for separation in the first place.<sup>22</sup> This conclusion is unlikely given the evidence presented in this dissertation: the causes of rebel group political objectives are deeply rooted and historical, and therefore would long precede any attempt to work out political arrangements with the ruling group. A better explanation for Walter's finding that separatist wars are less easily negotiated is the one offered here, namely, that the parties to state capture civil wars simply have more incentives to negotiate.

Moreover, while territory might be divisible, and opposing groups in a conflict may desire increased security, if the two sides to a conflict have different ideas about whether the rebelling group is part of the nation or not, there will be less room for compromise. The ideology motivating separatist rebels is one of belonging to a separate nation, which, coupled with the norm of self-determination, leads to a belief in the legitimacy of separating from the state. On the other hand, the grievances motivating state capture rebels are more often ones of

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<sup>19</sup> Autonomy does not in and of itself mean the physical separation of populations, as someone like Chaim Kaufmann would argue the logic of the security dilemma requires. However, security dilemma theorists should still see autonomy as increasing mutual security because it allows the rebelling group greater governance over its own affairs, which logically entails at least some retreat of central government authority from the rebelling group's territory. And, by increasing the security of the rebelling group, the security of the ruling group is boosted as well. While this logic should hold for most of the population of the autonomous area, autonomy may entail a reduction of security for members of the ruling population residing in that area.

<sup>20</sup> The category Walter employs, which she calls "territorial" wars, is roughly approximate to this dissertation's separatist conflicts.

<sup>21</sup> Walter, *Committing to Peace*, 81-2.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

equitable distribution of power within the state. The group feels a part of the state, and wishes to play what it believes is its deserved role in ruling the country, and both the ruling group and the rebelling group are likely to agree on the basic principle that the nation should comprise both groups. Once this is accepted, there are many different ways of dividing up power to the potential satisfaction of both sides. Taking these motivations into account, it becomes less surprising to observe fewer successful negotiations in separatist civil wars, because the issues at stake in separatist rebellions are actually less divisible than those involved in state capture rebellions.

While both sides in separatist conflicts may have relatively fewer incentives to negotiate, the story for outside powers is different. As separatist rebellions grow in strength, they should, in comparison with state capture civil wars, attract more involvement from outside powers eager to bring the conflict to a peaceful conclusion, for several reasons. First, many countries fear the precedent-setting effect of secession for minorities within their own borders. This fear should come into play particularly strongly for neighboring states that also have large numbers of the rebelling ethnic group. Similarly, a regional power might also get involved to help settle a separatist fight out of fear of the contagion effect of secessionist movements erupting around it.<sup>23</sup> For both these reasons, more international pressure may be brought to bear on separatist movements to negotiate their grievances relative to that placed on state capture movements.

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<sup>23</sup> See Stuart Hill and Donald Rothchild, "The Contagion of Political Conflict in Africa and the World," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 30:4 (December 1986), 716-735. Michael E. Brown has also written extensively on the international effects of internal conflict. While Brown discounts a simple "spillover" or "contagion" effect of civil war, he does note a number of different mechanisms by which internal conflict in one country can hurt the interests of a neighboring country, by decreasing regional stability, undermining local economies, creating crossborder flows of people and arms, and violating state authority in areas close to the conflict. "The Causes and Regional Dimensions of Internal Conflict," in *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict*, ed. Michael E. Brown (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 583. Each of these effects is more likely in separatist conflicts because by definition, the locus of conflict will remain closer to international borders, while as state capture rebellions progress successfully the physical location of conflict moves away from borders and toward the center of the country.

However, there is a major exception in which international pressure is more likely to favor the peaceful resolution of state capture, rather than separatist, conflicts, and this is when such pressure comes from a rebel group's patron.<sup>24</sup> In order to understand this, it is important to look at why such patrons originally entered into the relationship with their rebel client. There are three main types of patron-client relationships in civil wars, each likely to have its own particular impact on negotiations. Such relationships are either based on ideology, on a desire to change policies of the target country's government, or on satisfying a domestic constituency of the patron. The most notable examples of ideological patron-client relationships involved Soviet and U.S. support for socialist and anti-socialist rebel movements/governments, respectively, during the Cold War. In this relationship, the patron's goal is most often simply to hurt the other patron. Few of these cases were successfully negotiated,<sup>25</sup> presumably because each side in a conflict believed it could count on continuing support from its own patron, therefore decreasing any incentive to talk. Thus, serious negotiations to end civil wars in Angola, Mozambique, Nicaragua and elsewhere did not take place until the Cold War was ending or over.

The second type of relationship is one built by the patron in order to effect a change in the policies of the government against which the client is fighting. Typically, country A will

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<sup>24</sup> There is a great deal of focus in the conflict resolution literature on the importance of third-party support for negotiations to end civil wars. See, for example, Fen Osler Hampson, *Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed or Fail* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996), 210, and Walter, *Committing to Peace*. Touval and Zartman point out that international mediators in internal conflict often have other motives besides the strictly humanitarian; for instance, such mediators may be harmed by a continuation of the conflict, or they wish to exert influence over the parties involved in negotiations. The authors also note that a successful mediator will have leverage over the parties to the negotiations, another reason why patrons may be prone to involvement in mediation. See Saadia Touval and I. William Zartman, "Introduction: Mediation Theory," in *International Mediation in Theory and Practice*, ed. Saadia Touval and I. William Zartman (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 7-17. It has also been observed that neighboring states opposing a peace agreement are one of the key factors reducing the likelihood of successful implementation. Stephen John Stedman, "Policy Implications," in *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, ed. Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth M. Cousens (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 666. Thus the importance of understanding the role of such patrons in different types of cases. On the general role of spoilers, see Stephen John Stedman, "Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes," *International Security* 22:2 (Fall 1997), 5-53.

<sup>25</sup> Stedman, "Introduction," 1.

support insurgents in neighboring country B in order to pressure the government of country B to stop supporting insurgents in country A. One can cite numerous examples, including Iran and Iraq each supporting Kurdish rebels in the other country, Sudanese support for Eritrean rebel groups and Ethiopian support for Southern Sudanese separatists, and Mozambique's support for the African National Congress in South Africa while South Africa supported RENAMO rebels in Mozambique. In these cases and others like them, patrons have less of an interest in the actual success of the rebels than they do in having them continue to be a nuisance to the government they oppose, at least until government policy is changed to the patron's liking. Because state capture movements, if successful, would presumably change government policy in a way favorable to the patron's interests, patrons of this sort should have a greater interest in the ultimate success of such groups as compared to separatist clients. A successful separatist movement is much less useful to this type of patron because its very success removes any pressure the target government may have previously felt to change its policies. Because negotiations in state capture civil wars will be about the composition, and therefore by implication the policies, of the central government, patrons of state-capture clients should see negotiation as an alternative way of influencing policy, one that also comes with numerous side benefits (lower cost and less international disapproval compared to fueling a civil war, for example). Thus, patrons whose primary interest is changing the policy of the government their client is fighting should be more interested in helping the client resolve differences with the government if the rebellion is a state-capture one.

Finally, patron-rebel relationships are also established because helping the client satisfies a domestic constituency of the patron.<sup>26</sup> Often this occurs when the rebel group and the primary

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<sup>26</sup> Of course, ulterior motives may also be in play, and patrons of this sort may also play the role described in the examples above, of desiring more to hurt the state the rebel group is fighting than to benefit the interests of the rebel

backers of the patron government share ethnic ties.<sup>27</sup> Such patrons are also likely to view negotiations involving state capture and separatist clients differently, because patrons with a domestic constituency that shares ethnic ties with the client rebel group may have reason to fear the client successfully negotiating autonomy. First, if the ethnic group with ties to the client dominates the patron state, then client autonomy may be feared for the possibility of establishing a rival center of power for that ethnic group. If the ethnic group with ties to the client does not dominate the patron state, then client autonomy may be feared for the demonstration effect it could have, that is, for the possibility it could lead to separatism within the patron country. Thus, while such governments might like their domestic constituencies to believe they are doing everything possible to help the client achieve its goals, in practice a continuing separatist rebellion might be more in the patron's interests than a successful one.

### III. Consolidating Peace – Policy Prescriptions

The previous section analyzed how negotiations to end ethnic civil wars can be affected by the political objectives of the contending parties. Of course, negotiation is not the only way that civil wars can end—intervention by regional or global powers, as in East Timor and Bosnia, can also bring civil wars to a conclusion. Taking recent trends into account, increasing numbers of outside interventions to end such conflicts can be expected in the future,<sup>28</sup> sometimes including the forceful imposition of peace arrangements that may not have the consent of the contending

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group itself. Thus, while a Pakistani government may see political benefits domestically from helping Kashmiris gain status in negotiations with India, Islamabad may also see a continuing Kashmiri irritant to India to be in its best interests.

<sup>27</sup> Brown, "The Causes and Regional Dimensions..." 597. Examples include Iran's support of Farsi-speaking Tajik rebels and Shi'ite Hazara rebels in Afghanistan, Pakistan's support for Muslim Kashmiri rebels in India, and Armenian support for rebels in Ngorno-Karabakh.

<sup>28</sup> Adam Roberts, "The Crisis in UN Peacekeeping," *Survival* 36:3 (Autumn 1994), 99-105. Boutrous Boutrous-Ghali, "Supplement to An Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations," A/50/60-S/1995/1, 3, January 1995, reprinted in Boutrous Boutrous-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace* (New York: United Nations, 1995), 8.

parties.<sup>29</sup> Thus, it is worth considering how the different types of civil wars should affect the potential strategies of third-party peace enforcers.

The following section looks at two policy debates on ways to resolve ethnic conflict. While both offer invaluable theoretical insights into the conflict resolution process, one way to move these debates forward is to take the goals of the parties to a conflict into account. The first debate concerns the design of democratic institutions, and the second concerns policy decisions based on the security dilemma, particularly the forced separation of contending parties. Power sharing advocates and critics of forced separation both ignore the negative impact separatist desires can have on state-level institutions designed to reconcile competing parties. At the same time, advocates of group partition and some supporters of establishing federal institutions ignore the negative impact former rebels' center-oriented objectives can have on the enforced separation of opposing sides. In contrast, this section argues that insights from these two important debates can best be applied to peace enforcement in situations of ethnic civil wars by incorporating the goals of combatants. Specifically, solutions based on keeping parties apart from one another should only be implemented in separatist conflicts, and solutions based on getting contending parties to work together within a single national political system should only be implemented in state capture conflicts.

### *Democratic Institutions*

The first debate concerns the specific problem of how democracies can best handle ethnic tensions. The literature dealing with the management of ethnic politics in democracies is relevant for any discussion of ending ethnic civil wars by outside powers, even if few of the

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<sup>29</sup> Charles Dobbie distinguishes between peacekeeping and peace enforcement, not by the use of force, but by the identification of an enemy. See his "A Concept for Post-Cold War Peacekeeping," *Survival* 36:3 (Autumn 1994), 121-48.



cases of rebellions examined in this dissertation took place in democratic or democratizing societies. This is because democratic institutions are nearly always part of the arrangements imposed by third-party interveners. Thus, theories of how democracies can best handle ethnic conflict in the wake of civil wars are highly relevant to policymakers in states, like the U.S., that frequently involve themselves in the resolution of internal conflicts.

The academic debate over which democratic institutions are best suited to mitigate ethnic conflict is an old one, and is based largely on the idea that majoritarian democracy is destabilizing in heterogeneous societies because it can permanently disenfranchise ethnic minorities, who will therefore lose a stake in maintaining a democratic system.<sup>30</sup> Thus, basic democratic institutions must be modified in order that ethnic groups in plural societies are able to live with one another peacefully. From this debate one can derive prescriptions that are appropriate for meeting the concerns of both separatist and state capture rebels. Yet since this debate does not recognize the distinction between different types of civil conflict, the policy recommendations that emerge from it tend to be one-size-fits-all solutions that are likely to invite future revisionist threats when former combatants' political objectives are not met.

One of the most well-known set of recommendations is Arend Lijphart's consociationalism, which argues that societies best manage ethnic relations by allowing ethnic groups to individually handle those affairs that concern only themselves, with ethnic community leaders working out accommodations with one another at the center over issues of concern to all.<sup>31</sup> For consociationalists, power sharing and autonomy are not distinct solutions but rather

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<sup>30</sup> See the works by Lijphart and Horowitz cited in this section below, as well as Timothy D. Sisk, *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996).

<sup>31</sup> Lijphart has written many works expressing these views, including Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), but they are summarized nicely in Arend Lijphart, "The Power-Sharing Approach," in *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*, ed. Joseph V. Montville (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990), 491-509.

different components of a single political package that should best accommodate “contending” ethnic groups.<sup>32</sup> According to Lijphart, “[t]he best way for a government to prevent secession is a pledge not to resist it, accompanied by an offer of fair and effective power-sharing.”<sup>33</sup>

Consociationalism prescribes power-sharing for all contending groups, and therefore the different political objectives such groups seek do not play a role in the theory. That is, there is no recognition that some groups may actively seek power at the center, while others may wish nothing to do with the center at all. Rather, power sharing is seen as a means of managing a sort of general discontent that if left unchecked would naturally lead to secessionism.

Donald Horowitz shares consociationalists’ concern with the negative effects of majoritarian democracy in pluralist societies.<sup>34</sup> The institutions Horowitz advocates as alternatives are designed to create incentives for politicians to reach out across ethnic lines, and to foster competition within, rather than between, ethnic groups, and at lower levels of government than at the center. Thus, Horowitz offers a variety of electoral innovations, including alternative vote schemes that encourage politicians to campaign for the second, third, etc. vote of members of other groups,<sup>35</sup> as well as the establishment of federalism in order to foster competition within groups and reduce national tensions.<sup>36</sup> However, like Lijphart, Horowitz does not base his prescriptions on the different political objectives ethnic groups seek;

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<sup>32</sup> Lijphart, “The Power-Sharing Approach,” 493-4.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 494.

<sup>34</sup> Donald L. Horowitz, *A Democratic South Africa?: Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), and Donald L. Horowitz, “Ethnic Conflict Management for Policymakers,” in *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*, ed. Joseph V. Montville (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990), 115-130.

<sup>35</sup> Horowitz, “Ethnic Conflict Management for Policymakers,” 125-9.

<sup>36</sup> The argument is that by administratively dividing the country into a large number of fairly-homogeneous units, political fights take place away from the center, and among, rather than between, members of different ethnic groups, thus reducing country-wide ethnic tensions. See Horowitz, “Ethnic Conflict Management for Policymakers,” 123.

instead, they are based on the general assumption that groups desire to share the same political space, but are wary of losing power to opposing groups.

Many other scholars have entered this debate, similarly ignoring ethnic group political objectives. Frank Cohen argues that a combination of federalism, proportional representation, and multi-partism is the best way to mitigate ethnic conflicts in democracies, because together these institutions decrease the threshold of political victory (and thus are likely to be more acceptable to minorities), disperse points of political victory, and increase opportunities for political victory.<sup>37</sup> Fred Riggs advocates improved integration of members of an ethnic minority into society (eg., through affirmative action programs) as well as, when necessary, policies granting administrative autonomy.<sup>38</sup> According to this author, the need to have policies that both integrate and grant autonomy arises from a dichotomy the author sees within the target ethnic group itself—that there are some individuals who are more “modern” and therefore willing to participate in a modern, industrial democracy, and some who are more “traditional,” and therefore interested in preserving the traditional rights and culture of the ethnic group.<sup>39</sup> Needless to say, this dichotomy is not very helpful. As with the prescriptions offered by Horowitz and Lijphart, those put forward by others who have engaged them in debate do not recognize that mobilized ethnic groups have different political ambitions, and that the institutions established to consolidate peace will have the greatest chance of success if they satisfy these ambitions.

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<sup>37</sup> Frank S. Cohen, “Proportional Versus Majoritarian Ethnic Conflict Management in Democracies,” *Comparative Political Studies* 30:5 (October 1997), 607-630.

<sup>38</sup> Fred W. Riggs, “Ethnonational Rebellions and Viable Constitutionalism,” *International Political Science Review* 16:4 (October 1995), 390-1.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 393.

### *Security Dilemma Implications*

Like the prescriptions offered by scholars of democratic institutions, those engaged in a more recent debate about the policy implications of the security dilemma for civil conflict also tend to disregard the political objectives of the contending parties. The security dilemma has been used both to explain violence and to undergird theories of conflict resolution.<sup>40</sup> The primary assertion of security dilemma-based theories of ethnic conflict management is that consolidating peace is mainly a problem of increasing the security of the parties involved. Most prominently, a number of authors in this tradition have advocated partition and the forced separation of warring parties as the best way to restore a sense of mutual security and create a lasting peace.<sup>41</sup> Among these authors, Richard Betts most bluntly describes the solution as ethnic cleansing in order to prevent ethnic cleansing.<sup>42</sup> A number of other scholars have advocated partition as well, including John Mearsheimer and Stephen Van Evera, who argued that power sharing in Bosnia was unworkable because of “deep hatreds unleashed since Yugoslavia’s breakup,” and that partition represented the only solution that would bolster the security of all sides.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps the most well-known proponent of separation is Chaim Kaufmann, who proffers a general argument that the separation of warring parties into defensible

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<sup>40</sup> Among security dilemma theorists who have applied the idea to conflict resolution are John Mearsheimer and Stephen Van Evera, “When Peace Means War,” *The New Republic*, December 18, 1995, 16-21, Barbara F. Walter and Jack Snyder, ed., *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), Walter, *Committing to Peace*, David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, “Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict,” *International Security* 21:2 (Autumn 1996), 41-75, and Chaim Kaufmann, “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars,” *International Security* 20:4 (Spring, 1996) 136-175.

<sup>41</sup> One work, certainly a minority viewpoint, claims that *power sharing* is actually successful because it reduces insecurity, but it lumps territorial autonomy within a very broad definition of power sharing. Caroline Hartzell and Matthew Hoddie, “Institutionalizing Peace: Power Sharing and Post-Civil War Conflict Management,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47:2 (April 2003), 318-332.

<sup>42</sup> Richard K. Betts, “The Delusion of Impartial Intervention,” *Foreign Affairs* (Nov/Dec, 1994), 20ff.

<sup>43</sup> Mearsheimer and Van Evera, “When Peace Means War.”

enclaves, with population transfers overseen by the international community if necessary, is the best way to end civil wars.<sup>44</sup>

Other works explore different implications of the security dilemma for conflict mitigation and management. For instance, Barbara Walter advocates the need for strong international guarantors of peace treaties ending civil wars because of concerns emanating specifically from the security dilemma.<sup>45</sup> All parties to a conflict may desire peace, and support an accord to end a war, but in the absence of a powerful authority to enforce that peace, and with all groups still armed and therefore representing a threat to one another, the groups have strong incentives to distrust one another's stated commitment to ending violence. Strong, third-party intervention is needed to provide credible guarantees to combatants that a negotiated settlement will be adhered to by all sides.

However, because the factors that create the security dilemma—fear, violence, and the threat of violence—are universal in situations of ethnic civil wars, security dilemma-based theories do not take differences in the type of internal conflict into account. Thus, one author argues that "...feasibility is the first question that must be considered when weighing whether to partition a country,"<sup>46</sup> and partition should be considered for those conflicts that are "intractable."<sup>47</sup> And Walter sees third-party enforcement of peace agreements as necessary to "...integrate the previously warring factions into a single state..."<sup>48</sup> The relative applicability of security dilemma-based prescriptions to different types of conflict is not considered by those who write in this tradition.

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<sup>44</sup> Kaufmann, "Possible and Impossible...", 161-65.

<sup>45</sup> Walter, *Committing to Peace*.

<sup>46</sup> Daniel L. Byman, *Keeping the Peace: Lasting Solutions to Ethnic Conflicts* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 169.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>48</sup> Walter, *Committing to Peace*, 6. Territorial autonomy is given mention only as a possible intermediate step to "further reduce transitional vulnerabilities" prior to a full-fledged peace that involves power-sharing. *Ibid.*, 31.

Critics of partition based approaches are just as likely to ignore group political objectives, to the detriment of developing appropriate policy measures. The main reason for this is that partition opponents tend to base their criticism on norms respecting state borders and the reconciliation of previously warring parties, rather than to engage partition advocates on the merits of the theory. Territorial integrity and the reintegration of previously-warring ethnic groups into the same society are seen by these critics as necessary components of any post-conflict institutions, particularly since past partitions have often been extremely violent.<sup>49</sup> As Daniel Byman writes, "...there remains a tremendous bias for the continuation of current borders even in the face of constant unrest and repeated mass killing."<sup>50</sup> Chaim Kaufmann is correct in noting that his critics take the issue of reintegration of warring parties to be a moral one.<sup>51</sup> So, even while some scholars recognize that the relative appropriateness of partition is context dependent,<sup>52</sup> many remain firmly set against changing international borders. The idea of nation building, of getting former combatants to reconcile and work together, has reached the point of a norm.

### *The Need to Take Goals into Account*

Conflict resolution theories that ignore the political objectives of former combatants only invite future revisionist challenges, whether those strategies involve the separation of former

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<sup>49</sup> So, for example, Radha Kumar, "The Troubled History of Partition," *Foreign Affairs* (Jan/Feb 1997), 22ff, argues that partition will trigger further conflict because of the existence of dispersed or overlapping ethnic groups that are not confined to neat geographic boundaries, and that it will give rise to weak civil institutions that will hamper political and economic development.

<sup>50</sup> Byman, *Keeping the Peace*, 174. Other authors make a similar point, including Lapidot, *Autonomy*, 172.

<sup>51</sup> Chaim Kaufman, "When All Else Fails: Ethnic Population Transfers and Partitions in the Twentieth Century," *International Security* 23:2 (Fall 1998), 125-56.

<sup>52</sup> As Sisk writes, "[d]espite the inherent problems of partition, the international community should not assume that the borders of an existing state are sacrosanct. The principle decision the international community must face in any given violent ethnic conflict is whether separation or power sharing (living together) is the more achievable, sustainable, and just outcome." Sisk, *Power Sharing and International Mediation*, xii. Samuel Huntington makes a similar point. Samuel P. Huntington, "Forward," in *Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies*, Occasional Papers in International Affairs No. 29, ed. Eric A. Nordlinger (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Center for International Affairs, 1972), vii.

enemies through formal partition or federalist arrangements, or the implementation of power-sharing institutions at the center. The reason is that rebelling groups take their objectives very seriously. As described in this dissertation, they are often the product long-standing historical processes, they remain consistent over time, and they are important enough to those fighting for them that peace agreements drafted by contending parties almost uniformly contain provisions to satisfy those objectives. Moreover, former fighters often have the weapons and organization to violently derail post-conflict institutions if their goals are not met. While outside powers intervening to end civil wars may be able to enforce unpopular measures in the short term, their long-term objective is usually to withdraw and allow the contending parties to enforce the peace themselves. For these reasons the long-term success of conflict resolution strategies imposed on contending parties is dependent on how well they are tailored to meet the political objectives the groups were fighting for in the first place.

Thus, trying to end state capture civil wars by relying solely on the concerns expressed by security dilemma theorists will lead to a whole new set of problems.<sup>53</sup> While there is no doubt that the basis of the security dilemma, fear, plays a large role in all cases of civil wars, as a catalyst of violence, and as a hindrance to its peaceful resolution, the dynamics unleashed by fear take place within a broader context defined by the competing objectives of the combatants. It is not just governments that place value on national unity; many ethnic rebels do so as well. While Byman argues that partition can "...fulfill status aspirations [and] satisfy hegemonic aspirations...",<sup>54</sup> in addition to lessening the insecurity that comes from having to live side by

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<sup>53</sup> Another reason against relying solely on the security dilemma in thinking about civil war resolution is that security dilemma-based prescriptions typically ignore the propensity for violence between former allies after conflicts have ended. That is, separation may possibly end one conflict while setting the stage for another. Roy Licklider, "Conflict Among Former Allies after Civil War Settlement: Sudan, Zimbabwe, Chad, and Lebanon," *Journal of Peace Research* 36:1 (January 1999), 35-54.

<sup>54</sup> Byman, *Keeping the Peace*, 173.

side with one's enemy, this is true only to the extent that those aspirations are separatist. In a substantial number of cases, as detailed in this dissertation, aspirations are directed toward the center, and will not be satisfied through forced separation. Moreover, while the security dilemma predicts that separation will reduce the need for outside peace guarantors, if separatism is imposed on unwilling parties, outside guarantors may be even more necessary in order to prevent challenges to these unwanted arrangements.

Of course, just because a solution is the most appropriate one, does not mean its implementation will be problem free. Power sharing institutions may be necessary to satisfy the demands of state capture rebels, but they are also prone to invite resistance from members of majority groups, since power-sharing gives minorities political status they would not be able to gain through the ballot box, and may therefore be seen as illegitimate. Moreover, as shown in chapter two, state capture contests are more likely in countries that have ethnic majorities. Thus, while governments may prefer power sharing arrangements over being forcibly removed from power, after the implementation of such arrangements they will still often be left with the problem of managing discontent from a majority population. Such situations will require creative political solutions to prevent outbidding strategies of hard-line rivals within a majority party from derailing peace, and may also require the type of outside security guarantees favored by neo-realists like Walter.

If uncritical reliance on the ideas of the security dilemma by policymakers can result in the forced separation of groups that had no desire to be separated in the first place, a different problem emerges from the enforcement of norms stressing national unity following separatist civil wars. Here the danger lies in forced power sharing between groups at least one of which had previously fought to separate from the state. Neorealists rightly point to the danger inherent



in power sharing that derives from the lack of security between groups forced to live unwillingly in the same state.<sup>55</sup> But another danger emerges from the unrealized goals of combatants: separatists forced by outside intervention to share power in a state they do not feel a legitimate part of are likely to resume their fight as soon as circumstances allow, since power sharing does not meet their political objective of self-determination.<sup>56</sup>

Unfortunately, the taboo against redrawing borders is strong enough that in certain situations it may even preclude territorial autonomy measures being offered to separatist groups out of fear that such measures are stepping stones toward future secession. This is more likely to be the case when an opposition party within the majority group is strong enough to exercise a veto over peace arrangements.<sup>57</sup> As a result, practitioners should develop solutions to best accommodate separatist rebels in unitary states. One possible way to mitigate the problems inherent in denying the political objectives of separatist groups is to design non-territorial autonomy measures, like separate laws governing family relations, or the establishment of religious courts for ethnic groups that are religious minorities.<sup>58</sup> The separate legal system available to Muslims in India is one model. This system gives Muslims a measure of autonomy,

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<sup>55</sup> The reduction of insecurity *within* power-sharing arrangements is a topic that deserves much more attention than it has received. Neorealists are rightly concerned about security, but to end the discussion simply by calling for partition, as described above, is to do a disservice. Power-sharing may not always be the best solution to ethnic conflict, but there will be circumstances in which it is put in place, and neorealists should work on addressing their concerns with security to help create the best arrangements possible. One avenue to explore might be the internationalization of security services and/or key government functions like the judiciary.

<sup>56</sup> There is another reason besides security arguments and the arguments put forward concerning political goals against integrating separatists through power-sharing agreements. Particularly to the extent that separatists have been successful at carving out and consolidating *de facto* states over the length of a protracted conflict, the difficulties of power sharing will include the practical problems of integrating two separately functioning polities. See Charles King, "The Benefits of Ethnic War: Understanding Eurasia's Unrecognized States," *World Politics* 53 (July 2001), 524-52. An example of this problem is the current situation in Iraq involving integrating the *de facto* independent Kurdish enclave with the rest of the Iraqi state.

<sup>57</sup> Such fears are commonly expressed in times of negotiations with separatist rebels. For example, in Sri Lanka right-wing Sinhalese parties strongly objected to autonomy measures being offered to Tamil rebels. Similar objections were raised in Indonesia to the prospect of autonomy for Aceh, out of fear that it would lead to secession along the lines of East Timor.

<sup>58</sup> Arend Lijphart promotes the idea that autonomy is a component of any proper strategy to mitigate ethnic tensions, and that non-territorial autonomy is simply the version one would want to promote in societies in which the contending ethnic groups are not territorially concentrated. See his "The Power-Sharing Approach," 494.

but because it is not connected to territory, it does not, from the point of view of the majority, threaten to become a slippery slope to secession.

The distinction between state capture and separatist rebellions has a number of other implications for conflict management. Most of the above discussion has centered around how to end ethnic civil wars through negotiation. Of course, sometimes conflicts are ended by the military victory of one of the contending sides. When rebels are victorious, the post-conflict environment will obviously look very different following separatist as opposed to state capture rebellions. One implication is that the winning side in a successful state capture rebellion is likely to face more problems of internal factionalism than a successful separatist movement. Since most countries are multi-ethnic, and since capturing the center requires conquering land not part of the rebel ethnic group's home territory, rebellions aimed at capturing the state are likely to require allies from other ethnic groups. These groups will demand a seat at the table and a say in any post-conflict arrangements. While the TPLF fought alone or with one major ally for most of its 14-year civil war to topple Ethiopia's government, for the final push on the capital it gathered ethnic allies from around the country into an umbrella political organization called the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). After the government fell in 1989, a great deal of Ethiopian politics centered around power sharing within the winning EPRDF coalition. Although separatist groups may very well have unhappy internal factions and/or minority groups of their own to contend with, the problem of addressing demands by different groups is likely to be relatively less acute.

Finally, one negative, long-term consequence of victory in state capture conflicts may be their higher potential to recur. A successful state capture group displaces its enemy from power, immediately creating a potential revisionist threat to the new government. A successful

separatist movement may face future threats from the rump state it left behind, but such a challenge would face a formidable (and ironic) obstacle: the strong international norm against violating state sovereignty, in addition to the practical, material difficulties of recapturing lost territory. For these reasons, outside powers interested in the long-term peace and stability of a country facing a civil war may find that ending a conflict by helping to secure the military victory of the rebelling group may be more appropriate in cases of separatism.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

This chapter argues that our understanding of the resolution of ethnic civil wars—from negotiated solutions, to the implementation by outside powers of arrangements designed to institutionalize peace, to the military victory of one of the opposing sides—benefits from taking into account the political objectives ethnic rebels seek. In terms of negotiations, rebels and the governments they oppose have very different incentives to strike bargains with one another depending on whether the rebellion is separatist or aimed at capturing the state. Based on these incentives, all else being equal state capture rebellions should be more easily resolved through negotiations than separatist rebellions.

Much of the chapter deals with situations in which civil wars are ended by the intervention of outside powers. Policymakers in states that may intervene to end ethnic civil wars are particularly advised to take rebel group goals into account. When ethnic groups rebel against the state, they are often pursuing objectives that are the product of long-standing historical and cultural processes. Rebels take these goals very seriously, and they are not easily altered. Unless post-conflict institutions satisfy the objectives of the contending parties, a long-term peace that will allow interveners to eventually withdraw and hand over responsibilities to local parties is not likely to result. Specifically, the chapter argues that some measure of group

autonomy must be granted to separatists, and some measure of power sharing at the center granted to state capture groups, in order for peace to have the best long-term chances of success. These solutions are found within the broad packages of political goals that chapter one identifies as motivating ethnic rebellions, and are therefore likely to be acceptable to rebel movements because they offer some movement toward their political objectives. If a rebelling ethnic group is ready to pursue peace, these arrangements allow the group to move in the same “direction” they were previously fighting—either away from or toward the state. Moreover, at least under some circumstances, states will find these arrangements preferable to outright secession, the total loss of power, or the continuation of a protracted and costly war.

Could one argue that the theory presented earlier in this dissertation contradicts the prescriptions offered in this chapter? Chapter three puts forward an argument that autonomy creates feelings of difference and the desire for self-rule.<sup>59</sup> If past autonomy leads to separatist claims, how can granting autonomy in the present day quell those very same claims? Similarly, chapter four argues that the political integration of an ethnic group with the state leads to state capture claims. The power-sharing solutions this chapter proposes to end state capture rebellions are clearly examples of political integration. Thus, one might see the solutions offered here as likely to reinforce rebel groups’ absolutist goals, rather than put an end to such claims.

But one must distinguish two separate ideas here: groups engaged in violence being offered autonomy or power sharing in order to end that violence, versus groups having autonomy or being integrated into the state before they have mobilized in the first place. With time,

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<sup>59</sup> This is similar to arguments put forward by several authors on the relationship between autonomy and separatism. Cornell argues that autonomy increases the chances of violent secessionism by increasing ethnic group cohesion, and therefore its capacity and willingness to act. Svante E. Cornell, “Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective,” *World Politics* 54 (Jan, 2002), 252. Similarly, Leff argues that in periods of democratization, those states that are both multinational and organized along federal lines are prone to dissolution. Carol Skalnik Leff, “Democratization and Disintegration in Multinational States: The Breakup of the Communist Federations,” *World Politics* 51:2 (January 1999), 205-235.

autonomy produces the desire for separatism, and integration shapes the political orientation of ethnic groups toward the center. But when ethnic groups are rebellious, they have proven the desire and capacity to act already. As a result, governments can hardly fear more by granting them autonomy or a share of state power. The prescriptions this chapter offers to mitigate ethnic violence do not create group political objectives; rather, the chapter accepts those objectives as given, and offers prescriptions as a means to satisfy them.

## Chapter Six

### Conclusion

#### I. Findings

This dissertation began with a simple question about ethnic rebellions: why do some rebel groups aim to take over governments while others try to separate from them? State capture rebellions in particular appeared to present a number of puzzles. First, taking over a state seems inherently more dangerous than separation, since the former means having to rule over other populations, particularly those that were removed from power, that are likely to be hostile to the rebelling group. Second, within the academic literature there is a widely-held assumption that ethnic rebellions must be separatist.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, many groups over the past 50 years have pursued state capture.

In order to develop a theory of the goals ethnic rebels pursue, the dissertation began by looking to existing works on the causes of rebellions. Many studies argue that opportunity is the primary motivating factor. Scholars assume that most groups wish to revolt, and they will do so when they can. One can infer, therefore, that if opportunity is the prime factor explaining the occurrence of rebellions, it might also explain the direction rebellions take. Thus, separatist rebellions would be more likely when factors are present that make separatism, as opposed to state capture, more feasible, and vice versa.

Chapter one proposes a different argument: that rebels pursue particular goals not because they are easier, but because their accomplishment would satisfy certain grievances held

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<sup>1</sup> This assumption takes on two forms: ignoring state capture rebellions, and categorizing them as nonethnic simply because of their aims, rather than on any characteristics of the rebelling group itself. See chapter one for a discussion.

by the ethnic groups those rebels represent. The theory assumes populations hold certain beliefs about the proper relationship between that group and the state, and predicts that a rebellion will be separatist when the group believes it deserves to rule itself on its own territory, and will be aimed at the center when the group believes that it deserves to rule the country as a whole.

Grievance-based theories have a lengthy pedigree in the ethnic conflict literature. Again, the focus of these theories tends to be on the initiation of conflict, rather than the direction such conflict takes. But from these works one can infer the political objectives ethnic rebels will pursue. Chapter one develops a theoretical link between grievances and goals. It argues that grievances affect the relative legitimacy with which different rebel group goals are viewed by the population. Political organizations that put forward programs that satisfy group grievances are more likely to elicit popular support. The theory presented further asserts that the content of grievances is a function of the degree of cultural and historical differences between the rebelling ethnic group, on the one hand, and the state and its dominant group on the other hand. Groups that have major cultural differences with the population that dominates the state, and that have been ruled separately in the past, are more likely to see themselves as distinct peoples deserving of the right to rule themselves in the future. Groups that are culturally similar, and have much history in common with the state and its ruling group, are more likely to focus their political grievances on their relative position vis-à-vis the ruling group within existing state structures.

Chapter two tests these two competing hypotheses—one based on grievances and the other on opportunity—across a new dataset of large-scale ethnic rebellions since World War II. The findings presented in this chapter show that our ability to understand the goals of ethnic rebellions is greatest when group grievances are taken into account. Despite a strong

relationship between feasibility and the direction of ethnic rebellions,<sup>2</sup> statistical tests demonstrate that the strongest explanation of rebel group goals incorporates grievances. Following the theory presented in chapter one, the statistical analysis examines the roles played by cultural similarity and historical autonomy, testing the effects of major language and religious differences between the rebelling group and the state's dominant group, and the rebelling group's history of territorial autonomy in three distinct historical periods. Each of these are shown to be highly significant in terms of their effect on group goals, and in the direction the grievance-based theory predicts. The greater the extent of cultural differences between the rebelling group and the state's dominant group, and the more distinct periods in which the rebelling group had autonomy from the state, the greater the likelihood that the rebellion would be separatist. Rebellions that were culturally similar to the state's dominant group, and that had less autonomy in the past, were more likely to pursue state capture.

Moreover, the chapter offers evidence that past autonomy does not affect group goals simply by increasing the feasibility of separatism. As noted, the analysis codes rebelling ethnic groups according to whether they had autonomy in three separate historical periods, each of which is tested for its effect on rebel group goals. One can assume that autonomy in more recent periods may have an effect on the feasibility of pursuing a separatist rebellion, by creating institutions of self rule and personnel familiar with those institutions that may still have an influence in the present day. The analysis offered in the chapter finds that autonomy as far back as the pre-colonial period—from which any feasibility-effects of autonomy are likely to be weakest—is a highly significant predictor of contemporary rebel group political objectives.

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<sup>2</sup> As the opportunity theory predicts, as relative group size increases, and as country area decreases, the probability that ethnic rebellions will be aimed at capturing the state grows.



While the statistical analysis demonstrates a clear correlation between the grievance-based variables and the goals of ethnic rebellions, it does not establish how that relationship works in practice. The two chapters that follow explore the mechanisms by which cultural and historical differences shape the goals of rebellions, by presenting two case studies of ethnic rebellions in Ethiopia, one separatist and one aimed at capturing the state. Chapter three is a case study of the 1961-1989 Eritrean separatist revolt against Ethiopia. The chapter details how Eritrean rebels, as well as a generation of Eritrean nationalists before them, saw cultural differences between Eritreans and the ruling Amhara Ethiopians, as well as Eritrea's long history of political autonomy from the Ethiopian state, as legitimizing the idea that Eritrea deserved to be ruled separately.

Early Eritrean separatists were culturally distinct from the ruling group of Ethiopia in terms of both religion and language. Moreover, Eritrea was autonomous from Ethiopia under three successive administrations prior to being fully incorporated into Ethiopia 1962. It was an Italian colony from the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> Century until 1936, when all of Ethiopia came under Italian rule. During this time, Italy established Italian laws and slowly brought Eritreans into the administration of the Eritrean government. Under a British administration from 1942-1952, administrative, judicial, and educational reforms were instituted that gave Eritreans an even greater role in running their own affairs. During a ten-year period when Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia after the British left, Eritreans lived under a whole set of institutions and laws that distinguished them from other Ethiopians.

The chapter details how cultural distinctiveness and past autonomy were viewed by Eritrean nationalists and the wider population as distinguishing Eritreans from their Ethiopian neighbors, and as a consequence making Eritreans deserving of self rule. Cultural differences

were seen as helping constitute Eritreans as a separate people and therefore one deserving of self rule. Past autonomy affected the political objectives put forward by Eritrean nationalists in two ways. First, both the Italian and British administrations were seen as further distinguishing Eritreans from Ethiopians, who were viewed as less advanced and therefore less capable of competent administration in Eritrea. Second, the revocation of autonomous institutions by Ethiopia during the federal period was seen as fundamentally unfair, and requiring redress. The desire to reclaim an autonomy that was once held was repeatedly expressed both by elites and leaders of nationalist groups, as well as by the general population through public expressions of dissent that would follow each time an autonomous institution was taken away by Ethiopian authorities.

Chapter four examines the state capture rebellion fought from 1975-1989 by the small Tigrayan ethnic group that occupies a province in Northern Ethiopia directly across the border from Eritrea. In contrast to the Muslims who formed the bulk of the membership of the early Eritrean separatist movements, the Tigrayan ethnic group has much more in common with the Ethiopian state and with its ruling Amhara group. Tigrayans and Amharas share a centuries-old "Abyssinian" tradition, which combines common religious and cultural elements, and is associated with the idea of a continuous, unified Ethiopian state that originated in the first centuries AD, in what is now Tigray. Moreover, Tigrayans claim to have played a leading role in this tradition. The symbols used and the writings put forward by the Tigrayan rebel group that sought to capture the Ethiopian state clearly venerate this Abyssinian culture.

In addition, in more recent times Tigrayans and Amharas have interacted under state-run institutions much more commonly than Eritreans and Amharas. One of the most important spheres of interaction was a higher educational system that produced a multi-ethnic, national

political movement in the 1960s. This movement developed a political platform that was one of the main intellectual predecessors of the ideology put forward by the Tigrayan rebels shortly thereafter. Just as the Eritrean case study argued that a combination of cultural differences and political autonomy helped shape the separatist goals of the Eritrean rebellion, chapter four argues that cultural similarities and a tradition of political interaction had a similar influence on the state capture direction of the Tigrayan revolt.

Following the case studies, chapter five turned to conflict management, discussing the implications of the analysis of rebel group goals for the resolution of ethnic civil wars. Few students of conflict resolution in cases of civil wars take the political objectives of the groups fighting those wars very seriously, in part because of the widely held assumption that ethnic rebellions must be separatist. In contrast, the chapter analyzes how rebel group goals should affect both the process by which rebels and governments negotiate peace, as well as the likely success of different kinds of post-conflict institutions. The chapter argues that negotiations to end state capture wars may be more easily concluded than similar negotiations to end separatist wars. Moreover, in contrast to the focus of certain academic and policy-making communities, conflict management strategies are much more likely to succeed to the extent that they take the goals of rebel movements seriously. Specifically, governments and separatist rebels are likely to find that a successful compromise will involve autonomy arrangements, while peace between governments and state capture movements is likely to require power sharing arrangements at the center.

## II. Conclusion and Implications for Future Work

That grievances are a key factor in explaining rebel group objectives has been one of the dissertation's main themes. Of course, any rebelling group holds grievances against the state, and perhaps it is the universality of grievances in situations of conflict that has led so many to ignore their effects. After all, if grievances are present across all types of conflict, then they do not seem able to explain why one type of conflict occurs as opposed to another. However, this dissertation argues that it is the content of such grievances that matters greatly in determining the type of rebellion that emerges. Specifically, groups whose members consider themselves a separate people from the state's dominant group, and feel that they have been unfairly deprived of the right to rule over their "own" territory, will likely pursue separatism if they rebel. On the other hand, groups that share cultural characteristics with the state's dominant group, and whose members feel unfairly deprived of their political rights within existing state structures, are likely to pursue state capture.

The grievances that explain the goals of ethnic rebellions relate to feelings of group distinctiveness and the connection between a people and a territory. This combination brings to mind the concept of nationalism, since most definitions of nationalism focus on the political actions of ethnic populations,<sup>3</sup> specifically the mobilization of such groups to establish or strengthen political bonds with a particular territory. Thus, nations are seen as "sovereign,"<sup>4</sup> and nationalism as the desire for sovereignty,<sup>5</sup> and as the pursuit of "[t]he right of individuals to

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<sup>3</sup> See Walker Connor, "A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group, is a..." in *Nationalism*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, 36-46 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 45. Works on civic nationalism, in which the connection between nation and ethnic group is less clear, are an exception. See Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 9-12.

<sup>4</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 6.

<sup>5</sup> Elie Kedourie, "Nationalism and Self-Determination," in *Nationalism*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, 49-55 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 49.

choose the state to which they belong, that is, to establish territorial political structures corresponding to their consciousness of group identity...'<sup>6</sup> The dissertation suggests that future work exploring the connection between nationalism and the goals of ethnic rebellions is warranted, because the territory with which the “consciousness of group identity” is associated is variable, and in many cases seems to confound expectations found within the nationalism literature. This literature tends to see nationalist movements as either pursuing sovereignty over a subcomponent of an existing polity (corresponding to the group’s “own” territory), as an irredentist project that would unify the group with ethnic brethren in a neighboring state, or as a movement associated with a “nation” already congruent with state borders.<sup>7</sup> But more work is needed to explain, from the perspective of theories of nationalism, rebellions launched by groups whose members clearly associate with a sub-component of the state’s territory, yet whose political efforts are aimed at taking over the entire state rather than separating from it.

In the Tigray case presented in chapter four, the ideology of the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front was clearly nationalist in terms of its strong connection to the history and people of Tigray, yet at the same time its political objective was always to take over the Ethiopian state as a whole. In addition, in many ways Tigrayan nationalism identified with a broad Abyssinian culture that was shared with other groups within Ethiopia (including the ruling Amhara group against which the TPLF fought), and was connected to the idea of a unified Ethiopian state. The Tigrayan case shows that shared claims to the center can result not just from distinct and competing national identities, but from overlapping national identities as well.

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<sup>6</sup> John Armstrong, “Nations Before Nationalism,” in *Nationalism*, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, 140-147 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 141. Anthony Smith, who traces modern nations from older ethnic groups he calls *ethnies*, defines these in part as groups that have “an association with a specific territory.” Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 32.

<sup>7</sup> The nationalist project in this case might target minority groups, or aim at refocusing the political attachments of domestic constituents from, say, class or economic parties to a ruling nationalist party, or aim to expand the state’s borders to incorporate members of the nation living in other states. National Socialism in Germany from the 1920s fits all three of these categories.

This finding suggests the need for research on how overlapping as opposed to separate national identities emerge, as well as on how these different identities produce different political claims.

The dissertation also shows that when it comes to explaining the objectives of ethnic rebellions, history and politics are of great importance. The grievances that shape the goals of ethnic rebellions are historically-constituted, in the sense that they often derive from centuries of interaction between the ethnic group in question and the state and its dominant ethnic group. The descent myth that links the Tigrayan people to the Ethiopian state is many hundreds of years old, and is based at least in part on the existence of an empire that flourished nearly two-thousand years ago. Moreover, these grievances are politically-constituted in the sense that state actions play a large role in their formation. Chapter four tells how this descent myth may actually have been created by the Ethiopian state itself in order to legitimize its authority. Chapter three argues that the grievances of Eritrean nationalists, which held that Eritrea deserved to be ruled separately, were shaped in large part by the policies enacted by three different governments since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

Finally, given the prevalence of opportunity-based theories in the academic literature, the analysis presented in this dissertation offers an important step forward in our understanding of ethnic rebellions. To fully explain the goals ethnic rebels pursue, it is not enough to know the relative capabilities of the rebel group and the state. Many small, concentrated ethnic groups—precisely those opportunity-based theories would predict to be separatist—have attempted state capture rebellions. Instead, this dissertation has demonstrated that group grievances must be taken into account as well. The dissertation's conclusions have implications for the study of other forms of ethnic violence, and are of practical importance for conflict resolution. Broadly, they suggest that works focusing on material and structural conditions as the primary

explanations of conflict may be overlooking a key element shaping ethnic mobilization: the desires held by ethnic group members to shape their own political futures. And because these desires are held so strongly by group members—as shown in chapter five, when rebels and governments negotiate with one another, the political objectives of the parties almost always find their way into the agreements the two sides reach—conflict resolution policies that ignore group goals are likely to fail. With interventions by outside powers to end ethnic violence so common in today’s international environment, the need for the policy-making communities of these states to understand the importance of group goals for conflict resolution is vital.

## Appendix

### Methodology: Case Selection and Variable Coding for Quantitative Analysis

This appendix details the case selection methods that were used for the dataset analyzed in chapter two, as well as the coding of the dependent variable (goals), and each independent variable.

#### I. Case Selection

This section details how the dataset of ethnic rebellions analyzed in chapter two was created. In developing the dataset, all of the theoretical issues outlined in chapter one had to be contended with, including the questions of what qualifies a rebellion as being ethnic, and what constitutes a rebellion. Specific measures were devised to distinguish rebellions from non-rebellions, and ethnic fights from non-ethnic ones, and criteria for intensity were set so the dataset included only the largest scale rebellions. Most importantly, a system was put in place to attempt to find *all* the rebellions that qualified, so that the final dataset could claim to be as exhaustive as possible.

To find an appropriate set of ethnic rebellions to analyze, the project began with the Minorities at Risk (MAR) project's dataset of ethnic groups.<sup>1</sup> This dataset includes 340 ethnic

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<sup>1</sup> The MAR database aspires to include all groups for situations in which "...the country in which they reside had a population greater than 500,000 in 1995, the group itself had a population larger than 100,000 or 1 percent of the country population," and "...[t]he group collectively suffers, or benefits from, systematic discriminatory treatment vis-à-vis other groups in a society" or "[t]he group is the basis for political mobilization and collective action in defense or promotion of its self-defined interests." "MAR, About MAR, Defining a Minority at Risk," <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/definition.asp>.



groups<sup>2</sup> in 120 countries, and is widely cited and used in academic literature. However, while the dissertation relies heavily on decisions made by the MAR project, important checks on each individual case in the dataset used here were conducted through a content analysis of up to six separate sources. This analysis provided a check both on the question of whether rebellions actually occurred as well as whether they should be considered ethnic or not. This process is detailed below.

### *Finding an Initial Set of Cases*

The MAR database notes the “observed level of rebellion” of each ethnic group within ten separate 5-year periods and one 4-year period from 1945 to 1998.<sup>3</sup> The MAR “observed level of rebellion” codes are as follows:

<b>Minorities at Risk Project – Observed Level of Rebellion Codes</b>	
0	<b>None reported</b>
1	<b>Political banditry, sporadic terrorism</b>
2	<b>Campaigns of terrorism</b>
3	<b>Local rebellions</b> —Armed attempts to seize power in a locale. If they prove to be the opening round in what becomes a a [sic] protracted civil war during the year being coded, code the latter rather than local rebellion. Code declarations of independence by a minority controlled government here
4	<b>Small-scale guerrilla activity</b> —All of the following must exist: 1) fewer than 1000 armed fighters; 2) sporadic armed attacks (less than six reported per year); and 3) attacks in a small part of the area occupied by the group, or in one or two other locales
5	<b>Intermediate guerrilla activity</b> —Has one or two of the defining traits of large-scale activity and one or two of the defining traits of small-scale activity
6	<b>Large-scale guerrilla activity</b> —All of the following must exist: 1) more than 1000 armed fighters; 2) frequent armed attacks (more than 6 per year); and 3) attacks affecting a large part of the area occupied by the group
7	<b>Protracted civil war</b> —Fought by rebel military units with base areas

To compile the set of cases this dissertation analyzes, the groups to which the MAR database assigns either a 5, 6 or a 7 score for “observed level of rebellion” in one or more of the time periods between 1945 and 1998 were first noted. This process resulted in a list of 102 ethnic

<sup>2</sup> Separate entries are made for the same named ethnic group existing in multiple countries.

groups. That is, MAR notes that 102 ethnic groups were engaged in either intermediate or large-scale guerrilla activity, or protracted civil war, for at least one period between 1945 and 1998. The next step in creating that dataset was to develop a system to determine how many separate rebellions those 102 ethnic groups engaged in.

Toward this end, I consider rebellions that receive a 5, 6 or 7 score in consecutive periods as one single rebellion. When 5, 6, or 7 scores appear in non-consecutive periods, one rebellion is coded *unless* there were two or more 5-year periods between the periods in which a 5, 6 or 7 was scored, and at least one of the intervening periods received a code of 2 or lower (Campaigns of terrorism, Political banditry/sporadic terrorism, or None reported).<sup>4</sup> The idea is that two separate rebellions should be counted only when a significant period of relative calm takes place between the two periods of large-scale violence. As a result of this process, 10 additional cases of rebellion (those noted with an asterisk in the table below) were added to the original 102 cases taken from the MAR database, resulting in 112 cases. No ethnic groups were shown to be engaged in more than two distinct rebellions using this method.

The date range listed in this table indicates the beginning year of the first period in which the rebellion receives a 5, 6 or 7 score for observed level of rebellion, and the ending year of the last period in which the ethnic group receives a 5, 6 or 7 score. So a date range of 1990-1998 indicates that the ethnic group first received a 5, 6 or 7 score in the 1990-1994 period, and last received a 5, 6 or 7 score in the 1995-1998 period.

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<sup>3</sup> The periods are 1945-1949, 1950-1954...1990-1994, 1995-1998.

<sup>4</sup> This method for determining when to count two or more separate wars is relatively strict. See for comparison Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis," *American Political Science Review* 94:4 (December 2000), 779-801. Nicholas Sambanis also comments on criteria for determining whether a civil war is ongoing in Nicholas Sambanis, "A Note on the Death Threshold in Coding Civil War Events," "The Conflict Processes Newsletter," *American Political Science Association, Conflict Processes Section*, June 2001. He recommends using a 2-3 year cease-fire period between episodes of significant violence as the dividing line between coding one and coding more than one civil war. The criteria used here are more conservative and should result in fewer cases.

	<b>Group</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>MAR High Level of Rebellion Period</b>
1	ABKHAZIANS	GEORGIA	1990-1998
2	ACEHNESE	INDONESIA	1975-1994
3	ACHOLI	UGANDA	1985-1998
4	AFARS	ETHIOPIA	1975-1994
5	AFARS	DJIBOUTI	1990-1994
6	AFARS	ERITREA	1975-1994
7	AMHARA	ETHIOPIA	1990-1994
8	ANKOLE	UGANDA	1980-1984
9	ARMENIANS	AZERBAIJAN	1985-1998
10	ASSAMESE	INDIA	1995-1998
11	BAGANDA	UGANDA	1980-1989
12	BAKONGO	ANGOLA	1960-1975
13*	BAKONGO	ANGOLA	1995-1998
14	BALUCHIS	PAKISTAN	1970-1979
15	BANYARWANDANS	ZAIRE	1995-1998
16	BERBERS	ALGERIA	1955-1964
17	BODOS	INDIA	1985-1998
18	BOUGANVILLEANS	PAPUA N.G.	1995-1998
19	CHECHENS	RUSSIA	1990-1998
20	CHINESE	MALAYA <sup>5</sup>	1945-1959
21	CHITTAGONG HILL TRIBES	BANGLADESH	1975-1998
22	CROATS	BOSNIA	1990-1998
23	DRUZE	LEBANON	1975-1989
24	EAST TIMORESE	INDONESIA	1975-1998
25	ERITREANS	ETHIOPIA	1965-1989
26	HAZARAS	AFGHANISTAN	1980-1998
27	HILL TRIBALS	MYANMAR	1975-1989
28	HINDUS	BANGLADESH	1945-1949
29*	HINDUS	BANGLADESH	1970-1974
30	HMONG	LAOS	1945-1979
31	HUTUS	DEM. REP. CONGO	1995-1998
32	HUTUS	BURUNDI	1990-1998
33	HUTUS	RWANDA	1995-1998
34*	HUTUS	RWANDA	1955-1964
35	IBO	NIGERIA	1965-1974
36	IGOROTS	PHILIPPINES	1985-1989
37	INDIGENOUS PEOPLES	GUATEMALA	1980-1984
38	INDIGENOUS PEOPLES	NICARAGUA	1980-1989
39	ISSAQ	SOMALIA	1985-1994
40	KACHINS	BURMA	1960-1994

<sup>5</sup> The MAR database lists the country name as "Malaysia." But the highest level of rebellion by the Chinese community, from 1945-1959, took place when the country name was Malaya. Malaya gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1957 and Malaysia was created by adding additional territory to Malaya in 1963.

41	KAKWA	UGANDA	1980-1984
42	KARENS	BURMA	1945-1998
43	KASHMIRIS	INDIA	1990-1998
44	KIKUYU	KENYA	1950-1954
45	KONJO/AMBA	UGANDA	1960-1969
46	KOSOVO ALBANIANS	YUGOSLAVIA	1995-1998
47	KURDS	IRAN	1945-1959
48*	KURDS	IRAN	1975-1994
49	KURDS	IRAQ	1960-1994
50	KURDS	TURKEY	1985-1998
51	LANGI	UGANDA	1985-1989
52	LETTS/LATVIANS	USSR	1945-1949
53	LITHUANIANS	USSR	1945-1954
54	LUBA	DEM. REP. CONGO	1960-1964
55	LUGBARA/MADI	UGANDA	1980-1984
56	LUNDA, YEKE	DEM. REP. CONGO	1960-1964
57*	LUNDA, YEKE	DEM. REP. CONGO	1975-1979
58	MALAY-MUSLIMS	THAILAND	1970-1974
59*	MALAY-MUSLIMS	THAILAND	1995-1998
60	MARONITE CHRISTIANS	LEBANON	1975-1994
61	MAYANS	MEXICO	1990-1998
62	MIZOS	INDIA	1970-1979
63	MOHAJIRS	PAKISTAN	1995-1998
64	MONS	BURMA	1985-1998
65	MONTAGNARDS	VIETNAM	1945-1974
66	MOROS	PHILIPPINES	1970-1998
67	MUSLIMS	BOSNIA	1995-1998
68	NAGAS	INDIA	1955-1959
69*	NAGAS	INDIA	1995-1998
70	NDEBELE	ZIMBABWE	1975-1979
71	NORTHERN HILL TRIBES	THAILAND	1955-1969
72	NORTHERNERS	CHAD	1965-1979
73	OROMO	ETHIOPIA	1985-1994
74	OSSETIANS (SOUTH)	GEORGIA	1990-1994
75	OVIMBUNDU	ANGOLA	1965-1998
76	PALESTINIANS	ISRAEL	1965-1969
77	PALESTINIANS	JORDAN	1970-1974
78	PALESTINIANS	LEBANON	1975-1989
79	PAPUANS	INDONESIA	1985-1998
80	PASHTUNS (PUSHTUNS)	PAKISTAN	1980-1984
81	ROHINGYA (ARAKANES)	BURMA	1950-1954
82	RUSSIANS	GEORGIA	1990-1994
83	SAHARAWIS	MOROCCO	1955-1959
84*	SAHARAWIS	MOROCCO	1975-1994
85	SCHEDULED TRIBES	INDIA	1995-1998

86	SERBS	CROATIA	1990-1998
87	SERBS	BOSNIA	1990-1998
88	SHANS	BURMA	1960-1998
89	SHI'IS	IRAQ	1980-1994
90	SHI'IS	LEBANON	1980-1994
91	SIKHS	INDIA	1985-1994
92	SLAVS	MOLDOVA	1990-1994
93	SOMALIS	ETHIOPIA	1960-1979
94	SOUTHERNERS	CHAD	1980-1984
95	SOUTHERNERS	SUDAN	1960-1998
96	SRI LANKAN TAMILS	SRI LANKA	1980-1998
97	SUNNIS	LEBANON	1975-1989
98	TAJIKS	AFGHANISTAN	1980-1998
99	TEMNE	SIERRA LEONE	1990-1998
100	TIBETANS	CHINA	1950-1964
101	TIGREANS	ETHIOPIA	1975-1994
102	TRIPURAS	INDIA	1980-1998
103	TUAREG	MALI	1960-1964
104*	TUAREG	MALI	1990-1994
105	TUAREG	NIGER	1985-1994
106	TURKMEN	CHINA	1945-1954
107*	TURKMEN	CHINA	1995-1998
108	TUTSIS	DEM. REP. CONGO	1995-1998
109	TUTSIS	RWANDA	1990-1994
110	UKRAINIANS	USSR	1945-1954
111	UZBEKS	AFGHANISTAN	1985-1998
112	ZOMIS (CHINS)	BURMA	1985-1994

\* = second period of rebellion attributed to same ethnic group by method described above.

### *Further Refinement of Cases Using Content Analysis*

Each of the rebellions on the above list was subjected to significant checks, using a content analysis of six mainly secondary sources,<sup>6</sup> to a) confirm that the cases in the dataset represent actual rebellions, and b) to confirm that the rebellions were indeed ethnic.

<sup>6</sup> The sources are, in order, Jacob Bercovitch and Richard Jackson, *International Conflict: A Chronological Encyclopedia of Conflicts and Their Management 1945-1995* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1997), James Minahan, *Nations Without States: A Historical Dictionary of Contemporary National Movements* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), Patrick Brogan, *World Conflicts: A Comprehensive Guide to World Strife Since 1945* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998), the Minorities at Risk Project group files, available from the project's web site at <http://www.bsos.umd.edu/cidcm/mar/list.html>, the Country Studies book series published by American University in Washington, DC, and newspaper articles retrieved using a search of the Lexis/Nexis Academic Universe system.

To conduct this analysis, the first three of the six sources listed in footnote 6—*International Conflicts*, *Nations Without States*, and *World Conflicts*—were read for each rebellion on the above list. Each reference to armed insurgency against government forces during the specific time period MAR codes the level of violence as being greater than or equal to 5 (see above), as well as specific references to those organizations participating in violence and the goals they pursued, were recorded and counted. During the content analysis, rebellious activity was attributed to specific political organizations. Ultimately, however, the chapter produces a list of *ethnic groups* derived from information about those organizations.

Theoretically, it would be better to develop a list of rebelling political organizations, since it is political organizations, and not ethnic groups, that make decisions to rebel and to pursue certain military and political objectives. But in practical terms it is impossible to count individual political organizations. Problems include knowing when to count alliances as single organizations or to separate them by their constituent groups; how to handle the creation, merger, or dissolution of individual organizations over time; and how to develop criteria regarding the size and level of support that would warrant an organization's inclusion.

The first goal of the content analysis was to confirm that each case represented an actual rebellion, and that it met MAR's own inclusion criteria for intermediate to large-scale guerrilla activity or protracted civil war. This process served as a check on MAR's own coding. To determine whether a rebellion occurred, evidence of a rebellion had to be noted in at least two separate sources with no conflicting evidence. If no evidence of rebellion could be found in the first three sources—*International Conflict*, *Nations Without States*, and *World Conflicts*—then the appropriate Minorities at Risk project file was examined. The Minorities at Risk project files include detailed information on each ethnic group, and derive from a variety of sources that the

MAR project used to create its dataset. If no evidence of rebellion was found there, then the case was removed from the data set (see below for explanations of each case that was removed following this process). If evidence of rebellion was found in only one out of the first three sources, then the remaining sources were consulted, in order, until either additional evidence suggesting rebellion was found or until the six sources were exhausted. When evidence of rebellion was found in two sources and no contradictory evidence emerged, then no further sources were consulted. If only one source suggested evidence of rebellion even after all six sources had been consulted, then the case was flagged as ambiguous and set aside for further research, which was later conducted using a variety of other materials. This process is also detailed below.

A similar method was used to determine whether a rebellion was ethnic. Evidence from two sources had to suggest that at least one of the main organizations participating in the rebellion was an ethnic organization, with no contradictory evidence. If no evidence of an ethnic connection could be found in the first three sources—*International Conflict*, *Nations Without States*, and *World Conflicts*—then the next three sources were examined, in order. If no evidence of an ethnic connection could be found in any of the six sources, then the case was removed from the data set. If evidence of an ethnic connection was found in only one of the six sources, or if contradictory evidence was found, then the case was flagged as ambiguous and set aside for further research.

The standard used to determine whether an organization participating in a rebellion should be labeled “ethnic” was very broad. One can conceivably define an ethnically-based organization according either to the issues the organization advocates, or the ethnic composition

of its membership base, its leadership, or its supporters. Thus, one may consider an organization *ethnic* when

- 1) a certain minimum percentage of the issues the organization advocates explicitly or implicitly favor an ethnic group,<sup>7</sup>
- 2) a certain minimum percentage of the organization's members are of the ethnic group,
- 3) a certain minimum percentage of the organization's leadership are of the ethnic group,
- 4) a certain minimum percentage of the organization's supporters are of the ethnic group,

or some combination of these separate criteria. For the purposes of constructing the data set this dissertation analyzes, any of the above criteria were accepted. The only caveat is that the sources must not have suggested that the state represented the same group that the rebelling organization was said to represent. If the same group that comprises the membership of the rebel organization is seen as being represented by the armed forces against which it is fighting, that organization is not considered ethnic.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, if one source described a "Chinese insurgency" (suggesting ethnic membership) while another described a "pro-Chinese rebellion" (suggesting the organization supports a pro-Chinese agenda), the rebellion would have been coded as ethnic. It should be noted that this construction allows for organizations to be labeled as ethnic even if most of the ethnic group does not support that organization. In practice this seemed to occur very infrequently; one example may be the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, which is apparently not supported by most Acholi, even though it is made up primarily of Acholi. Admittedly, this method avoids asking some difficult questions about the appropriateness of different definitions of ethnic. However, there is an advantage to employing such a broad definition of what constitutes an ethnic rebellion, namely, that it allows each of the different conceptions themselves to be tested

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<sup>7</sup> Kanchan Chandra, "Coding Protocol for Cross-national Database on Ethnic Parties," Manuscript, April 28, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Conscription may lead to fellow ethnics facing one another across the battlefield; however, this definition is less concerned with actual numbers than it is with the perception that organizations represent particular groups.



as independent variables in the analysis of group goals. Once the organizations are coded for precisely *how* they are ethnic, this factor may be tested against the goals of the rebellions those organizations launch.

The dissertation defines “ethnic group” in chapter one. For purposes of coding groups during the content analysis, I assume that ethnic groups are groups of unrelated individuals who share one or more ascriptive (inherited) characteristics.<sup>9</sup> I take for granted that the groups identified in this way share the second half of the definition given earlier, namely that they share a common myth of origin. The most common ascriptive characteristics that bind group members are religion and language. Several of the groups in the MAR dataset seem to be defined by region, eg. Southerners in Sudan, or Northerners in Chad. Through the content analysis, I found that these regional differences normally overlay differences along other ascriptive characteristics; in Sudan and Chad, significant language, religious and racial differences exist between North and South, for instance.

I also had to determine the number of rebellions to count when multiple ethnic groups and/or multiple political organizations were involved in fighting, often but not necessarily for the same political goals. For example, should two or more ethnic groups fighting alongside one another for the same goals be counted as a single rebellion, or as multiple rebellions, one for each ethnic group? This is an important theoretical question that applies not just to those political organizations that seem clearly multiethnic, because it speaks to the infinite division problem inherent in discussing ethnicity: any ethnic group can be divided into smaller parts, and can be combined with others into larger groupings. The unit of analysis used usually depends far more on a researcher’s interests (or biases) than on any objective standards. Thus, the content

analysis may rely on one author's description of a rebelling political party that she claims represents groups X and Y. Another author may describe the same party as representing group Z, which is known but not stated explicitly as comprising the same groups X and Y that the first author described. It is important that any methodology used to analyze these two different authors not categorize a rebellion launched by that party in two different ways based on their slightly different descriptions.

To deal with this problem, a single rebellion was coded when evidence showed that a rebelling political organization represented more than one ethnic group. Furthermore, when multiple political organizations were in rebellion, a single ethnic rebellion was coded so long as the organizations observed either represented the same ethnic group, or shared significant membership or leadership between two or more ethnic groups. In the latter case, the rebellion would be coded as being that of the two (or more) groups combined. Separate rebellions would be counted only when separate organizations were observed to represent distinct ethnic communities, even if those organizations and the communities they represented shared the same political goal, and were allies in their respective military campaigns. A slightly different puzzle would emerge if two organizations representing the same ethnic group pursued different goals. Since the very purpose of this dissertation is to define rebellions according to the goals they seek, two organizations representing the same ethnic community but pursuing different goals would have to be coded as two separate rebellions. In practice, this occurred only once: the Shan in Burma pursued separatism through several organizations over the years, and also formed the bulk of the Communist Party of Burma, which attempted to overthrow the central government in

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<sup>9</sup> Such characteristics need be inherited, but not biological. Thus, native language and religion are most often passed down from parent to child, and are included among other biologically inherited characteristics like race ascriptive categories.

Rangoon. As a result of this information, the Communist Party of Burma was added as a separate Shan rebellion in the dataset.

This discussion is summarized in the table below.

**Number of Rebellions coded Given number of Ethnic Groups and Political Organizations Involved in Rebellion**

		<i># of Ethnic Groups</i>	
		1	>1
<i># of Political Organizations</i>	1	1 rebellion	1 rebellion
	>1	Depends on goal: a) same goal → 1 rebellion b) diff. goals → >1 rebellion	Depends on ethnic crossover: a) no crossover → >1 rebellion b) significant crossover → 1 rebellion

*Elimination of non-rebellions and anti-colonial fights*

As noted, cases were eliminated from the list above when no evidence of rebellion could be found in any of the six sources consulted. In addition, cases that were found to be anti-colonial rebellions were eliminated from the dataset. This was done by comparing the end date of the MAR high level of rebellion time period with a country’s year of independence. If the country against which the group in question was rebelling did not gain independence prior to the end of the MAR high level of rebellion period, then the case is classified as an anti-colonial rebellion and discarded.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> This method is somewhat flawed in that under one condition it will not eliminate certain anticolonial rebellions that should be thrown out. This condition is when independence takes place after the high level rebellion actually ends, but before the end of the MAR 5-year high level of violence period. There are five cases in the dataset in which the country’s independence takes place during the MAR 5-year high level of violence period. These are Luba, Democratic Republic of Congo, 1960-1964 (independence 1960); Lunda/Yeke, Democratic Republic of Congo, 1960-1964 (independence 1960); Tuareg, Mali, 1960-1964 (independence 1960); Chinese, Malaya, 1945-1959 (independence 1957); and Berbers, Algeria, 1955-1964 (independence 1962). Since MAR only defines “Observed Level of Rebellion” by five year periods, we cannot know which precise year the MAR considers a rebellion to have escalated above or cooled below a certain level of violence on its scale. Therefore in these situations we can only compare the date other scholars consider the rebellion to have ended with the date of independence, and to consider evidence from these same sources of precipitous drops in a rebellion’s level of violence. Individual investigation during this content analysis into these five cases shows that all five rebellions appear to have persisted against the post-colonial state and not to have had any significant drop in violence following independence.

Anti-colonial revolts were discarded primarily because of questions of comparability between anti-colonial fights and other kinds of ethnic rebellions. Specifically, it is not clear whether anti-colonial rebellions should be considered separation or state capture. The distinction depends on the subjective perspective of whether the “local” colonial administration or the European metropole constitutes “the center.” For example, one could conceptualize Algerian rebels as either trying to secede from France or as trying to capture the Algerian state from the French colonial rulers. A similar question of interpretation does not arise from non-colonial cases of ethnic rebellion, and therefore the two types of rebellion should probably not be compared. Furthermore, even if it was desirable to undertake such a comparison, the MAR project made no systematic attempt to include all anti-colonial rebellions in its dataset.

Twenty four of the cases originally in the dataset were discarded following the content analysis either because of the absence of evidence that any rebellion had taken place or because they were anti-colonial rebellions. They are listed below.

<b>No Evidence of Rebellion</b>	<b>Anti-Colonial Rebellions</b>
Afars, Eritrea, 1975-1994 <sup>11</sup>	Bakongo, Angola, 1960-1975 <sup>12</sup>
Amhara, Ethiopia, 1990-1994 <sup>13</sup>	Kikuyu, Kenya, 1950-1954 <sup>14</sup>
Baganda, Uganda, 1980-1989	Saharawis, Morocco, 1955-1959 <sup>15</sup>
Hill Tribals, Myanmar, 1975-1989 <sup>16</sup>	
Hindus, Bangladesh, 1945-1949	
Hindus, Bangladesh, 1970-1974	
Hutus, Dem. Rep. of Congo, 1995-1998 <sup>17</sup>	

<sup>11</sup> Eritrea only became formally independent in May of 1993, even though de facto independence was achieved two years earlier. There is no evidence of any significant Afar revolt against Eritrea between 1991 and 1994; further, any Afar revolt against Ethiopia prior to 1991 is captured in a separate entry.

<sup>12</sup> Angolan independence dates only from 1975.

<sup>13</sup> According to the MAR country file for Ethiopia, the Amhara-dominated Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party (EPRP) allied with the country’s Amhara rulers in a last-ditch effort to stop the Tigrayan-dominated EPRDF (Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front) from capturing the country in April of 1991. This was not an Amhara revolt, therefore, but rather an action to defend the center.

<sup>14</sup> Kenya became independent in 1963. This probably represents the Mau Mau rebellion against the British.

<sup>15</sup> Although Morocco gained its independence in 1956, Spain only withdrew from the Western Sahara in 1975; therefore this is an anti-colonial (anti-Spanish) rebellion.

<sup>16</sup> The MAR country file maintains that “Hill Tribals” comprise two ethnic groups, the Chins and Kachins; yet both these groups have separate entries in the MAR database.

Hutus, Rwanda, 1955-1964  
Kakwa, Uganda, 1980-1984  
Kurds, Iran, 1945-1959<sup>18</sup>  
Langi, Uganda, 1985-1989<sup>19</sup>  
Letts/Latvians, USSR, 1945-1949  
Lithuanians, USSR, 1945-1954  
Lugbara/Madi, Uganda, 1980-1984  
Muslims, Bosnia, 1995-1998<sup>20</sup>  
Northern Hill Tribes, Thailand, 1955-1969<sup>21</sup>  
Pashtuns (Pushtuns), Pakistan, 1980-1984  
Rohingya (Arakanese), Burma, 1950-1954  
Russians, Georgia, 1990-1994  
Scheduled Tribes, India, 1995-1998<sup>22</sup>  
Ukrainians, USSR, 1945-1954

Nine cases were found for which some, but not sufficient, evidence of rebellion was ascertained using the above methodology. (After following the procedures laid out above, no cases were found to need further research to determine whether the rebellions were *ethnic*.) After exhausting the reference works on conflict and civil war, to finish the coding for these nine cases a variety of sources focusing on the individual cases or countries was consulted. No single system was used to identify these sources. When primary documents were easily available, as in the case of Palestinians in Israel, those were used. Otherwise a search on the case or country was performed through library catalogs and several of the resources identified were read. All information pertaining to the cases was noted.

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<sup>17</sup> This case was eliminated because no additional evidence of rebellion could be found beyond the Minorities at Risk case file.

<sup>18</sup> The Kurdish republic of Mahabad was declared under Soviet influence in 1946, but there is no evidence of any rebellion against the Iranian state.

<sup>19</sup> The Langi are the tribe of Milton Obote, who was overthrown in a coup in 1985. But there is no evidence of a Langi rebellion.

<sup>20</sup> This was not an ethnic rebellion so much as the ruling group's attempt to expand the area of the state over which it held effective control. One might ask how this case differs from the Maronites during Lebanon's civil war. The difference is that non-government Maronite militias took part in the Lebanese civil war, while all evidence examined suggests that the Muslim side in the Bosnian war was represented by the government.

<sup>21</sup> According to the MAR case file, the two main ethnic groups this label incorporates are the Hmong and the Karen. Except for the MAR mentioning that the Hmong were suspected by Thai authorities as being involved in the Communist Party of Thailand insurgency (no dates given), no mention of rebellion by either Hmong or Karen in Thailand is provided by MAR, or the other sources used.

The nine cases are listed as follows, with the sources consulted to finalize the coding of each case listed in the bibliography. Specific goals ascribed to those groups kept in the dataset are mentioned here, with a more detailed discussion of goals in the following section.

**Berbers, Algeria, 1955-1965**

This case was not coded due to conflicting information on goals.<sup>23</sup>

**Hmong, Laos, 1945-1979**

This case was not coded because of insufficient information on goals.

**Indigenous Peoples, Guatemala, 1980-1984**

Coded as state capture due to consistent evidence of this goal in the additional sources employed.

**Konjo/Amba, Uganda, 1960-1969**

Coded as separatism; additional sources showed this case to be an interesting variant of separatism, namely, separatism from a sub-state unit.

**Maronite Christians, Lebanon, 1975-1994**

Additional sources suggested that this case should be coded as either a Policy or Constitutional Challenge; evidence from these sources showed that the Christian militias fought to prevent other confessional groups from forcing constitutional changes.

**Palestinians, Israel, 1965-1969**

Coded as state capture using evidence from additional sources.<sup>24</sup>

**Sunnis, Lebanon, 1975-1989**

Coded as state capture using evidence from additional sources.

**Tuareg, Mali, 1960-1964**

Coded as separatism using evidence from additional sources.

**Zomis (Chins), Burma, 1985-1994**

Coded as separatism using evidence from additional sources.

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<sup>22</sup> Apparently this category refers mainly to Jharkhandists in Northeast India; there is no evidence of rebellion in any of the sources examined.

<sup>23</sup> Various sources described the goals of the insurgents as state capture, secession, autonomy, and (uniquely among all the cases studied), as an attempt to bolster the standing of individual Berber leaders in the central government.

<sup>24</sup> Evidence of goals taken from two primary documents, "The Palestinian National Charter: Resolutions of the Palestine National Council," written in 1968, and "The Seven Points," passed by the Central Committee of Al Fatah, January, 1969. Both documents are published in Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, ed., *The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict* (NY: Penguin Books, 1991), 366-72 and 372-3, respectively.

## II. Coding the Dependent Variable: Goal of Rebellion

The third purpose of the content analysis was to code each rebellion according to the goals it sought to accomplish, and to verify that each of the periods of large-scale violence listed in the table corresponded to only one distinct type of rebellion, that is, corresponded to only one goal. As explained in chapter one, the term “goal” refers specifically to the proximate changes sought in power relations between the rebelling group’s constituency and the country’s rulers; these are the direct political changes desired and toward which violence is employed by the rebelling group. The same six goals described in chapter one, and reproduced in the table below, were recorded during the content analysis.

<i>Separatist</i>	1. <b>Secession</b> —The group fights to remove government control from a particular geographic region and seeks international recognition of that region’s sovereignty.
	2. <b>Autonomy</b> —The group’s goal is not sovereignty, but solely increased powers of self rule within a particular geographic area, without challenging existing state borders.
	3. <b>Irredentism</b> —The group seeks incorporation into a neighboring state, presumably ruled by ethnic brethren.
<i>Center-oriented</i>	4. <b>State Capture</b> —The group’s goal is to take power over the central state.
	5. <b>Constitutional Challenge</b> —The group’s goal is to pressure the government, through military means, to change or preserve the balance of power between government and ethnic group, in terms of their respective abilities to enact policies.
	6. <b>Policy Challenge</b> —The group’s goal is to pressure the government, through military means, to institute, change, or end particular policies.

Goals were noted when given by the authors of the sources used or when attributed by them to any individuals or groups claiming to represent a rebelling political organization. The idea was to cultivate a range of expert opinion on the rebellions as well as to capture the broadest range of sentiment expressed by members of the rebelling organizations and their supporters. (The time period investigated in the content analysis corresponded with the period of high levels

of violence listed in the table above. However, when goals were mentioned as having been expressed prior to MAR's high level of rebellion period, they were still recorded, but were noted as having been expressed earlier. The reason for recording these expressions is that an organization, along with its goals, may very well develop prior to its initiating the type of large-scale violence that would merit its inclusion in the MAR data set; that is, an organization's goals may develop long before it develops the strength to attack the state in such a way that the MAR project would code the rebellion's level of violence as greater than 5, as described above.) Goals were recorded as offered in the sources employed in this exercise, but often problems of interpretation arose. For example, it is not clear at all what one author means in describing the Hmong insurgency against Laos after 1975 as "...an armed struggle against the communist consolidation of power."<sup>25</sup> This and other ambiguous statements of goals were recorded but were not counted as evidence.

It was also at times impossible to determine whether certain statements of intent by participants in rebellions were meant to convey the group's goals as defined above—the type of proximate change in power relations sought—or longer-term political ends that could be accomplished by several different means. Most often it was difficult to strictly distinguish statements advocating "policy challenges"—attempts to directly force the government to institute a policy by pressuring it militarily—and statements that supported a particular policy end, without specifically noting how such an end was to be achieved. Since the latter would not count as a goal as defined here, ambiguous statements of this type were not counted as evidence.

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<sup>25</sup> MacAlister Brown and Joseph J. Zasloff, *Apprentice Revolutionaries: The Communist Movement in Laos, 1930-1985* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 183-4.



### *New Cases Considered for Inclusion*

Over the course of compiling this dataset, several large-scale rebellions fought by ethnic groups that were not included in the Minorities at Risk database were noted and considered for inclusion. Attention was drawn to these cases from a variety of sources and no particular methodology was used to find them. With two exceptions, they appear on the surface to meet MAR's inclusion criteria,<sup>26</sup> and therefore their omission from the MAR dataset may have been an oversight. The two exceptions that clearly do not meet MAR criteria were two ethnic groups that were not minorities.<sup>27</sup> Since this dissertation attempts to understand the goals of *all* large-scale ethnic rebellions, and not just those launched by minority groups, majority status should not be disqualifying.

One objection to including several cases not originally found in MAR is that I may be introducing selection bias into the dataset. Other groups that engaged in large-scale rebellion between 1945 and 1998, that were also not included in MAR, and that I had *not* been able to discover, may, after all, exist. Since the primary purpose of using MAR to build this dataset of rebellions was to create a systematic process, is it worth forgoing that system to include a handful of cases that may have been overlooked by the research teams that created MAR?

I believe that rather than exclude cases I know should be analyzed simply to avoid the possibility of creating bias in the final dataset, it is more reasonable to include these cases and be open about the process, and the possibility of bias. Future work could determine whether such bias exists. Further, the number of cases being added is small compared to the number of cases derived directly from MAR, and therefore any selection bias in the final dataset is likely to

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<sup>26</sup> These criteria are that the ethnic group is a minority, drawn from "politically active communal groups in all countries in the world with a current population of at least 500,000." See the Minorities at Risk Home Page, <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/>.

<sup>27</sup> The groups are Bengalis in pre-1971 Pakistan, and Shona in Rhodesia.

remain small as well. While I cannot rule out the possibility that I have overlooked other groups that should be included, a good faith effort was made to look widely for additional cases that might warrant inclusion. Further, each of the new cases considered was subject to the exact same methodology used to select cases for the final list as were those cases derived directly from MAR. Only some of the new cases made the final cut, but below all the non-MAR cases *considered* for inclusion are listed.

Conflict	Notes
Liberia civil war, 1989-	Two sources noted that the Liberian civil war that began in 1989 was ethnically-fueled <sup>28</sup> and “an identity war.” <sup>29</sup>
Bengalis in pre-1971 Pakistan	Clearly not included in MAR because Bengalis made up majority of united Pakistan.
Anjouan (Nzwani) separatism vs. Comoros Islands, 1997	Noted as armed conflict in one source; <sup>30</sup> investigated to see whether it met the rest of MAR inclusion criteria
North Yemen civil war 1962-1970	Noted in several sources about conflict; investigated to see whether ethnic
S. Yemen attempted secession 5/94-7/94	Noted in several sources about conflict; investigated to see whether ethnic
Shona in Rhodesia	MAR lists Ndebelle in Zimbabwe, actively fighting in 1970s. This was the civil war against white Rhodesian rule. But the other major participant was the Shona group, which apparently is not included because it was not a minority.

After following the same content analysis described above for each of these cases to determine whether rebellions took place, and whether those rebellions were ethnic, the Anjouan, North Yemen civil war, and South Yemen attempted secession cases were discarded. No evidence of an ethnic basis to the fighting in Comoros could be found. While ethnic divisions

<sup>28</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, *Peoples Versus States: Minorities at Risk in the New Century* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2000), 373.

<sup>29</sup> Roy Licklider, “The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945-1993,” *American Political Science Review* 89:3 (September 1995), 681-690.

clearly played a role in the Royalist attempt to retake the North Yemen state from Republicans in the 1960s, the Royalist revolt cannot be considered ethnic because significant numbers of the ethnic group that made up most of the Royalist forces also fought on the Republican side.<sup>31</sup> The same issue prevents the attempted South Yemen secession in 1994 from being labeled an ethnic civil war.<sup>32</sup> Only the 4 cases below were added to the final dataset upon completing the content analysis.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Goal</b>
Gio & Mano	Liberia	State Capture
Krahn	Liberia	State Capture
Mandingo	Liberia	State Capture
Bengalis	Pakistan	Separatism

In addition, one case already in the final dataset was slightly changed to include another group not listed in MAR. MAR lists an Ndebelle revolt against white rule in Rhodesia, but does not include the Shona group, presumably because Shona were a majority. Like Bengalis in united, pre-1971 Pakistan, Shona in Rhodesia should be analyzed by this dissertation. However, the question remained as to whether two separate revolts, one Ndebelle and one Shona, should be included in the dataset, or whether only one revolt by both groups should be included. After reviewing the secondary literature on the anti-Rhodesian revolt, and consulting with a Zimbabwe expert, it was decided to include one “black” category combining Ndebelle and Shona in the final dataset, rather than including them as two separate groups, because of significant ethnic overlap in the two main rebel organizations.

The final list of cases with the coding for goals is presented below.

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<sup>30</sup> Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg “Armed Conflict and Regional Conflict Complexes, 1989-97,” *Journal of Peace Research* 35:5 (September 98), 623.

<sup>31</sup> While the Royalists were mainly Zaydi Shi’ia Muslims, a significant number of Zaydi tribes fought on the Republican side as well.

		<b>Goal</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Years of Rebellion</b>
57 (61%)	1	S	ABKHAZIANS	GEORGIA	1990-1998
	2	S	ACEHNESE	INDONESIA	1975-1994
	3	S	AFARS	ETHIOPIA	1975-1994
	4	S	ARMENIANS	AZERBAIJAN	1985-1998
	5	S	ASSAMESE	INDIA	1995-1998
	6	S	BALUCHIS	PAKISTAN	1970-1979
	7	S	BENGALIS	PAKISTAN	c. 1971
	8	S	BODOS	INDIA	1985-1998
	9	S	BOUGANVILLEANS	PAPUA N.G.	1995-1998
	10	S	CHECHENS	RUSSIA	1990-1998
	11	S	CHITTAGONG HILL TRIBES	BANGLADESH	1975-1998
	12	S	CROATS	BOSNIA	1990-1998
	13	S	EAST TIMORESE	INDONESIA	1975-1998
	14	S	ERITREANS	ETHIOPIA	1965-1989
	15	S	IBO	NIGERIA	1965-1974
	16	S	IGOROTS	PHILIPPINES	1985-1989
	17	S	INDIGENOUS PEOPLES	NICARAGUA	1980-1989
	18	S	ISSAQ	SOMALIA	1985-1994
	19	S	KACHINS	BURMA	1960-1994
	20	S	KARENS	BURMA	1945-1998
	21	S	KASHMIRIS	INDIA	1990-1998
	22	S	KONJO/AMBA	UGANDA	1960-1969
	23	S	KOSOVO ALBANIANS	YUGOSLAVIA	1995-1998
	24	S	KURDS	IRAN	1975-1994
	25	S	KURDS	IRAQ	1960-1994
	26	S	KURDS	TURKEY	1985-1998
	27	S	LUBA	DEM. REP. CONGO	1960-1964
	28	S	LUNDA, YEKE	DEM. REP. CONGO	1960-1964
	29	S	LUNDA, YEKE	DEM. REP. CONGO	1975-1979
	30	S	MALAY-MUSLIMS	THAILAND	1970-1974
	31	S	MALAY-MUSLIMS	THAILAND	1995-1998
	32	S	MIZOS	INDIA	1970-1979
	33	S	MONS	BURMA	1985-1998
	34	S	MONTAGNARDS	VIETNAM	1945-1974
	35	S	MOROS	PHILIPPINES	1970-1998
	36	S	NAGAS	INDIA	1955-1959
	37	S	NAGAS	INDIA	1995-1998
	38	S	OROMO	ETHIOPIA	1985-1994
	39	S	OSSETIANS (SOUTH)	GEORGIA	1990-1994
	40	S	PAPUANS	INDONESIA	1985-1998
	41	S	SAHARAWIS	MOROCCO	1975-1994
	42	S	SERBS	BOSNIA	1990-1998
	43	S	SERBS	CROATIA	1990-1998

<sup>32</sup> The Southernns were mainly Shafi'i Sunni Muslims, and possibly saw their fight in terms of a battle against northern Zaydi Shi'ias, but the northern government was clearly controlled by Shafi'i as well.

	44	S	SHANS	BURMA	1960-1998
	45	S	SIKHS	INDIA	1985-1994
	46	S	SLAVS	MOLDOVA	1990-1994
	47	S	SOMALIS	ETHIOPIA	1960-1979
	48	S	SOUTHERNERS	SUDAN	1960-1998
	49	S	SRI LANKAN TAMILS	SRI LANKA	1980-1998
	50	S	TIBETANS	CHINA	1950-1964
	51	S	TRIPURAS	INDIA	1980-1998
	52	S	TUAREG	MALI	1960-1964
	53	S	TUAREG	MALI	1990-1994
	54	S	TUAREG	NIGER	1985-1994
	55	S	TURKMEN	CHINA	1945-1954
	56	S	TURKMEN	CHINA	1995-1998
	57	S	ZOMIS (CHINS)	BURMA	1985-1994
31 (33%)	58	SC	ACHOLI	UGANDA	1985-1998
	59	SC	AFARS	DJIBOUTI	1990-1994
	60	SC	ANKOLE	UGANDA	1980-1984
	61	SC	BAKONGO	ANGOLA	1995-1998
	62	SC	BANYARWANDANS	ZAIRE	1995-1998
	63	SC	CHINESE	MALAYA	1945-1959
	64	SC	DRUZE	LEBANON	1975-1989
	65	SC	GIO & MANO	LIBERIA	c. 1989
	66	SC	HAZARAS	AFGHANISTAN	1980-1998
	67	SC	HUTUS	BURUNDI	1990-1998
	68	SC	HUTUS	RWANDA	1995-1998
	69	SC	INDIGENOUS PEOPLES	GUATEMALA	1980-1984
	70	SC	KRAHN	LIBERIA	c. 1989
	71	SC	MANDINGO	LIBERIA	c. 1989
	72	SC	NDEBELLE	ZIMBABWE (RHODESIA)	1975-1979
	73	SC	NORTHERNERS	CHAD	1965-1979
	74	SC	OVIMBUNDU	ANGOLA	1965-1998
	75	SC	PALESTINIANS	ISRAEL	1965-1969
	76	SC	PALESTINIANS	JORDAN	1970-1974
	77	SC	PALESTINIANS	LEBANON	1975-1989
	78	SC	SHANS (BCP)	BURMA	1960-1998
	79	SC	SHI'IS	IRAQ	1980-1994
	80	SC	SHI'IS	LEBANON	1980-1994
	81	SC	SOUTHERNERS	CHAD	1980-1984
	82	SC	SUNNIS	LEBANON	1975-1989
	83	SC	TAJIKS	AFGHANISTAN	1980-1998
	84	SC	TEMNE	SIERRA LEONE	1990-1998
	85	SC	TIGREANS	ETHIOPIA	1975-1994
	86	SC	TUTSIS	DEM. REP. CONGO	1995-1998
	87	SC	TUTSIS	RWANDA	1990-1994
	88	SC	UZBEKS	AFGHANISTAN	1985-1998
2 (2%)	89	P/C	MARONITE CHRISTIANS	LEBANON	1975-1994
	90	P/C	MAYANS	MEXICO	1990-1998
1 (1%)	91	M/C	MOHAJIRS	PAKISTAN	1995-1998

2	92	NC	BERBERS	ALGERIA	1955-1964
(2%)	93	NC	HMONG	LAOS	1945-1979

S=Separatism;

SC=State capture;

P/C=Either policy or constitutional challenge;

M/C=Mixed or Changing goals. The group either sought goals from more than one of the categories analyzed, or the group's goals changed from one category to another over time;

NC=Not coded; either some, but not sufficient, information on goals was found, or contradictory evidence on goals was found.

For purposes of the quantitative analysis produced in chapter two, only the 88 cases for which a coding of separatism or state capture was given were used. Theoretically, there is no basis to expect the five cases not coded as state capture or separatism to share the same explanation; and methodologically, the move from binary logit to multinomial logit regression analysis that including these five cases would have required presents problems of both data and interpretation. It was therefore decided that the most cogent analysis could be performed solely with the list of 88 cases.

### III. Independent Variables

Each independent variable used in the analyses presented in chapter two is described below.

#### A. *grppro*

The size of the rebelling group as a percentage of the country's total population. The variable is derived from the MAR variable *gpro95*, the group proportion of the country population in 1995, or, if no information is available for 1995, *gpro90*, the MAR estimate of the group population percentage in 1990.<sup>33</sup> For Bengalis in Pakistan, figures from the 1971 Europa Yearbook<sup>34</sup> were used. For the three Liberian groups, figures from Ethnologue.com<sup>35</sup> were used.

<sup>33</sup> According to the MAR codebook, the 1995 figures are more accurate.

<sup>34</sup> *The Europa World Yearbook, 1971: A World Survey* (London: Europa Publications, 1971), 1116.

<sup>35</sup> Ethnologue: Languages of the World, <http://www.ethnologue.com/>.

## ***B. land***

The total land area of the country, measured in millions of square kilometers. All data except for Yugoslavia are taken from the Earth Trends website of the World Resources Institute.<sup>36</sup> Land area of Yugoslavia is taken from the CIA World Factbook.

## ***C. majority***

Majority takes the value of 1 if the country being rebelled against had a majority ethnic group at the time of rebellion, and 0 otherwise. The main issue that arose for this coding was choosing an ethnic category within which to search for a majority in each country. For example, a country may have a majority religious group, but no majority language group (eg., Afghanistan) while another country may have a majority language group but no majority religious group (eg., Lebanon). To decide simply whether a county had a majority ethnic group or not, I used the ethnic category implied by the group in rebellion. So, for example, because the Kashmiri rebels in India constitute both a language and a religious group (Kashmiri-speaking Muslims), the country is coded as not having a majority in this case because no other distinct language/religious group constitutes a majority of the country's population. Theoretically, this rule means that a single country may be coded both as having a majority and as not having a majority for two different rebelling groups, although this did not occur in practice.<sup>37</sup> Countries were automatically coded as having a majority when the name of the rebelling group implied a division of the country into two groups, for instance "Northerners" in Chad, or "Southerners" in Sudan. Further, it did not matter whether the majority was the rebelling group, the ruling group, or neither of these.

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<sup>36</sup> Earthtrends: The Environmental Information Portal. <http://earthtrends.wri.org>.

<sup>37</sup> With one partial exception, which is that Pakistan is coded as having a majority for Bengalis but not having a majority for Baluchis. Prior to the 1971 Bangladeshi secession Bengalis made up a majority of the united country of Pakistan. The Baluchi rebellion occurred after this split, however, when no language group constituted a majority.

#### ***D. kindred***

A dummy variable indicating whether the group has close kindred in a country adjoining its regional base. This is based on the gc10 variable developed by Fearon and Laitin and incorporated into the latest version of MAR.<sup>38</sup> It is coded 0 if the group has no close kindred across an international border, the group has close kindred across a border that does not adjoin its regional base (cases that do not have regional bases are coded here), or the group has no close kindred in countries that adjoin its regional base. The variable is coded 1 if the group has close kindred in one or more countries that adjoin its regional base.

#### ***E. gdp***

This is the country's real per capita gross domestic product, with imputed missing values, lagged once.<sup>39</sup> Some missing values were added from years closely preceding or following those years containing missing information: Azerbaijan 1985 uses 1988, Bosnia 1990 & Croatia 1990 use Yugoslavia 1986, Burma 1960 uses 1961, Dem Rep Congo 1960 uses 1961, Ethiopia 1960 uses 1961, Georgia 1990 uses 1991, India 1955 uses 1961, Iraq 1960 uses 1961, Mali 1960 uses 1961, Moldova 1990 uses 1991, Sudan 1960 uses 1961, and Uganda 1960 uses 1961. Even given these substitutions, seven cases remain with missing data for this variable.

#### ***F. britcol***

A dummy variable indicating whether the country is a former British colony.

#### ***G. frenchcol***

A dummy variable indicating whether the country is a former French colony.

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<sup>38</sup> See Minorities at Risk Project, *Minorities at Risk Dataset Users Manual* 040903, 2003, 19.

<sup>39</sup> These data were taken from Sambanis' dataset (and are originally World Bank data). Sambanis' data are available online from <http://www.yale.edu/unsy/civilwars/jcrivilwars.zip>.



### ***H. africa***

A dummy variable indicating whether the country is in Africa. Arabic-speaking north African countries are included.

### ***I. collapse***

An indicator dividing time into periods roughly corresponding to before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It takes on a value of 0 if the MAR high level of violence period starts before 1990, and a value of 1 if the MAR high level of violence period begins in 1990 or afterwards.

### ***J. culdif***

A dummy variable indicating whether the group had both language and religious differences with the ruling group. The culdif variable relies on two MAR variables: culdifx2 and culdifx4, indicating whether no differential, some indeterminate differential, or significant differential existed between the ethnic group and the country's ruling group in terms of language and religion, respectively. Culdif is coded 1 if there were both language and religious differences, and 0 otherwise. For the four groups not included in MAR, I relied on information from a variety of sources, including those used for the content analysis, and ethnologue.com, to determine the coding of this variable.

### **Autonomy Variables**

Autonomy is considered only in the sense that it is connected to a territory. A driving interest of this analysis is to see whether certain political arrangements that administratively connect a people to a territory can have future effects in terms of the goals of organizations representing those peoples. Additionally, it is much more difficult methodologically to track

instances of non-territorial based autonomy. Therefore, autonomous rights given to a community defined in a non-geographic way are not considered forms of autonomy here.

Four different autonomy variables are presented in the analysis in chapter two. The building blocks of these four variables are three measures of autonomy in the post-colonial, colonial, and pre-colonial periods for each group in the final list of cases. Those three measures are *autpostc*, *autcol*, and *autprec*.

*Autpostc* measures autonomy in the post-colonial period. For countries that were not colonized, the period examined is the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The measure *autpostc* is coded as 0 if the group did not have any regional autonomy during the period, 1 if the group had some autonomy in name only at any time during the period, 3 if real autonomy with actual legislative and executive powers existed, and 2 if the group possessed a degree of autonomy that fell somewhere between 1 and 3. All titular groups of autonomous regions in the former Soviet Union are coded as 2.<sup>40</sup>

*Autcol* measures autonomy under colonialism. The colonial period is assumed to be the period of European colonization of non-European countries directly preceding independence. Thus, if an area changed hands from one European country to another, and then received independence, only the time period under the second colonial power is analyzed. Additionally, even if the Ottoman Empire is considered a colonial power in terms of its control over Middle Eastern lands, in every relevant case there was a period of British or French colonial rule prior to

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<sup>40</sup> The idea being that Soviet autonomous regions were clearly less than fully autonomous, but were more than just nominal entities. See Dmitry Gorenburg, "Nationalism for the Masses: Popular Support for Nationalism in Russia's Ethnic Republics," *Europe-Asia Studies* 53 (January 2001), 73-104, and also Carol Skalnik Leff, "Democratization and Disintegration in Multinational States: The Breakup of the Communist Federations," *World Politics* 51:2 (January 1999), 205-235. The latter article notes of the federal structure of Communist states, "...the fact that the center accorded official recognition to the identity of the dominant titular nationalities in each republic—reinforced by language and cultural rights—had unanticipated consequences for ethnic mobilization" (210).

independence, and it was this period that was analyzed for autonomy.<sup>41</sup> Autcol is coded as 0 if the country in which the group lives was never colonized, or if no special administrative status was given to the group by the colonial authority. It is coded as 1 if the group was separately governed by the same colonial administration that governed the rest of the territory. Autonomy in this regard is considered only if the colonial authority ruled the group as a whole, separately from other groups. It is not considered when colonial authorities delegated authority to sub-groups like tribes. Finally, autcol is coded as 2 if the group was colonized by a different European power than ruled the rest of the territory that became the country at independence.

The theory advanced in chapter one states that group norms of legitimacy play a role in determining group goals. I believe a norm exists that groups with a history of distinct government are more deserving of self rule, and therefore distinctly administered groups under colonialism are given an autcol code of 1. But I believe an even stronger norm involves the transition from colonial status to statehood, and says that colonialism ends and former colonies become independent states. I reflect this stronger norm by giving an autcol code of 2 to groups that were administered by a separate colonial power.

Finally, autprec, for autonomy in the pre-colonial period, is coded as 1 if the group was more or less united in a single, independent polity, ruled by members of the group, in the period immediately preceding colonization. A group is only coded as having had such independence if evidence of a single state ruled by the group could be found—that is, a series of mutually-independent tribes or villages would not count as autonomy for the group.<sup>42</sup> A group whose

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<sup>41</sup> Thus, even though Mt. Lebanon was divided into separate Christian and Druze governments under Ottoman rule, the Druze are not coded as having a distinct colonial administration because no such arrangements existed under the French, who controlled Lebanon in the period immediately preceding Lebanese independence.

<sup>42</sup> Thus, because sources identify a single Bakongo-ruled “Kingdom of Kongo” immediately prior to Belgian rule of Congo, but many separate Ovimbundu kingdoms, the Bakongo are coded as having had precolonial independence while the Ovimbundu are coded as not having had precolonial independence. And Kashmir is not considered to have been independent in the precolonial period because its rulers were Sikh, whereas Kashmiri rebels are Muslim.

members were governed by several independent polities in the pre-colonial period may later come to see itself as having been once autonomous, because group members were not ruled by outsiders, but to avoid a tautological definition of autonomy strict criteria must be drawn. A group is given an additional three points on this measure if it possessed an independent state sometime in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

As with autcol, norms play the decisive role in the coding rules used for autprec. I hypothesize that past autonomy for the group as a whole leads to feelings of deserving to be autonomous in the present, and therefore code groups that have had such autonomy in the pre-colonial period as 1 on autprec. But a very strong norm exists that sovereignty, once granted, should not be taken away, and I therefore believe that groups that actually had independent states as recently as the 20<sup>th</sup> Century should have that norm appropriately reflected in the autprec score.

The following table shows the codes for each of the three autonomy indicators described above, for each case in the dataset. The table shows a period for missing data.

group	country	autpostc	autcol	autprec
HAZARAS	AFGHANISTAN	0	0	0
TAJIKS	AFGHANISTAN	0	0	0
UZBEKS	AFGHANISTAN	0	0	0
BAKONGO	ANGOLA	0	0	1
OVIMBUNDU	ANGOLA	0	0	0
ARMENIANS	AZERBAIJAN	2	0	3
CHITTAGONG HILL TRIBES	BANGLADESH	2	1	0
CROATS	BOSNIA	2	0	0
SERBS	BOSNIA	2	0	0
KACHINS	BURMA	0	0	0
KARENS	BURMA	0	0	0
MONS	BURMA	0	0	1
SHANS	BURMA	2	0	0
SHANS (BCP)	BURMA	2	0	0
ZOMIS (CHINS)	BURMA	0	0	0
HUTUS	BURUNDI	0	0	0
NORTHERNERS	CHAD	0	0	0
SOUTHERNERS	CHAD	0	0	0
TIBETANS	CHINA	1	0	3

TURKMEN	CHINA	1	0	4
TURKMEN	CHINA	1	0	4
SERBS	CROATIA	2	0	0
LUBA	DEM. REP. CONGO	0	.	.
LUNDA, YEKE	DEM. REP. CONGO	0	.	.
LUNDA, YEKE	DEM. REP. CONGO	0	.	.
TUTSIS	DEM. REP. CONGO	0	.	.
AFARS	DJIBOUTI	0	.	0
AFARS	ETHIOPIA	0	0	0
ERITREANS	ETHIOPIA	3	2	0
OROMO	ETHIOPIA	0	1	0
SOMALIS	ETHIOPIA	0	1	0
TIGREANS	ETHIOPIA	0	0	0
ABKHAZIANS	GEORGIA	2	0	0
OSSETIANS (SOUTH)	GEORGIA	2	0	0
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES	GUATEMALA	0	0	0
ASSAMESE	INDIA	3	1	1
BODOS	INDIA	0	0	.
KASHMIRIS	INDIA	3	1	0
MIZOS	INDIA	1	1	0
NAGAS	INDIA	0	1	0
NAGAS	INDIA	3	1	0
SIKHS	INDIA	3	.	1
TRIPURAS	INDIA	3	1	1
ACEHNESE	INDONESIA	3	.	1
EAST TIMORESE	INDONESIA	.	2	.
PAPUANS	INDONESIA	.	1	.
KURDS	IRAN	0	0	3
KURDS	IRAQ	0	0	0
SHI ' IS	IRAQ	0	0	0
PALESTINIANS	ISRAEL	0	0	0
PALESTINIANS	JORDAN	0	0	0
DRUZE	LEBANON	0	0	0
PALESTINIANS	LEBANON	0	0	0
SHI ' IS	LEBANON	0	0	0
SUNNIS	LEBANON	0	0	0
Gio and Mano	Liberia	0	0	0
Krahn	Liberia	0	0	0
Mandingo	Liberia	0	0	0
CHINESE	MALAYSIA	0	0	0
TUAREG	MALI	0	0	1
TUAREG	MALI	0	0	1
SLAVS	MOLDOVA	2	0	0
SAHARAWIS	MOROCCO	0	2	0
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES	NICARAGUA	3	2	0
TUAREG	NIGER	0	0	1
IBO	NIGERIA	2	1	.
BALUCHIS	PAKISTAN	3	1	0

BOUGANVILLEANS	PAPUA N.G.	.	.	.
IGOROTS	PHILIPPINES	0	0	0
MOROS	PHILIPPINES	0	0	1
Bengalis	Pakistan	.	1	0
CHECHENS	RUSSIA	2	0	.
HUTUS	RWANDA	0	0	0
TUTSIS	RWANDA	0	0	0
TEMNE	SIERRA LEONE	0	0	0
ISSAQ	SOMALIA	0	2	3
SRI LANKAN TAMILS	SRI LANKA	0	0	.
SOUTHERNERS	SUDAN	0	1	0
MALAY-MUSLIMS	THAILAND	2	0	1
MALAY-MUSLIMS	THAILAND	0	0	1
KURDS	TURKEY	0	0	0
ACHOLI	UGANDA	1	0	0
ANKOLE	UGANDA	1	0	0
KONJO/AMBA	UGANDA	0	0	0
MONTAGNARDS	VIETNAM	0	0	0
KOSOVO ALBANIANS	YUGOSLAVIA	1	0	0
BANYARWANDANS	ZAIRE	0	0	1
NDEBELE	ZIMBABWE	0	0	0

The four autonomy variables actually presented in chapter two are as follows:

***K. autsum***

An index of past autonomy, it ranges from 0 to 5,<sup>43</sup> and is the sum of the values of autpostc, autcol, and autprec. Thus, autsum attempts to incorporate the *extent* of the group's past autonomy.

***L. autany***

A dummy variable indicating whether the group had any sort of regional autonomy in the post-colonial or colonial period, or independence in the period immediately preceding colonialism. It is coded 1 if autpostc, autcol, *or* autprec are coded as greater than or equal to 1.

***M. autpostc***

A dummy variable indicating whether the group had any autonomy in the post-colonial period, as described above.

***N. autpreind***

The variable autpreind is a dummy variable indicating whether the group had any autonomy in the pre-independence period, that is, either under colonialism or in the period immediately preceding colonialism. It is coded as 1 if either autcol>0 or if autprec>0.

The coding of each independent variable used in chapter two, with the exception of the control variables britcol, frenchcol, africa, and collapse, is shown in the table below.

group	country	Grppro	land	majority	kindred	gdp	autsum	autany	Autpostc	autpreind	culdif
HAZARAS	AFGHANISTAN	0.19	0.65	0	0	3814	0	0	0	0	1
TAJIKS	AFGHANISTAN	0.25	0.65	0	1	3814	0	0	0	0	0
UZBEKS	AFGHANISTAN	0.06	0.65	0	1	3685	0	0	0	0	0
BAKONGO	ANGOLA	0.13	1.25	0	1	4096	1	1	0	1	1
OVIMBUNDU	ANGOLA	0.37	1.25	0	1	.	0	0	0	0	1
ARMENIANS	AZERBAIJAN	0.02	0.09	1	0	4118	5	1	1	1	1

<sup>43</sup> Theoretically the index could range from 0 to 9.

CHITTAGONG HILL TRIBES	BANGLADESH	0.01	0.14	1	1	968	3	1	1	1	1
CROATS	BOSNIA	0.22	0.05	0	1	3998	2	1	1	0	1
SERBS	BOSNIA	0.40	0.05	0	1	3998	2	1	1	0	1
KACHINS	BURMA	0.02	0.68	1	1	3685	0	0	0	0	1
KARENS	BURMA	0.07	0.68	1	0	.	0	0	0	0	1
MONS	BURMA	0.02	0.68	1	1	3692	1	1	0	1	0
SHANS	BURMA	0.09	0.68	1	1	3685	2	1	1	0	0
SHANS (BCP)	BURMA	0.09	0.68	1	1	3685	2	1	1	0	0
ZOMIS (CHINS)	BURMA	0.02	0.68	1	1	3692	0	0	0	0	1
HUTUS	BURUNDI	0.85	0.03	1	0	532	0	0	0	0	0
ORTHERNERS	CHAD	0.52	1.28	1	0	744	0	0	0	0	1
SOUTHERNERS	CHAD	0.38	1.28	1	0	574	0	0	0	0	1
TIBETANS	CHINA	0.00	9.60	1	0	.	4	1	1	1	1
TURKMEN	CHINA	0.01	9.60	1	0	1908	5	1	1	1	1
TURKMEN	CHINA	0.01	9.60	1	0	.	5	1	1	1	1
SERBS	CROATIA	0.05	0.06	1	0	3998	2	1	1	0	1
LUBA	DEM. REP. CONGO	0.04	2.34	0	0	3687	0	0	0	0	0
LUNDA, YEKE	DEM. REP. CONGO	0.02	2.34	0	1	3687	0	0	0	0	0
LUNDA, YEKE	DEM. REP. CONGO	0.02	2.34	0	1	1712	0	0	0	0	0
TUTSIS	DEM. REP. CONGO	0.02	2.34	0	1	2096	0	0	0	0	0
AFARS	DJIBOUTI	0.35	0.02	1	1	4082	0	0	0	0	0
AFARS	ETHIOPIA	0.04	1.10	0	1	3682	0	0	0	0	1
ERITREANS	ETHIOPIA	0.08	1.10	0	1	3679	5	1	1	1	1
OROMO	ETHIOPIA	0.40	1.10	0	0	3824	1	1	0	1	1
SOMALIS	ETHIOPIA	0.06	1.10	0	1	3678	1	1	0	1	1
TIGREANS	ETHIOPIA	0.10	1.10	0	1	3682	0	0	0	0	0
ABKHAZIANS	GEORGIA	0.02	0.07	1	0	4081	2	1	1	0	1
OSSETIANS (SOUTH)	GEORGIA	0.03	0.07	1	1	4081	2	1	1	0	0
INDIGEOUS PEOPLES	GUATEMALA	0.42	0.11	1	1	2578	0	0	0	0	0
ASSAMESE	INDIA	0.01	3.29	0	0	1455	5	1	1	1	1
BODOS	INDIA	0.01	3.29	0	1	1008	0	0	0	0	0
KASHMIRIS	INDIA	0.01	3.29	0	1	1235	4	1	1	1	1
MIZOS	INDIA	0.00	3.29	0	1	759	2	1	1	1	1
NAGAS	INDIA	0.00	3.29	0	1	766	1	1	0	1	1
NAGAS	INDIA	0.00	3.29	0	1	1455	4	1	1	1	1
SIKHS	INDIA	0.02	3.29	0	1	1008	4	1	1	1	1
TRIPURAS	INDIA	0.00	3.29	0	1	837	5	1	1	1	0
ACEHNESE	INDONESIA	0.02	1.90	0	0	892	4	1	1	1	0
EAST TIMORESE	INDONESIA	0.00	1.90	0	0	892	2	1	0	1	1
PAPUANS	INDONESIA	0.01	1.90	0	1	1610	1	1	0	1	1
KURDS	IRAN	0.07	1.63	0	1	5952	3	1	0	1	1
KURDS	IRAQ	0.20	0.44	1	1	3820	0	0	0	0	0
SHI'IS	IRAQ	0.60	0.44	1	1	4010	0	0	0	0	0
PALESTINIANS	ISRAEL	0.29	0.02	1	1	4445	0	0	0	0	1
PALESTINIANS	JORDAN	0.50	0.09	1	1	3799	0	0	0	0	0
DRUZE	LEBAON	0.06	0.01	0	0	3695	0	0	0	0	0
PALESTINIANS	LEBAON	0.10	0.01	0	0	3695	0	0	0	0	0



SHI'IS	LEBAON	0.32	0.01	0	1	3692	0	0	0	0	0
SUNNIS	LEBAON	0.20	0.01	0	0	3695	0	0	0	0	0
Gio and Ma0	Liberia	0.14	0.11	0	1	4085	0	0	0	0	0
Krahn	Liberia	0.04	0.11	0	1	4085	0	0	0	0	0
Mandingo	Liberia	0.02	0.11	0	1	4085	0	0	0	0	1
CHINESE	MALAYSIA	0.27	0.33	0	0	.	0	0	0	0	1
TUAREG	MALI	0.06	1.24	0	1	4089	1	1	0	1	0
TUAREG	MALI	0.06	1.24	0	1	3678	1	1	0	1	0
SLAVS	MOLDOVA	0.27	0.03	1	1	4121	2	1	1	0	0
SAHARAWIS	MOROCCO	0.01	0.45	1	1	1433	2	1	0	1	0
INDIGEOUS PEOPLES	NICARAGUA	0.05	0.13	1	1	3803	5	1	1	1	1
TUAREG	NIGER	0.08	1.27	1	1	3802	1	1	0	1	0
IBO	NIGERIA	0.17	0.92	0	0	606	3	1	1	1	1
BALUCHIS	PAKISTAN	0.04	0.80	0	1	946	4	1	1	1	0
BOUGANVILLEANS	PAPUA N.G.	0.03	0.46	0	1	1970	0	0	0	0	0
IGOROTS	PHILIPPINES	0.01	0.30	1	0	1663	0	0	0	0	0
MOROS	PHILIPPINES	0.05	0.30	1	0	1401	1	1	0	1	1
Bengalis	Pakistan	0.54	0.80	1	1	1029	1	1	0	1	0
CHECHENS	RUSSIA	0.01	17.08	1	0	6369	2	1	1	0	1
HUTUS	RWANDA	0.80	0.03	1	0	354	0	0	0	0	0
TUTSIS	RWANDA	0.19	0.03	1	0	730	0	0	0	0	0
TEMNE	SIERRA LEONE	0.30	0.07	0	1	4085	0	0	0	0	0
ISSAQ	SOMALIA	0.12	0.64	0	1	3799	5	1	0	1	0
SRI LANKAN TAMILS	SRI LANKA	0.12	0.07	1	1	1549	0	0	0	0	1
SOUTHERNERS	SUDAN	0.25	2.51	1	1	3801	1	1	0	1	1
MALAY-MUSLIMS	THAILAND	0.03	0.51	1	1	4654	3	1	1	1	1
MALAY-MUSLIMS	THAILAND	0.03	0.51	1	1	1401	1	1	0	1	1
KURDS	TURKEY	0.20	0.77	1	1	3022	0	0	0	0	1
ACHOLI	UGANDA	0.04	0.24	0	1	576	1	1	1	0	0
ANKOLE	UGANDA	0.08	0.24	0	0	572	1	1	1	0	0
KONJO/AMBA	UGANDA	0.03	0.24	0	1	598	0	0	0	0	0
MONTAGNARDS	VIETNAM	0.02	0.33	1	1	.	0	0	0	0	1
KOSOVO ALBANIANS	YUGOSLAVIA	0.14	0.10	1	1	.	1	1	1	0	1
BANYARWANDANS	ZAIRE	0.05	2.34	0	1	4108	1	1	0	1	0
NDEBELE	ZIMBABWE	0.16	0.39	1	1	1364	0	0	0	0	0

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## **Other Materials**

### *Note on Archival Materials*

U.S. archival documents are from the National Archives Annex in College Park Maryland, and are designated in the footnotes with “NA2,” for “National Archives 2” and “RG59,” for “Record Group 59,” in which all State Department archives are found. In parentheses in each citation of paper records is a series of five numbers, corresponding to the record group, stack area, row, compartment, and shelf, respectively. Together with the box number and the folder name, this information is sufficient to find each item. Older documents that are microfilmed are cited with a single code that is sufficient to locate them, for instance:

865D.01/468

This code identifies the category (8—internal affairs), the country (65D—Italian East Africa), the subject (01—government), and the location on the microfilm roll (the 468<sup>th</sup> document). This information can be used with a finding aid available at the National Archives to identify which roll of film contains each document.

UK government materials were taken from the Public Record Office (designated PRO in the footnotes) in London and are marked FO for Foreign Office.

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<sup>1</sup> published between November 1962 and February 1963

<sup>2</sup> published between 1970 and 1973.

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<sup>3</sup> originally presented in fall, 1963.

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<sup>4</sup> According to the web site, this declaration was endorsed (among several others) by Baqir al-Hakim, the head at the time of one of the largest Iraqi Shi'a political parties, The Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq.



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