

POLITICAL OPPORTUNISM AND ETHNIC MOBILIZATION:

A Triadic Model for Predicting the Ethnicization of Politics in New States

Working Paper

Comments Appreciated

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Ethnic conflict is a complex social process involving multiple iterated plays between a dizzying array of participants. Consequently, students of ethno-politics have made contributions to the understanding of different aspects of this process without necessarily even speaking to each other. Some scholars have studied the *development of different types of "nations,"* which they argue result from the founding moments of society or states (Gellner 1983; Horowitz 1985; Stavenhagen 1990), while materialist scholars hypothesize that relative *economic backwardness* and cultural barriers to upward mobility lead some ethnic groups to assume modern nationhood (Smith 1989; Hobsbawm 1990; Nairn 1974; Gellner 1964). Others have focused on explaining *how* populations can be mobilized on an ethnic basis (Hroch 1993; Anderson 1991).¹ while instrumentalist approaches have shed light on conditions under which *political elites* mobilize populations around ethnicity in order to achieve or maintain political power (Bates 1994; Weingast 1994; Gagnon 1993; Tishkov 1993). Rationalist scholars have argued that *groups respond* to mobilization when the center cannot commit to protecting the minority or when the minority can extort economic concessions from the center (Fearon and van Houten 1998; Fearon 1994; Bates 1994). Finally, constructivists have shown how national scripts or institutions can "construct" rules of membership in a political entity, creating boundaries that serve as lines of potential conflict (Stoler 1992; Mosse 1985; Brubaker 1993; Malkki 1992).²

Although the above works have illuminated important aspects of ethno-politics, I will argue that the current literature suffers generally from the problem of trying to understand a complex social dynamic by analyzing many of its parts and then inferring the whole. Each of these approaches has produced snapshots of the bigger picture ethnic mobilization, but until the complete cycle of mobilization is examined in systematic detail, the complete process of ethnic mobilization remains woefully misunderstood. This involves an analysis of how the actions of minority groups, the state

¹ Much of the work on ethnic mobilization draws heavily on sociological theories, particular Charles Tilly's theory of resource mobilization. See Charles Tilly (1978) *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Englewood Hills, N.J.: Prentice Hall).

² Constructivist contributions to the study of ethno-politics span a wide range of issues; the approach directly pertaining to the puzzle of group radicalization will be discussed in greater length in the literature review below.

center (or majority), and the minority's outside lobby state *interact* to produce ethnic mobilization and de-mobilization.

In this paper, I put forth a triadic bargaining model intended to test the hypothesis that variation in group radicalization (measured by the extremity of claims against the center) is a function of interactions between the majority and the minority's lobby state, which signal changes in the big players' policy incentives regarding the group. This model is intended to address the following three empirical puzzles. First, why do ethnic groups (the minority) advance more or less extreme demands against the center over time, particularly when--contrary to neorealist hypotheses that groups mobilize in response to a security threat--groups often mobilize in the *absence* of outside threats and de-mobilize in the *presence* of increased threat? Second, why do states (here, the majority) undertake discriminatory policies against an ethnic minority when such measures (1) are economically costly, (2) often fail to attract significant popular support within the majority population, and (3), go against leaders' electoral incentives in the sense that these policies hurt the state's chances of obtaining membership in international or regional organizations highly popular with the general electorate? Finally, and relatedly, why do representatives of the minority and majority typically advance ethnic policies that are more extreme than what is preferred by the median voter of their constituencies? This fact is puzzling if we make the reasonable assumption that political leaders value re-election and should therefore adopt policies that reflect median voters' preferences.

THE ARGUMENT IN BRIEF

I will make the argument that we need to analyze group behavior through the lens of party politics in order to answer the above questions concerning ethnicization of politics, including the puzzle of why elites typically advance claims that are more extreme than is reflected by group preferences. I posit that minority leaders' stances are often more extreme than the preferences of the group because these positions are generated by an electoral process that forces compromise coalitions with ethnic extremists when ethnic salience is high, as shown in the *spatial model*. Similarly, the majority will undertake politically unpopular policies against a minority when high ethnic salience forces majority parties or political agents into coalitions with extremist groups in order to govern. The relaxation of the

unitary actor assumption in the context of this spatial model suggests answers for the puzzle of how ethnic identity is constructed, by identifying conditions under which political actors will realign along different dimensions.

When ethnic salience is high, parties are likely to align on an ethnic basis, instead of forming intra-ethnic coalitions. Conversely, when ethnic salience is low (again as an outcome of negotiations between the majority and the minority's lobby state), the minority is likely to moderate its demands, becoming open to political alliances across ethnic boundaries. This model therefore predicts that a *realignment of political actors from an ethnic to an economic dimension* will typically occur following (1) elections (in either host or lobby state), which often generate new political agents, and (2), treaty negotiations between the host state and the minority's lobby state.

Ethnic salience, in turn, is a function of negotiations between the minority, the majority and an outside lobby state, which is modelled in the simple *decision tree* below. Here, minority groups undertake cost-benefit analysis in determining whether to mobilize on an ethnic basis following state formation. In making this decision, groups consider the relative costs and benefits of "radicalizing" against the relative costs and benefits of "accommodating" under the auspices of a new state. This model demonstrates that the greater the likelihood that an outside lobby state is nationalistic and/or that the majority has incentives to repress, the higher the probability that a minority will radicalize their demands, mobilizing upon ethnic characteristics.

In making the argument that groups radicalize, moderate and realign upon different dimensions as a function of *political opportunism*, I argue against (1) pure economic approaches to ethnic conflict, and (2), the constructivist or elite-based approach to group radicalization. This model predicts, and case studies reveal, that economic opportunism cannot account for the many economically backward groups that have sought separation from wealthier centers (Slovakia, Belarus, Ireland, and Macedonia, to name a few). The opposite economic account for group radicalization—that poor regions will attempt to secede from the center due to “cultural barriers to assimilation”—similarly fails to explain why, for example, the Scots (who never faced barriers to assimilation) suddenly mobilized upon a “separate” Scottish identity in the 1990s, nor why Quebecois separatism enjoys strongest support among

bi-lingual residents of Quebec, rather than non-English speakers who presumably face greater barriers to assimilation. The constructivist account to ethnic mobilization—that political elites are largely responsible for fomenting conflict, by selecting nationalizing scripts that intensify ethnic fear or hatred as a means of holding onto power—is importantly flawed in that it overestimates the role of elites in this process. Not only are nationalizing elites routinely ousted, marginalized, or otherwise ignored, but, in many cases, nationalizing elites have transformed themselves into liberal elites, and vice versa. This strongly suggests that nationalizing elites are *generated* by the process of group radicalization, rather than the other way around.

THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE: WHY PREDICT GROUP DEMANDS?

It may be argued that the development of a model designed to predict radicalization and moderation of group demands is pointless as there is no way of knowing whether these claims reflect what the group "really wants." This is because leaders have incentives to misrepresent the interests of groups in order to win concessions from the center. In this view, focusing on demands detracts from the enterprise of understanding ethnic mobilization, as demands could be little more than bluffing behavior or empty talk. I will argue, however, that group claims play a crucial role in the ethnicization of politics. They do so in at least two ways. First, demands effectively "commit" groups to radicalization (through organized protest or civil violence) if the center fails to concede these demands. This is so because, even when members of the group do not wish to follow through with the threat implicit to these claims, members of the group know that the center, taking the threat of radicalization seriously, may launch a preventive strike. Consequently, the group is "locked into" following through on their demands in order to avoid victimization.³

³ An additional reason for following through on the threat implicit in group claims is to avoid incurring "reputation costs." Under this logic, a group would follow through on its demands in order to build a reputation as a group with "high resolve" for fighting for its stated goals. If the center believes it is dealing with a group with high resolve, it is unlikely to call the group's bluff when the group makes demands against the center. This draws upon the logic of war as seen from a bargaining perspective developed by James Fearon (Summer 1995) "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* 49, 3, 379-414.

Second, group demands signal a minority's "reservation value" of the minimum the minority is prepared to accept from the center in return for co-habitation with the majority in a common state.⁴ If the group chooses to "radicalize," it signals both to the majority and to its outside lobby state (if one exists) that it is prepared to engage in conflict with the majority if the center refuses to concede its demands. Because of the behavioral commitment involved in taking stands against the center, a model designed to predict shifts in the extremity of group demands will go a considerable distance in forecasting ethnic mobilization and de-mobilization as well as conceiving of means by which groups may be de-mobilized.

I set forth this argument as follows: In Part I, I define the terms that will be used in the analysis of ethnic mobilization; in Part II, a review of the recent work on nationalism and ethnic conflict relevant to this project will be given; in Part III, I present basic model and its implications for ethnicization of politics; and in Part IV, I delineate the comparative and statistical methodologies that will be used in case study chapters to test the hypotheses yielded by the model.

I. Definitions of Nations, Minorities and Ethnic Groups

The term *group or communal group* will be used to refer to any population within which there is a shared perception that it is defined by certain salient traits--whether cultural, linguistic, religious, or otherwise--which sets this group apart from others (Gurr 1993, Ch. 1). While communal groups certainly predate the nation-state, it would appear that every "group" is to some extent transitory, as group identities shift and overlap throughout time. Group identity also depends upon the larger structure within which groups exist. The phenomenon of *minorities* illustrates this point nicely, since a group's minority status is wholly contingent upon the relationship between minority and majority group that co-exist within a political entity. In the post-communist countries of Eastern Europe, for example,

⁴ Fearon (Summer 1995) argues that the player's respective reservation values—the minimum amount of a divided good that a player will accept in lieu of going to war—affects the width of the "bargaining range" of settlements preferred to war by both players. Underestimation of one's opponent's reservation value can lead one player to offer a settlement outside of the bargaining range, in which case war will be the preferred action for the other player. In this sense, group radicalization can be seen as an effort by the group to credibly commit to a particular reservation value.

many "minorities at risk" (Gurr 1993) have since become governing majorities of new states and they are now faced with the prospect of dealing with an entirely new set of sub-regional minorities (Marshall 1994, 192).

Ethnic conflict can be defined as "collective behavior that uses some set of ethnic markers...as the basis for membership in a group that also articulates a grievance (such as a protest against discrimination), or is acting against a specific ethnic...population" (Olzak 1994).⁵ *Nationalism*, on the other hand, is more narrowly defined as the enterprise of seeking some level of political autonomy for a group on the basis of the group's ethnic identity; in its extreme form, nationalism involves the claim of political sovereignty over a given territory. A nation, thus, is a group that has politicized the cultural characteristics that make it distinct. Nations (groups which are politicized in terms of culture) and minorities (groups that exist in a numerically subordinate position to other group[s] within a governing system) are both subsets of the broader category of groups.⁶ For the sake of clarity, I will use the term *groups* to refer to ethnic groups, while *minorities* will be used only in reference to groups that are numerically smaller⁷ to at least one other group that exists within the boundaries of a state or other sovereign political unit.

II. Prior Research and Theory

Very little of the existing literature on nationalism is directed toward explaining or predicting group demands, but instead focuses on explaining the actual outbreak of ethnic violence or the origins of

⁵Here, *ethnic conflict* will be defined as collective action that uses some set of ethnic markers to act against a particular population.

⁶Ted Gurr argues that national peoples and minority peoples are both types of *politicized* communal groups, thus defining the groups in terms of the types of goals that they tend to advance. He claims that national peoples "seek separation or autonomy from the states that rule them," while minority peoples merely "seek greater access or control [within the system]" (1993, 15). However, since I would be making a tautological argument by first classifying these groups based upon the goals that they pursue in order to infer from these classifications the goals these groups are likely to advance, I will attempt to classify groups within East Central Europe in terms of their general structural features. I am grateful to Professor David Holloway for making this point.

⁷While this definition admittedly can lead to counterintuitive categories, such as cases of majorities *excluded* from access to political and economic resources and minorities that enjoy exclusive access to such resources (e.g., whites in South Africa), I believe that it is useful to define minorities as those groups that are numerically smaller than other groups within the state, if only to highlight the interesting, potentially explosive cases in which members of such groups have disproportionate access to state resources relative to the population at large.

different national forms. Here, I will exploit the most important approaches to the study of nationalism in order to review the existing hypotheses concerning the emergence of group demands.

PRIMORDIALISM

Primordialism holds that there is some "immutable common ancestry, history and solidarity of the *ethnie* that is prior to any social interactions and structures" (Vayrynen 1994, 8). This approach treats groups as ontologically prior, positing that group identities have existed throughout time in some form or other, and have only now "awakened," as if from a deep slumber, to assume the form of a modern nation in the absence of repressive foreign or "anti-national" rule. Although no scholars actually cast themselves as primordialists—a title generally used to deride scholarly work that views group identity as "given" or "natural"—many students of nationalism make the argument that ethnic identity is inherently more important than, and therefore trumps, other identities such as class or gender.⁸

Primordialists would hypothesize that, though group identity remains constant throughout time, variations in group demands reflect different strategies used to protect the group in response to shifting political circumstances. Importantly, however, groups have been observed to de-mobilize or to adopt strategies motivated out of economic interests *at the expense of protecting their ethnic identity*—the cultural assimilation of successive waves of immigrant groups in the United States in search of economic betterment serves to illustrate this point nicely. A person's ethnic identity therefore does not always trump other "identities." Second, the primordialist stance, with its focus on the *permanence* of ethnic identities, is ill-equipped to predict shifts in the extremity of group claims or the timing of group radicalization. Finally, constructivist insights have been used to undermine the very premise of primordialism—that group identities have existed in one form or other throughout time—noting that political elites and institutions have self-consciously "constructed" nations and ethnic groups where none existed before (Slezkine 1994; Brubaker CITE; Suny 1993). Because of these empirical discrepancies, primordialism utterly fails to address the causes of shifts in group radicalization.

⁸ For examples of such arguments, see Walker Connor (1994) *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), and Clifford Geertz, in J. Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith, eds. (1994) *Nationalism: A Reader* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press), 29-34.

MODERNIZATION THEORIES: NATIONALISM OF “BACKWARD” REGIONS

Modernization theories posit that nations are not “awakened,” so much as *formed* through the processes of industrialization and modernization. There are many different hypotheses concerning the link between modernization and nationalism, but the modernization approach holds generally that the emergence of different “nations” or groups in conflict is the result of disparate rates of industrial or economic development.⁹ Such theories argue that the uneven diffusion of industrialization results in the “relative backwardness” of certain regions in a polity. The particular form this region’s “backwardness” takes serves as the primary determinant of whether the less economically-developed area produces a nationalism of its own or instead fuses with that of the dominant region (Hroch 1993; Nairn 1974; Gellner 1983, 1964).¹⁰ Nairn (1974) argues, for example, that the long absence of Scottish nationalism is due to the fact that Scottish middle class faced no barriers to assimilation into England during a time when nationalist movements were rampant throughout Europe. Scottish nationalism therefore failed to emerge because England was absorbing Scottish elites, who otherwise would have developed a Scottish separatist movement. The absence of cultural barriers to assimilation thus accounted for the absence of a Scottish nationalist movement in the 19th Century.

Hobsbawm describes in greater detail how uneven rates of economic development can lead to the emergence of “nations” in conflict. He claims that the growth of “ethnic” as opposed to “civic nationalism” in the period of 1870-1914 was the outgrowth of modernizing forces such as urbanization, migration flows and the resistance of traditional groups to the growth of modernity. Groups subjected to these conditions are, according to Hobsbawm, more likely to listen to arguments that the disruptions

⁹ This argument is very similar to the cultural division of labor hypothesis put forth by Michael Hechter (1975) *Internal Colonialism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press). Hechter analyzed voting patterns in the Celtic Fringe in Great Britain, discovering that cultural patterns (including regional language and religion) accounted for voting behavior in economically disadvantaged counties but not in wealthier counties of Great Britain. His explanation--consistent with the modernization approach--is that the combination of regional backwardness and cultural differences causes ethnic grievances to become politicized, as economic inequities and dependence on external investment reifies ethnic solidarity as a basis for political conflict.

¹⁰ Fundamental to these arguments, however, is the assumption that nations are created on top of some pre-existing group identity. In other words, prior group traits constitute necessary but insufficient bases for the emergence of full nations (Hroch 1993; Hobsbawm 1990; Smith 1989). In making this argument, modernization theorists rely importantly upon the primordialist assumption that a pre-condition for nation-formation is the existence of *some* prior group identity, whether it be regional, religious, linguistic, physical, or other.

in their lives were caused by a "non-Ruritanian [or foreign] state or ruling class" (Ibid., 109).

Accordingly, *a modernization theorist would argue that when uneven rates of industrialization are coupled with cultural barriers to assimilation, relatively backward groups will advance claims of autonomy against the center.* While this does indeed occur, this approach cannot account for the fact that relatively *rich* regions seek autonomy from backward centers just as often (e.g., Quebec, Slovenia and Basque). Further, groups routinely radicalize in the *absence* of shifts in economic development (see cases of ethnic conflict in the 1980s and 90s throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union). An adequate explanation of ethnic mobilization must be able to account for these empirical irregularities.

CLAIMS AS OPPORTUNISM: NATIONALISM AND “ADVANCED” REGIONS

This approach draws from works in political economy that hold that a “pre-existing” ethnic identity is a necessary but insufficient condition for secessionist movements—a group will not advance secessionist claims unless it has economic incentives to alter the boundaries of a state. For example, economically advantaged groups (such as Slovenia in the former Yugoslavia) may calculate that political secession represents a means of avoiding costly net transfer payments to poorer regions of the state. Although this approach is materialist in the sense that ethnic claims are motivated out of economic interests, it differs from the modernization hypothesis that groups advance claims as a function of the group’s “backwardness” vis-à-vis the center. In contrast, the “claims as opportunism” approach holds that group claims are a function of changing economic incentives of individuals within that group.

Moreover, whereas modernization theorists hypothesize that economically backward regions are more likely to seek autonomy, the “claims as opportunism” approach would hold that economically advanced regions are more likely to radicalize. Foundational works in this literature include Nairn (1977) and Gourevitch (1979) who argue that an economically advanced region will have an incentive to break away from the center in order to avoid subsidizing poorer regions of the state. Nairn (1977) argues—in contrast to both Hechter (1975) and his earlier work (Nairn 1974)—that Scotland’s

overdevelopment vis-à-vis Britain will cause this region to advance claims of autonomy against the state. Gourevitch likewise posits that when a state's political and economic centers are located in different regions, the economically advantaged region will agitate for separation from the administrative center (Gourevitch 1979, 306). Other scholars use a more strictly political economy approach to determine the "optimal" size of nations (or states), using efficiency of public goods provision, transaction costs to trade, and tax base arguments to explain why some nations merge while others break apart.¹¹

Recognizing that any useful theory of state secession must take into account the political processes through which secessionist efforts are filtered, Bolton and Roland (1995) advance an argument explaining preferences of the region as a function of median voter economic interests. For example, if wealth or income is far more unequally distributed in one region than in another, then the median voter of the former region may prefer to vote to secede (by popular referendum) in order to implement a more redistributive economic policy than would be preferred by the median voter of the union as a whole.¹² James Fearon and Pieter van Houten (1998) refine this analysis to show how autonomy movements can emerge in both advanced *and* backward regions, by hypothesizing that, while strength of a regional autonomy movement is usually positively correlated with higher per capita income, secessionism can emerge in a poor region as well when the regional income *distribution* is sufficiently different from that of the country as a whole, such that the benefit of implementing their most preferred policy exceeds the cost of lost tax base resulting from secession.¹³

¹¹ This political economy literature on the optimal size of nations is voluminous and growing, and includes: A. Alesina, and E. Spolaore, "On the Number and Size of Nations," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 112, 1027-1056, 1997; D. Freidman, "A Theory of the Size and Shape of Nations," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 85, 59-77, 1977; Donald Wittman, "The Wealth and Size of Nations: An Efficiency Explanation," 1998, Unpublished MS; and Beth V. Yarbrough and Robert M. Yarbrough, "Unification and Secession: Group Size and 'Escape from Lock-In,'" Department of Economics, Amherst College, 1997, Unpublished MS. This literature will be discussed more extensively in Chapter 2.

¹² P. Bolton and G. Roland, "The Break up of Nations: A Political-Economy Analysis, 1995, Mimeo ECARE, April, as cited in Bolton, Roland, and Spolaore, "Economic Theories of the Break-up and Integration of Nations," *European Economic Review* 40 (1996), 702.

¹³ James D. Fearon and Pieter van Houten, "The Politicization of Cultural an Economic Difference: A Return to the Theory of Regional Autonomy Movements," prepared for delivery at the 1998 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Boston, September 3-6, 1998.

The “claims as opportunism” literature thus holds that *groups advance claims of autonomy against the center when they stand to gain either because (1) secession from the center would result in economic gain to the region median voter, or (2), the center is expected to bribe the region in order to prevent secession.* The problem is that such hypotheses do not account for the numerous cases of poor, secessionist regions, for which the tax base cost of seceding is not compensated for through implementation of the preferred policy of the region’s median voter. Even if we consider Fearon and van Houten’s (1998) more nuanced version that accounts for autonomy movements of both “poor” and “rich” regions, there are cases of poor secessionist regions in which a majority of the citizens stood to *lose* economically in the event of separation (consider the cases of secessionist Slovakia in the early 1990s, Belarus in the former Soviet Union, and autonomy-seeking Sudeten Germans in post-WWI Czechoslovakia). Second, economic opportunism cannot account for the *long absence* of claims of autonomy among several overdeveloped regions with “ethnic potential” (e.g., Scotland, Quebec).

CLAIMS AS PROTECTION (THE INSTITUTIONALIST APPROACH)

Whereas “claims as opportunism” assumes that a region will seek secession when its “exit option” is more attractive than the expected benefits of remaining within the state (representing a pure conflict of interests between the region and center), “claims as protection” holds that there is a shared interest in maintaining the integrity of the state, but that the center cannot credibly commit to protect the minority under the auspices of a new state. State formation thus represents a commitment problem for the ruling majority group, structurally similar to a *Prisoner’s Dilemma*.¹⁴

When the majority has a commitment problem, a minority is likely to defect based on the perceived probability that the majority will fail to honor its pledge to cooperate when it comes to power. In order to induce minority cooperation, the majority must therefore *credibly commit* to preserve minority rights. This can be accomplished through the formation of institutions (such as

¹⁴ The Prisoner’s Dilemma can be illustrated as a two-player interactive game in which Group A will fail to cooperate with Group B if the expected gain from cooperating with the other player is not expected to outweigh the gain resulting from defection; both players therefore defect and obtain a lower payoff than they would have obtained had they chosen to cooperate with one another. Thus, what is individually rational for both players results in a Pareto-suboptimal outcome of mutual defection (see Axelrod 1984).

power-sharing institutions or international treaties with “teeth”) that effectively “tie the hands” of the stronger player from transgressing against the weaker player. Assured that the center is constrained, the weaker player then cooperates and both players move out on the Pareto frontier. Institutions thus work to increase the probability of repeated plays between players, by increasing the value of extended cooperation over one-time defect strategies (Keohane 1984; Fearon 1993; Weingast 1994). The commitment problem faced by a majority toward minorities in the context of state formation is particularly intense. This is because a minority faces repression or, worse, total annihilation if it acquiesces to being ruled by another, more powerful ethnic group that may have incentives to transgress against the minority once in power.

As a consequence of the center’s commitment problem, a minority may seek to preserve its rights through various institutional means, from constitutional guarantees to protect the everyday use of one’s native language to the ultimate protection of state secession. Therefore, “claims as protection” would posit that, *when the discretionary power of a majority is unconstrained, the inability of a state government to make a credible promise to preserve minority rights increases the probability that the minority will pursue political autonomy—in order to protect against potentially devastating policies enacted by the central government* (Root 1989; Weingast 1995a; 1995b; 1995c; 1996; Weingast and Schultz 1996).¹⁵ The problem here is that, though this may describe the logic of the groups that advance demands due to the *threat* of majority aggression, this cannot explain why groups in a position of power vis-à-vis the majority advance claims against the state just as often. More problematic for the “claims as protection” approach, the mere *act* of advancing claims of autonomy typically provokes

¹⁵Weingast demonstrates the logic of the credible commitment problem in a variety of different contexts, including political development, democratization and ethnic conflict. For example, he notes that a central dilemma faced by governments is how a government strong enough to protect property rights can credibly commit not to confiscate the wealth of its citizens. He argues that “market-preserving federalism” serves as one institutional solution to this problem. Essentially, the central government ties its hands by devolving authority to local units, thus establishing a degree of regional autonomy. This induces competition among lower units of the federal structure which need to implement policies favorable to their economies, thus promoting growth. The additional tax revenue generated through the resultant economic growth means that it is in the central government’s interest to preserve these federal arrangements. Thus, the central government has effectively made a credible commitment not to confiscate the wealth of its citizens--the institutions are self-enforcing (Weingast 1995a).

massive retaliation on the part of the majority. Given this likely reaction, pressing for autonomy is hardly a rational strategy for weak minorities interested in self-preservation.

CONSTRUCTIVISM AND THE “ELITE FACTOR”

Here, I consider constructivist and instrumentalist approaches to the study of nationalism together, as these perspectives—though dissimilar in assumptions—advance similar predictions concerning the causes of group mobilization. Specifically, both approaches posit that elites play a central role in nationalizing projects and the outbreak of ethnic conflict. The instrumentalist approach to ethnic conflict, which has its roots in rational choice theory, holds that utility-maximizing political elites use the ethnic features of a group to obtain material gains. In this formulation, violence is one such tool that can be used to acquire certain material benefits such as territory, political and cultural autonomy, and so forth (de Figueiredo and Weingast 1997). Similarly, constructivists hold that nations are not so much "discovered," so much as consciously created by intellectuals or ethnic entrepreneurs (Eley and Suny 1995). Importantly, however, both approaches qualify their propositions concerning the role of elites in ethnic conflict. Constructivists hold that the choices made by nationalizing actors are significantly constrained, since "(n)ationalists make their own history, but not entirely as they please; not with cultures of their own choosing, but with cultures directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past" (Ibid., 39). Similarly, instrumentalists note that *institutions* as well as their constituencies serve as significant constraints on elite behavior. Even given these constraints, these theorists hypothesize that elites play a primary role in ethnic mobilization.

In sum, both approaches hypothesize that *changes in either the political elites or their interests lead to shifts in group mobilization*. An important flaw in this logic is that the cases upon which the theories are based suffer from selection bias—by focussing solely on cases of successful ethnic mobilization, these theorists do not examine the many cases in which nationalizing elites *fail* to mobilize their constituency or become politically marginalized (consider Le Pen of France or Zhirinovskiy of Russia). According to constructivists, national “scripts” are chosen from among a set of many possible scripts. However, there is nothing in this broad approach that suggests *which* scripts will be chosen and *when*. Similarly, an instrumentalist may argue that a political leader with no reformist skills may wish to

foment ethnic mobilization in order to “gamble for resurrection” or hold onto power when it appears that his skills are no longer in demand. But the attempts of nationalizing elites do not always meet with success. I will argue, in contrast, that the political factors that generate ethnic mobilization also generate nationalizing elites--suggesting a spurious relationship between elites and ethnic conflict.

TOWARD A BARGAINING MODEL OF ETHNICIZATION

As a model designed to test the hypothesis that ethnicization of politics is an outcome of bargaining games between the above actors, it bears some similarity to Rogers Brubaker’s model of ethnic mobilization, which envisions a “triadic nexus” of nationalizing actors. Brubaker, utilizing a constructivist approach, has argued that the nationalizing state, the national minority and external national homeland (here, lobby state) are constituted referentially against, and exist in a triadic relationship with, one another. He further posits that these entities should not be taken as given, but instead themselves consist of “relational fields of competing stances” (concerning minority rights or state minority policies). This triadic nexus is, therefore, a “relation between relational fields” (Brubaker, 1996, Ch. 3). Arguing that the actions and interests of these “entities” are constituted by the institutional environments in which they exist, Brubaker maintains that the “stances” of these entities are shaped by the “relational fields” in which these bodies are embedded. The emergence of a more radical stance within one of the relational fields (the nationalizing state, for example) results in the emergence of a more radical stance in the next relational field, and so on. The escalation of ethnic conflict is thus seen as a “contingent” outcome of “the interplay of mutually suspicious, mutually monitoring, mutually misrepresenting political elites...” (Brubaker 1996, 76). Importantly, Brubaker admits that his model has no predictive capacity: “...[w]hat cannot be retrospectively explained as structurally determined...was just what kind of nationalizing stance, what kind of minority self-understanding, what kind of homeland politics would prevail in the struggles among competing stances within these three relational fields...” (Ibid., 76). Brubaker’s model is thus designed to neither explain nor predict, but rather *describe* the process of ethnic mobilization as it unfolds. In contrast, my bargaining model, in identifying circumstances under which a group is likely to feel threatened, is designed to *predict* when and under what conditions group claims are likely to radicalize.

While conceding the important insights yielded by constructivist scholars in debunking the primordialist view of nations and national identities as fixed through time, my game tree model begins by assuming groups are unified actors at the outset of state formation, in order to test whether alterations in *power relations* between the minority, majority and lobby state—as well as *perceived incentives* of the lobby state and majority regarding the minority—can serve to ethnicize or de-ethnicize politics. The spatial model then relaxes the “groups as unified actors” assumption to show how actions of the minority group in the first game can alter the degree of ethnic salience within a polity, thus altering the preferences of each group and inducing political alliances along ethnic or non-ethnic dimension. This approach shows clearly the limitations in viewing group radicalization purely as a function of opportunism, protection or as a result of modernization factors. The case study analysis of minorities in East Central Europe will show that groups radicalize and, conversely, accommodate in response to shifts in primarily *political rather than economic variables*. Insofar as economic variables matter in this model of group mobilization, they matter in terms of the relative costs of politicizing upon an ethnic as opposed to economic dimension. If the ethnic salience in politics is low, then organizing along an ethnic dimension is politically costly, and vice versa. This logic will be laid out systematically in the model below.

IV. The Model

The following simple model draws significantly upon the technology used in Weingast and deFigueiredo’s “Rationality of Fear” (1996) in an effort to explore the conditions under which a minority will advance more, as opposed to less, radical claims against the majority within a state. In doing so, I utilize an extensive form game tree to sketch out all possible plays of both minority and majority that begin strategic interaction following state formation. *State formation* serves as a logical starting point for strategic interaction as new institutions implemented at the state level generate new incentives for political actors, altering relationships that had formerly been in

equilibrium.¹⁶ Such institutions include new or altered state apparatuses, access to new resources (e.g., land, wealth, strategic assets, additional population), and new political or economic structures. The introduction of such institutions can create incentives that lead a minority group either to radicalize against, or accommodate, the majority under the auspices of a new state.

This model will formalize the interactions of three players following state formation: the Majority (M), the Minority (m), and the “lobby” state (LS)--an outside state that identifies ethnically with the said minority. This model importantly considers (1) relative power between the minority and majority within the new state, and (2), equilibrium behavior of the minority given their beliefs concerning both the true state of the world and the anticipated actions of the majority. In order to test the extent to which this triadic bargaining model provides useful predictions concerning behavior of minority groups within a new state, I treat these three actors as unitary. The results of this analysis will, in turn, be fed into a spatial model of electoral behavior, in which both minority and majority groups interact on a two-dimensional political landscape. Here, variations in the level of ethnic salience can alter coalition formation behavior, either reifying the significance of the ethnic dimension in politics or, alternatively, providing incentives for political actors to mobilize along a different dimension. The electoral process may even result in the break-down of ethnic groups as political actors, as political agents re-emerge from elections in altogether different political groupings.

¹⁶ In its most extreme form, *state formation* involves a shift in power from one ethnic group to another. This will radically alter not only the incentives of the group(s) out of power, but also the perceptions of the group(s) out of power concerning the incentives of the new government (consider, for example, the case of post-1918 Czechoslovakia, in which government power shifted from Sudeten Germans to the Czechs). A less extreme example of state formation involves *regime change* at the state level, which also alters the incentives of political actors (examples include post-colonial state formation in Africa during the 1950s and 60s; such transitions were commonly followed by conflicts between groups).

ACTIONS OF THE PLAYERS

To begin with, we will formalize the actions of these three actors in the extensive form game. Nature (N) plays first and chooses a strong, nationalist lobby state (SN) with probability p_2 and a non-strong, nationalist type (\sim SN) with probability $1-p_2$. Nature also has the second move and chooses a nationalizing majority with incentives to repress (IR) with probability p_1 and a non-nationalizing majority (\sim IR) with probability $1-p_1$.¹⁷ The term “nationalizing majority” can be defined as the majority population of a state which has at least nominal control of its governing institutions and which has incentives to transgress against the rights of a minority group within the state. A “strong, nationalistic” lobby state denotes a state which is *at least as strong*—militarily, economically and politically--as the state belonging to the majority (the “host” state), and which has compelling incentives to interfere in the host state’s internal affairs, ostensibly to support the economic or political status of the minority group with which it identifies.¹⁸

Nature then moves a third time, choosing a “strong” or a “weak” minority. As strength matters here primarily as an indicator of power relative to the majority, this move by nature is *presumed to be known to all players*. Strength is largely a function of size and compactness which confer advantages to the minority in its negotiations with the majority. The bargaining leverage enjoyed by “strong” types yields an entirely different set of incentives than that of “weak” types, which tend to be smaller and dispersed and which therefore must rely on the uncertain support of outside lobby states in order to obtain a bargaining position on the same level as that wielded by a strong minority. Although there are obvious problems involved in measuring “strong” and “weak”, it should be stressed that these are ideal types, intended to produce general

¹⁷ This sequence of plays by Nature is an abstraction adopted for the purposes of setting up the game. In fact, the first two picks of Nature could be reversed or Nature’s choices could be made simultaneously, without any substantive impact on the resulting equilibria of the game. These picks by Nature are meant simply to formalize the political fact that, in the context of state formation, the “types” of majority and outside lobby state are unknown to the minority, who must rely on signals that imperfectly inform the minority concerning the types of the other two players.

¹⁸ Factors that drive the extent to which a lobby state is nationalist are not germane to this model, but will rather be treated as exogenously given.

propositions concerning different paths of ethnicization taken by two hypothesized types of minority groups.

The minorities have the next move, and will choose either to radicalize (RAD) or accommodate (ACC).¹⁹ “Radicalizing” will be defined as advancing more extreme demands of autonomy against the state, which is controlled by the majority. In the process of radicalization, the minority organizes politically upon its ethnic characteristics. “Accommodating” will denote the scaling back of demands of autonomy against the state. When “accommodating,” the minority may be seeking some compromise coexistence agreement with the majority. The majority then has the next move, and will either “challenge” the group or “back down” if the minority chooses to radicalize. If the group chooses to accommodate, the majority then faces a choice of whether to “take advantage” of the group.

A word here should be said about Nature’s previous moves in choosing the lobby state and majority types. Unlike Nature’s pick of “strong” or “weak” minority—a choice known to all parties, *the two previous draws by Nature are unknown*. Although the strength of the lobby state can be fairly readily determined by examination its economic and strategic assets relative to the host state, the extent to which the lobby state is “nationalistic” with respect to its co-ethnics *cannot* be determined with certainty by the minority prior to bargaining with the majority. This is because, while lip service may be paid to the ideals of supporting the “rights” of its co-ethnics, the empirical record shows that such trans-border support is sporadic at best, constrained as it is by the lobby state’s unwillingness to risk antagonizing the host state and incurring the costs of interstate war.

Similarly, the minority faces uncertainty at the outset of state formation as to whether it is facing a “nationalizing” or a “non-nationalizing” majority. Nature’s draw of majority type is exogenous to this model, but may be considered a joint function of (1) the type of regime change

¹⁹ Here, the minority moves before the majority because the game begins *after* state formation, at which point the minority has already been “offered” a unitary state by the majority in power—this play by the majority is exogenous to the game. After the plays by Nature, the minority then decides whether to accept the state framework by “accommodating” or reject it by “radicalizing.”

and the particular interests of the political actors who assumed state power, and (2), the outside pressure brought to bear on the majority to coopt the minority into the state’s governing structures. Although the majority typically pays lip service to the ideals of protecting minority rights in its construction of new state institutions, the minority cannot know the majority type *with certainty* and therefore faces considerable uncertainty in its bargaining with the majority over its status in the new state.

In determining whether it enjoys the support of its lobby state and whether it is bargaining with a nationalistic or non-nationalistic majority, the minority relies heavily upon *signals* that convey information concerning the players’ types. The most salient signal conveying this information is contained in the agreement (or lack thereof) between M and LS in the aftermath of institutional transition.²⁰ Because the minority does not know the other two players’ types with certainty, it must rely on the information contained in this signal to infer each player’s type. I will show how the minority undertakes these calculations in a likelihood matrix that will be given later in the paper.

First we must specify the preferences of the players.

PLAYER PREFERENCES

Minority

<u>Type 1 (“strong”)</u>		<u>Type 2 (“weak”)</u>	
Reward (R)	(+)	Reward	(+)
Liberal Society (Lib Soc)	(=)	Liberal Society	(=)
War-C	(gamble)	Repression	(-)
Repression (Rep)	(-)	War-C	(gamble)

The ordering of preferences for each minority type is largely self-explanatory. Both minorities face a significant threat following state formation, as the majority can use its power either to

²⁰ Many other signals can also convey information concerning the likelihood of the majority and lobby state being of particular types. These signals include, among others, national elections which place different political groupings in power, new laws and policies governing minority-majority relations, and government treatment of sensitive inter-ethnic events. For simplicity, however, this model focuses on the signal contained in the conclusion of a bilateral peace agreement between the lobby state and majority, as this is the most salient and reliable signal concerning the players’ types and because it simultaneously contains information concerning *both* players’ types.

exclude the minority from political power or to infringe upon its rights. Even under democratic regimes, minority preferences may easily be overruled due to the group’s numerical inferiority. For these reasons, both types of minorities prefer to obtain Reward over accommodating and risking that the majority will “take advantage” of the minority’s acquiescence. The Reward also serves to enhance the minority’s survival chances by providing institutional protection against future transgressions. For obvious reasons, both minority types will next prefer Liberal Society-- where members of the minority enjoy a status equal to that of the majority—to both War and Repression, where the minority incurs costs. The top two preferences are thus the same for both types of minorities. The two minority types value the final two preferences differently, however, due to the power differential between the two types of minorities. Because a “strong” minority is advantaged by its capacity to engage the center in the event of a conflict, it will choose the gamble of going to War and receiving a reward over facing Repression, representing *certain* disadvantage to the minority. Conversely, a “weak” minority faces certain annihilation if it faces conflict with the center and so prefers Repression (certain disadvantage) over War.²¹

The preferences of the two types of majorities vary depending on (1) whether it is a nationalizing or non-nationalizing majority, and (2) whether it is faces a “strong” or “weak” minority:

Nationalizing Majority (IR)

Facing “strong” Minority (Case 1)		Facing “weak” Minority (Case 2)	
Loot	(+)	Loot	(+)
Liberal Society (Lib Soc)	(=)	Liberal Society	(=)
Concessions (Con)	(-)	War-C	(gamble)
War-C	(gamble)	Concessions	(-)

²¹ The costs of war (C) is not presumed here to be the same for both Minority types, but rather is higher for the “weak” Minority. This, together with the high probability of losing in a violent conflict with the center, is represented in the different preference ordering of Repression and War-C between the two types. In the comparative statics section of the paper, we will explore the consequences of varying the level of C for both types.

Non-nationalizing Majority (~IR)

<u>Case 1</u>	<u>Case 2</u>
Liberal Society	Liberal Society
Loot	Loot
Concessions	War-C
War-C	Concessions

The above preference orderings correspond to the two different types of majorities that the minority anticipates meeting in future plays: a nationalizing majority and non-nationalizing majority. A *nationalizing* majority has an incentive to repress (IR) because loot (or advantages) obtained from transgressing against the minority is valued over a obtaining a liberal society. A *non-nationalizing* majority, on the other hand, does not have an incentive to transgress against the minority because the expected benefits of coopting an ethnic minority into a multi-ethnic society are greater than the expected gains from transgressing against this minority. Unlike the minority, which *always* values Reward over Liberal Society at the inception of the new state, the majority does not face the threat of subjugation by the minority. Consequently, the majority does not risk oppression if it accommodates the other player in an effort to create a liberal society. Because of this, a majority may be of either nice or non-nice types at the outset of state formation, whereas minorities--uncertain of the majority type--value security against the majority most highly and are thus always non-nice.

For each majority type, the preference orderings of the majority facing a “strong” (Case 1) versus a “weak” minority (Case 2) are identical except for the final two preferences, Concessions and War-C. When facing a “strong” minority, a majority would prefer Concessions to War-C, whereas this ordering is reversed when facing a “weak” minority. This is due to strategic considerations, as the majority knows it could vanquish the “weak” minority in battle with greater certainty than it could the “strong” minority. This is also the case for a non-nationalizing majority. Although a nice majority prefers forging a Liberal Society to Loot, this majority, like the nationalizing type, prefers War-C to Concessions when facing a “weak” minority. This is because, although the majority is “nice,” and would prefer a Liberal Society to exploitation, it

prefers to challenge a “weak” minority through war—as it is sure of easy victory—to granting concessions to the minority. Conversely, the majority will prefer Concessions to War-C when facing a “strong” minority, as the costs of going to war are high.

It is also important to note that *the presence of a “strong nationalist” lobby state alters the preference ordering of the both types of majority, such that the majority will always value Concessions over War-C.* This is because the presence of a “strong nationalist” lobby state serves as a credible threat to the majority, so that it will always prefer to make concessions to the minority (even a “weak” type) over transgressing against the minority and risking interstate war with the lobby state.

The preference ordering of the two types of lobby states (SN and ~SN) will be considered in the likelihood matrix given below. The preferences of the lobby state will be treated as exogenous to the game, however, since this model is designed primarily to explain and predict the changes in the nature of minority-majority relations and the ways in which the presence of a strong nationalist lobby state will alter the degree of ethnicization in a nascent political community. The plays of the game are given in the extensive form decision tree below.

(See Figure 1.)

The interaction of the different types of LS and M and the incentives generated by this interaction for each minority are given in the following likelihood matrix, from which the minority infers the likelihood of the type of players they face, based on the observation of whether or not a treaty between the LS and M has been concluded at the inception of the new state.

(See Figure 2.)

The four boxes represent the interaction of the two types of LS and M; the minority will choose either to radicalize or accommodate based upon its perceptions concerning which of the four “states of the world” it is in. We can now infer equilibria of the game under complete information (when the minority knows the other players’ types with certainty). In the upper left, a

strong nationalist state (SN) interacts with a nationalizing majority (IR), altering the majority's preference ordering, such that Concessions are valued over War-C for the "weak" as well as "strong" minorities. This is due to the fact that the presence of a strong nationalist LS provides bargaining leverage to the weak minority, thus compensating for its strategic disadvantage, such that the majority faces similar (if not greater) disincentives for challenging "weak" minority as it would a "strong" minority. In this scenario, the actions of a "weak" and "strong" minority will be identical (because of identical preference orderings). If the minority radicalizes, it will receive Reward; if m accommodates, it receives Repression. Since the former is valued over the latter, m will radicalize.²²

In the upper right, where the minority believes it faces a non-nationalizing majority with the backing of a strong nationalist LS, the two minority types again behave similarly. If m radicalizes, it receives Reward; if m accommodates, m receives Liberal Society. Since Reward is valued more highly than Liberal Society by both types at the outset of the game, both "strong" and "weak" minorities will radicalize and receive Reward. In the lower left, where the minority faces a nationalizing majority without the backing of a lobby state, the actions of the "strong" and "weak" minorities diverge. If the "weak" minority radicalizes, it receives War-C; if it accommodates, it receives Repression. It therefore accommodates and receives Repression. A "strong" minority, on the other hand, receives Reward when it radicalizes, but Repression if it accommodates. Therefore, "strong" minorities will radicalize and receive Reward. In the lower right, with a non-nationalizing majority and an unsupportive lobby state, the "strong" Minority again chooses to radicalize as it values Reward over Liberal Society. The "weak" Minority, however, values Liberal Society over War-C, and so it will accommodate and receive Liberal Society.

The behavior of the minorities based on these four different beliefs concerning the state of the world are summarized in the following chart.

²² If C is sufficiently low here, both parties may choose War-C if this is the perceived state of the world.

Equilibria in a Game of Complete Information

Lobby State	Majority	Minority
SN	IR	<u>Cases 1 and 2:</u> ²³ m radicalizes, receives Reward
SN	~IR	<u>Cases 1 and 2:</u> m radicalizes, receives Reward
~SN	IR	<u>Case 1:</u> m radicalizes, receives Reward <u>Case 2:</u> m accommodates, receives Repression
~SN	~IR	<u>Case 1:</u> m radicalizes, receives Reward <u>Case 2:</u> m accommodates, receives Liberal Society

Next note that *reasonable prior beliefs* on the part of the Minority concerning the four states of the world is .25 for each.²⁴ Here, we will consider the beliefs of the “weak” Minority, since its behavior (unlike that of the “strong” minority) is actually altered by the different states of the world. These “prior” beliefs may be “updated” or altered, following observation of events that cause the minority to “revise” its beliefs concerning the true state of the world. When an agreement, such as a non-aggression pact or bilateral treaty, is concluded between the LS and M, the minority knows with certainty that it is in a state of the world corresponding to box 4, where the minority faces a non-nationalizing majority and a non-nationalist LS. When the two states fail to conclude a treaty, however, the minority does not know whether this is because the LS is nationalist or because the majority is nationalizing. Despite this uncertainty, failure to conclude a pact does convey some information concerning players’ types. It means that the only possible states of the world include those represented by boxes 1, 2, and 3. Thus, the revised or posterior

²³ Case 1 denotes a “strong” Minority, Case 2 a “weak” Minority.

²⁴ This generalization means only that the minority believes that chances are 50-50 that the lobby state and majority are of either type. Although it may have reasons to believe differently based on, for example, past experience with the players, we will make the above assumption in order to construct a general model of group radicalization.

belief, r , that the majority is a nationalizing type, given that the minority has observed the failure to conclude a bilateral treaty between LS and M, is given by:

$$r = p_1 / (p_1 + p_2 - p_1 p_2) > p_1$$

As the denominator is now strictly less than 1, r , the posterior probability that the minority faces a nationalizing majority, is now greater than p_1 , their prior belief that this is the case. The failure of the host and lobby states to conclude a bilateral treaty as the outset of state formation therefore causes the minority to *believe with higher probability* that the majority is of a nationalizing type. This is true because the only possible states of the world are now represented by boxes 1, 2, and 3, two of which feature a “nationalizing” majority type and two of which feature a strong, nationalist lobby state. *These updated beliefs concerning the state of the world will strictly increase the probability that the weak minority will radicalize*, as it stands to gain Reward from doing so in 2 out of the remaining 3 states of the world, whereas it would have gained the Reward in only 2 out of 4 states of the world under its prior beliefs.

EQUILIBRIUM BEHAVIOR

We will now solve for equilibrium behavior for the different types of minorities under incomplete information, in which the minority infers the type of LS and M from observation of a treaty (or lack thereof) between the two players at the outset of state formation.

Hypothesis 1: *A “strong” minority will choose to radicalize regardless of majority and lobby state types, as radicalizing is the minority’s dominant strategy in every possible state of the world (see Table 1).*²⁵

Equilibrium behavior for the “weak” minority *without a lobby state* can be obtained by solving for the expected utilities of following the two possible actions, radicalizing and accommodating. The value of each action is gauged by determining the value of the outcomes of each action, weighted

²⁵ This equilibrium may not hold in future iterations of the game, as we shall see later.

by the probability of obtaining these outcomes. Thus, the value to the minority of radicalizing is as follows:

$$EU_m (\text{RAD}) = (1 - p_1)(R) + (p_1)(\text{WAR} - C)$$

In contrast, the expected utility to the minority of accommodating is

$$EU_m (\text{ACC}) = (1 - p_1)(\text{LIB SOC}) + (p_1)(\text{REP})$$

To pick radicalization over accommodation, the following inequality must hold:

$$(1 - p_1)(R) + (p_1)(\text{WAR} - C) > (1 - p_1)(\text{LIB SOC}) + (p_1)(\text{REP})$$

which reduces to

$$(p_1)[\text{REP} - (\text{WAR} - C)] < (1 - p_1)(R - \text{LIB SOC})$$

Assuming that the probability that the majority is of either type is .5, the above equation can be interpreted to mean that a minority will choose to radicalize when the difference in utility between Reward and Liberal Society is greater than the difference in utility between Repression and War - C. This yields the following hypothesis concerning how the relative size of the stakes alters equilibrium behavior on the part of the minority.

Hypothesis 2: All else being equal, if Reward is valued very highly relative to Liberal Society and/or War is valued almost as much as receiving Repression, this increases the likelihood that the minority will choose to radicalize. Conversely, if War - C becomes extremely unattractive relative to Repression, or the outcome of Liberal Society is valued almost as highly as Reward, then this increases the odds that the minority will choose to accommodate.

The minority's beliefs concerning the probability that the majority is nationalizing (p_1) also impacts the minority's behavior, such that the minority will radicalize if the following inequality holds:

$$p_1^* < \frac{R - \text{LIB SOC}}{(\text{REP} - \text{WAR} - C) + (R - \text{LIB SOC})}$$

When the probability that the majority is a nationalizing type (p_1^*) is strictly less than the right side of the inequality, the minority will choose to radicalize. This probability is largely impacted

by the relative size of the stakes, Repression and War - C. The more highly the minority values Repression relative to War - C, the lower p_1^* (the probability that the majority is a “nationalizing” type) need be for the minority to choose to radicalize rather than accommodate to the majority. Conversely, if War - C is valued almost as highly as Repression, then the minority would still choose to radicalize even at very high levels of p_1^* , as the right side of the equation approaches 1.

Hypothesis 3: *As “weak” minorities without a lobby state value Repression much more highly than War - C--as they face almost certain annihilation were they to engage in militarized conflict with the center, the probability p_1^* that the majority is a nationalizing type must be very low for a “weak” minority without a lobby state to choose to radicalize.*

We now consider equilibrium behavior for a “weak” minority *with a lobby state*. Here, the minority can observe whether its lobby state and host state concluded a peace agreement at the outset of the game. If a bilateral treaty is reached, then the state of the world corresponds to that of box 4, and the minority believes with certainty that it is facing a non-nationalizing majority. At the same time, the minority knows with certainty that its lobby state is non-nationalistic, and so the minority will refrain from radicalizing its group demands against the center, as it cannot hope to rely on outside support for its aims.

Hypothesis 4: *A “weak” minority (one which depends upon the support of an outside lobby state in its negotiations with the majority) will never radicalize its claims against the majority following a non-aggression pact or bilateral treaty negotiated between the majority and the minority’s outside lobby state. Instead, it will moderate its claims, seeking accommodation within the state’s existing political structures.*

Even if LS and M *fail* to conclude a peace accord, the minority still obtains information concerning the likelihood that the lobby state and the majority are of particular types. As discussed above, observation of the failure to conclude a treaty leads the minority to update its prior beliefs, p_1 , that the majority is a nationalizing type. Its posterior beliefs concerning the likelihood that the majority is nationalizing, r , is greater than p_1 ; similarly, the minority believes with greater probability that the lobby state is a nationalistic type. This is true because the only possible states of the world are now represented by boxes 1, 2, and 3, two of which feature a “nationalizing” majority type and two of which feature a strong, nationalist lobby state. *These*

updated beliefs concerning the state of the world will strictly increase the probability that the weak minority will radicalize, as it stands to gain Reward from doing so in 2 out of the remaining 3 states of the world, whereas it would have gained the Reward in only 2 out of 4 states of the world under its prior beliefs.

COMPARATIVE STATICS

Comparative statics on, for example, the costs of war (C) can be undertaken to produce several different equilibria, some of which include war. For example, if C is so low as to bump it up over Concessions for the Majority, and the value of gains to be had for War-C sufficiently high (e.g., independence for the Minority, which can only be obtained outside the state framework), Cases 1 and 2 will choose to radicalize and this time obtain War-C. Alternatively, costs of war C may be different for Majority and Minority, yielding different equilibria.

ETHNIC ELITES AND THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

The logic of this game also has implications for ethnic elites, presuming that (1) these elites wish to gain political power, and (2), Reward is valued more highly by elites (who can expect to gain from devolution of power to the group) than it is by the group itself. Given these assumptions, elites of weak minorities have a vested interest in persuading members of the Minority that the state of the world is that of box 1. When members of this minority value Liberal Society as much as Reward, and Repression over War-C, the group will choose to accommodate if it believes strongly that the possible states of the world were those represented by boxes 4 or 3. Elites, however, may have opposite preferences. Thus, it is in the interests of party leaders to induce the beliefs that the minority is in states of the world represented by boxes 1 and 2, thereby increasing the likelihood that the members of the group will choose to radicalize rather than accommodate. Further, insofar as the minority values Liberal Society as much as Reward, ethnic elites will attempt to induce the belief that the state of the world is that of box 1 so that the minority will be

more likely to radicalize for fear of accommodating and receiving repression. This yields the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 5: Party leaders of “weak” minorities will attempt to induce the belief among the group population that the lobby state is of a strong nationalist type and, further, will attempt to persuade their constituency that the majority has incentives to transgress against group members(box 1). Party leaders therefore tend to be more “extremist” than the members of their constituency. This suggests that, insofar as party leaders attempt to send misleading signals concerning the state of the world, these leaders fail to represent the interests of the group and may actually act against them. This also suggests that--given the known bias of these elites--their information concerning the true state of the world may be discounted by members of the group.

Hypothesis 6: To the extent that the “strong” minority values Liberal Society as highly as Reward, ethnic party leaders (who invariably value Reward much more highly than that of Liberal Society), will attempt to convince their group constituency that the majority is nationalizing, so that the group will choose to radicalize in order to gain Reward in order to avoid Repression, which would be obtained through accommodation.

ETHNICIZATION AND DE-ETHNICIZATION OF POLITICS

In every political system, there exist multiple cleavages upon which political agents may appeal for electoral support. These cleavages include, most importantly, class and ethnic cleavages.

Accordingly, this electoral model of multi-ethnic societies consists of a two-dimensional issue space, in which parties or other political agents may mobilize upon ethnic and/or class lines in order to attract voters in a political system.

(See Figure 3.)

Voters’ ideal points are presumed to depend crucially on the salience of ethnic issues within this particular society. If ethnicity takes on high political salience, voters’ ideal points will polarize upon the ethnic dimension, represented by the vertical axis. If, on the other hand, ethnicity enjoys only a very low political salience, voters’ ideal points will cluster along the economic dimension, represented by the horizontal axis. Here, I assume a *trade-off* between each issue dimension, such that, when ethnicity takes on a great political salience, voters value this dimension at the expense of the economic dimension. The voter utility function is given by the following equation:

$$EU_v = - (1 - \beta)(x)^2 - \beta(y)^2 ,$$

where β will denote the ethnic salience vector, which takes on values between 0 and 1. The utility functions of political agents have a similar form, differing only in the extent to which political agents are presumed to have a comparative advantage in either the ethnic or economic issue areas. Because of this comparative advantage, political agents also value their ideal points in this policy space. Minority and majority group leaders' utility functions, respectively, are given below:

$$EU_m = - (1 - \beta)(x - x_m)^2 - \beta(y - y_m)^2$$

$$EU_M = - (1 - \beta)(x - x_M)^2 - \beta(y - y_M)^2$$

Here, I assume the existence of a subset of political agents whose comparative advantage lies almost solely in ethnic issues and who therefore value their ideal points more highly than do other political leaders. These agents' utility functions are therefore barely altered by variations in the ethnic salience vector, but lie obstinately along the y axis. In contrast to this, the political agents who value gaining office over their own ideal points will put forth political stances that migrate between the two axes as a function of β , in an effort to capture the median voter of their constituency.

***Hypothesis 7:** Extremist ethnic elites value their ideal points highly and therefore alter their political stances very little as a function of variation in the ethnic salience vector, \mathbf{b} . Such agents consequently obtain a minority of the vote within their constituency. In contrast, political elites who value gaining office more than their own ideal points will vary their political stances as a direct function of \mathbf{b} . In doing so, these agents capture the bulk of the electorate in each respective population.*

Next we consider the conditions under which politics ethnicize or de-ethnicize in the case of a “weak” minority. β , or the ethnic salience vector, is a function of the minority's belief concerning the probability of obtaining Repression were they to “accommodate.” β is equal to this probability divided by the *total probability* of (1) accommodating and obtaining Repression, plus (2) accommodating and not obtaining Repression.

$$\beta = \frac{\text{Prob(Repression)}}{\text{Prob(Repression)} + \text{Prob}(\sim\text{Repression})}$$

Given reasonable prior beliefs that the likelihood of each state of the world is .25 (see Figure 2), and, since accommodation yields Repression in only two states of the world, the minority's prior beliefs concerning β is .5. However, when the minority observes that a peace accord has been concluded between LS and M, then the minority updates its beliefs concerning the probability of receiving Repression. In this case, β equals 0, as observation of a peace accord allows the minority to infer that the majority is non-nationalist with certainty. In this case, politics de-ethnicize, as political opportunities for cross-ethnic coalitions based on similar economic stances emerge (see Figure 3).

In contrast, when LS and M *fail* to reach a peace arrangement, then β is strictly greater than .5, as the only remaining possible states of the world feature a nationalizing majority in two of three of them. This reduces the size of the denominator, which means that β is strictly greater than it would be under the minority's prior beliefs. As β is now greater than .5, both majority and minority political agents place a relatively greater emphasis on the ethnic dimension. This effectively rules out the construction of inter-ethnic coalitions between the minority and majority political agents, as ethnic issues are valued strictly higher by voters than economic issues. Further, as β is relatively high, the minority has judged it relatively more beneficial to mobilize ethnically and protect themselves against the majority than mobilizing upon class lines, leaving the group vulnerable to repression.

This simple model suggests an interesting result with regard to majority coalition formation as well. When β is high, the political agent winning the bulk of the majority electorate--taking the lead in forming the government in a parliamentary system--is vulnerable to "spoiling" undertaken by nationalist parties that have located on the far end of the y axis. Such parties can undermine the credibility of a government formed by more moderate political agents by undertaking campaigns accusing the government of "selling out" majority interests to a pampered, exploitative minority. These accusations are only credible when β is high and members of the

majority population perceive that the minority group is uncooperative and potentially treasonous. In order to prevent such nationalist parties from playing the role of the “spoiler” at high levels of β , a centrist political agent will forge an alliance with the extremist party, thus coopting them in the government and forestalling their efforts to undermine the credibility of the government. This generates the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 9: When \mathbf{b} is low, centrist political agents of majority and minority groups are likely to form inter-ethnic coalitions, as there exist greater incentives for mobilizing upon economic as opposed to ethnic issues. Conversely, when \mathbf{b} is high, these political agents are more likely to form intra-ethnic coalitions. Within the majority group, the centrist political agent (as the formateur of the government) will likely form a coalition with an extremist political agent when \mathbf{b} is high in order to prevent this agent from playing a “spoiler” role. The government is thus likely to advance a more nationalizing stance than what is supported by the population at large, in an effort to “buy off” the extremist political agent.

The electoral process within a multi-ethnic society also provides clues as to how politics may become ethnicized or de-ethnicized. For example, when β is low such that centrist political agents of majority and minority groups will form inter-ethnic coalitions, the identity of the political agents and, consequently, that of their constituency may be fundamentally altered. If members of the minority perceive that the benefit of remaining a part cross-ethnic coalitions is greater than that of isolating themselves from the majority in order to mobilize upon an ethnic basis, then the minority preference ordering will shift such that Liberal Society is valued more highly than that of Reward. If this calculation is mirrored by the majority population such that both sides value Liberal Society more highly than Reward, then both “strong” and “weak” minorities will choose to accommodate, receiving Liberal Society in the next iteration of the game tree model.

This spatial model demonstrates that alterations in the level of β --as a function of the minority updating its beliefs concerning the types of lobby state and majority it faces--creates incentives for centrist political agents from both majority and minority populations to form intra- or, conversely, inter-ethnic political coalitions. This mechanism can account for both the ethnicization and de-ethnicization of politics, as the preference ordering of both minority shifts as

a result of interactions between the majority and lobby state, which reveal shifts in the incentives of the big players toward the minority.

IV. Methodology and Case Selection

The above hypotheses concerning the conditions under which different minority types will choose to radicalize rather than accommodate at the outset of state formation will be tested using longitudinal data on the extremity of group claims in the cases of six different minorities in East Central Europe in the post-1989 period: Moravians in the Czech Republic, Slovaks in former Czechoslovakia, the Hungarian minorities in Romania and Slovakia, and Roma (gypsies) in the Czech Republic. I will also investigate the case of the Sudeten Germans at the close of World War I. The claims of these minorities will be examined immediately following state formation in their respective countries; thus, these cases are well-suited to test propositions concerning the conditions under which groups will radicalize or accommodate in the context of a new state. These data were gathered during intensive field work in the countries of the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania in the year of 1997-8. The dependent variable of group claims (which serves as a rough proxy of group radicalization and accommodation) can be seen as a continuous variable in the extent to which the claim involves an institutional exit from the existing state framework. Demands vary in extremity along this continuum from (1) the moderate claims of affirmative action to (2) demands for linguistic or cultural autonomy to (3) goals of regional autonomy to (4) the most extreme ethnic claims of secession or irredentism. I argue that, though these claims appear to be qualitatively distinct from one another, they can be measured *quantitatively* in the extent to which they represent attempts by the group to escape control by the center or to insulate the group from violations by the center. The usefulness of placing group claims on this continuum can be evinced by observing the empirical record of claims advanced by groups. The dependent variable of ethnic group claims can be measured as demands advanced by political parties or organizations that (1) claim to represent a particular ethnic group, and (2) enjoy wide support throughout the group. I measure an ethnic party with "wide support" as a party that obtained the plurality of ethnic group votes in the last national elections. Data on the extremity of group claims

have been gathered through interviews with leaders of such parties, through archival data on electoral platforms of these parties, and through additional archival data on the activities of minority representatives.

I will attempt to utilize John Stuart Mill's "method of difference" in order to establish a causal link between the interactions between the majority and the outside lobby state--signalling these players' "types"--and the radicalization of a minority, as measured by the extremity of group claims advanced against the center. The method of difference consists of comparing two or more cases that are *similar* in almost every relevant aspect except one antecedent condition, which is *present* in one or more cases but *absent* in the other(s). If a phenomenon is then found to have occurred in the case with the antecedent condition, while not having occurred in the case without the condition, then we can establish with some confidence that the presence of the phenomenon is attributable to the antecedent condition that was allowed to vary between the cases (Mill, in Etzioni and Dubow 1970). Although some theorists have found fault with the use of the method of difference in comparative studies, claiming that it is impossible to achieve controls adequate for making causal statements under non-experimental conditions (Liebersohn 1985; 1994), I argue that it is only necessary to control for those factors that may be expected to influence the hypothesized outcome. In order to subject my model to a variety of different tests, I first utilize *longitudinal analysis* in order to trace fluctuations in the mobilization of each of these groups over the course of several years in order to determine whether shifts in interactions of the outside lobby state and the majority led to shifts in the level of ethnic mobilization within the group. Second, by utilizing "the method of difference," I can compare, for example, the Sudeten German group's activities prior to the close of World War I to the activities of the same group directly following the establishment of the Czechoslovak state. Given the near perfect controls achieved

through such a comparison,²⁶ any differences in the political goals sought by the Sudeten German would have to be attributed to changes that occurred in the 1918-1920 period.²⁷

I have chosen to analyze these groups for both substantive and methodological reasons. First, by selecting cases within the region of East and Central Europe, I can hold constant most significant social, economic and historical factors, as countries within this region share important historical experiences relevant to the study of ethnic politics. These countries have had the common experience of communist rule, under which independent civil society was strictly prohibited while expressions of nationalism were strongly discouraged under aggressive assimilationist policies. In the post-1989 period, communist regimes in this region collapsed in quick succession, leaving a vacuum of political leadership in their wake. These states are now in the process of democratic consolidation and market reform, thus constituting very similar political and economic environments within which I may isolate the effects of my independent variables upon the dependent variable of extremity of group demands. Second, as a region with a legacy of national movements, I argue that East and Central Europe serves as a crucial test site for investigating hypotheses concerning the impact that the above variables have on the extent to which groups will seek to exit or alter their state frameworks.

Having established that the *regional* context, in terms of the factors that appear most relevant to the conditions of minorities in these states, may be held constant, it is possible to conduct case analysis. One of the primary advantages of examining minorities in this region is the presence of many regional transmigrant groups within each of these countries. Because of this, it is possible to look at different groupings of a single ethnicity in order to discover the causes of the differences in their goals. For example, assuming that there are no significant differences among states in this region in regard to the treatment of minorities, the existence of Hungarian groups in different East European countries will

²⁶In such an analysis, the group's structural conditions as well as group-specific traits (including leadership, location, identity, and so forth) are effectively held constant, in an effort to ascertain the *independent effect* that the political/economic costs and benefits of exiting the state framework has on the type of political goals that this group is likely to seek.

²⁷For a discussion on the usefulness of longitudinal analysis in the comparative method, see Jukka Savolainen, "The Rationality of Drawing Big Conclusions Based on Small Samples: In Defense of Mill's Methods," *Social Forces*, June 1994, 72(4): 1217-1224 and Charles Ragin, *The Comparative Method*, 1987: The University of California Press.

allow us, using the method of difference, to tentatively control not only for *state* variables, but also for the *effect of being Hungarian* in determining the causes of goal differentiation among the Hungarian groups.

VII. Conclusions

I have presented a basic model for predicting the conditions under which a minority ethnically mobilize following state formation. This model formalizes the interactions between the majority, the minority, and the minority's lobby state in order to generate predictions under which politics will become ethnicized or, conversely, de-ethnicized for various types of minorities. A "weak" minority, for example, observes whether the majority and the minority's lobby state concluded a bi-lateral treaty normalizing cross-border relations at the outset of state formation. If a bi-lateral pact is observed, the minority knows with certainty that neither the lobby state nor the majority are nationalistic.

Consequently, the "weak" minority choose not to radicalize upon its ethnic features. Conversely, if a pact is *not* observed, then the minority believes with greater probability that *both* majority and lobby state are nationalistic. The minority is then more likely to radicalize its demands against the center, given the increased probability that (1) its lobby state will lend the minority cross-border support, and (2), the majority will exploit the minority if the minority chooses to acquiesce.

This model challenges pure economic theories of ethnic mobilization—including economic opportunism and modernization theories—that hold that groups advance claims of autonomy out of economic incentives. Instead, the predictions yielded by this model support the notion that ethnic groups mobilize upon their ethnic features out of *political opportunism*. When the perceived probability that the majority will repress is high, then ethnic salience within the polity will be high and political alliances will be formed along the ethnic dimension. Conversely, when ethnic salience is low, members of the minority will calculate that their votes are better spent on political agents with economic agendas. Consequently, intra-ethnic alliances will form along an economic dimension. Interactions between the majority and the minority's lobby state effectively signal the incentives of the big players in regard to the minority, serving to ethnicize or de-ethnicize politics within a state.

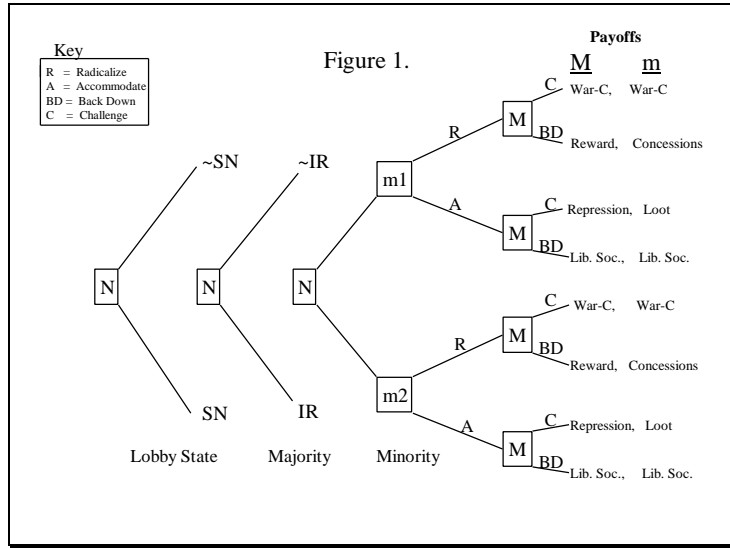
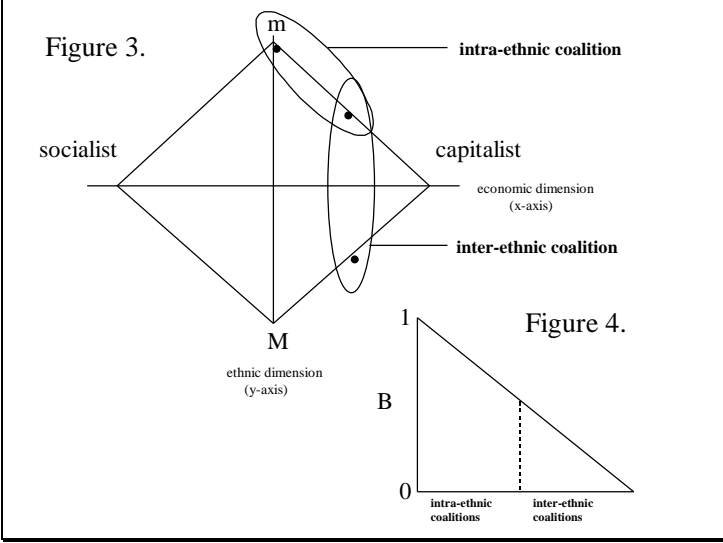


Figure 2.

		Majority (M)	
		IR (p_1)	\sim IR ($1-p_1$)
Lobby State (LS)	SN (p_2)	(p_1)(p_2) no treaty	($1-p_1$)(p_2) no treaty
	\sim SN ($1-p_2$)	(p_1)($1-p_2$) no treaty	($1-p_1$)($1-p_2$) treaty



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