

# **Ethnic Conflict and International Security**

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## Chapter 1

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### Causes and Implications of Ethnic Conflict

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Expectations were too high. The Cold War generated great tension, but also exceptional stability—at least as far as Europe was concerned. When the Cold War ended, many people assumed that international tensions would be reduced, but that stability would be retained—perhaps even extended to previously troubled parts of the world. Learned commentators spoke of “the end of history.” Presidents suggested that the great powers would work together to create a “New World Order.” Many people expected, inferring too much from the international community’s response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, that effective international action would be taken in the future to prevent conflicts from breaking out and to resolve those that did. Many people seemed to think that the end of the Cold War marked the advent of the millennium.

These great expectations—which could only have been generated by willfully ignoring the many ethnic conflicts around the world that have raged for years, even decades—have been dashed. People have been stunned by both the breadth and depth of the ethnic conflicts that are now taking place in many regions. The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina has received the most attention in the West because of the intense coverage it has received from the Western media, but equally if not more horrific conflicts are under way in Afghanistan, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Burma, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Liberia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Tajikistan. Other trouble spots abound—Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Burundi, Estonia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Iraq, Latvia, Lebanon, Mali, Moldova, Niger, Northern Ireland, Pakistan, the Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, South Africa, Spain, and Turkey, for example—and the prospects for ethnic conflict in Russia and China cannot be dismissed.

Expectations about the willingness and ability of outside powers to prevent and resolve ethnic conflicts have also been dampened. European and American leaders have agonized over the conflict in Bosnia, trying to

decide if genocidal acts and threats to outside interests have created either moral or strategic imperatives for intervention. Except for providing some small measure of humanitarian assistance, no action was taken as cities were bombed and civilians slaughtered. The possibility that Western powers will intervene in other ethnic conflicts, where their interests are even less engaged and where media attention is less intense, is remote.

This chapter pulls together the main arguments developed in this book about the causes and implications of ethnic conflict, as well as the recommendations that have been put forward to minimize the potential for instability and violence. Its objective is to provide a framework for analyzing the key issues that will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters. It begins with a brief discussion of some basic definitional issues, in an effort to sharpen an understanding of the parameters of the term, "ethnic conflict." Second, it examines alternative explanations of the causes of ethnic conflict, focusing in turn on systemic, domestic, and perceptual explanations. Third, it analyzes the regional and international implications of ethnic conflicts, arguing that one must distinguish among the effects of three basic kinds of conflict outcomes: peaceful reconciliation, peaceful separation, and ethnic war. The latter, it is argued, can affect the strategic interests and moral calculations of the outside world in seven important ways. This chapter concludes with a discussion of recommendations that have been developed to prevent or dampen ethnic conflicts, focusing in particular on steps outside powers and the international community could take in this regard.

## DEFINITIONS

The term "ethnic conflict" is often used loosely, to describe a wide range of intrastate conflicts that are not, in fact, ethnic in character. The conflict in Somalia, for example, is occasionally referred to as an ethnic conflict even though Somalia is the most ethnically homogenous country in Africa. The conflict in Somalia is not between rival ethnic groups, but between rival gangs, clans, and warlords, all of whom belong to the same ethnic group.

This inquiry consequently begins with some definitions. According to Anthony Smith, an "ethnic community" is "a named human population with a myth of common ancestry, shared memories, and cultural elements; a link with a historic territory or homeland; and a measure of solidarity."<sup>1</sup> Six criteria must be met, therefore, before a group can be called an ethnic community. First, the group must have a name for itself. This is not trivial; a lack of a name reflects an insufficiently developed collective identity. Second, the people in the group must believe in a

common ancestry. This is more important than genetic ties, which may exist, but are not essential. Third, the members of the group must share historical memories, often myths or legends passed from generation to generation by word of mouth. Fourth, the group must have a shared culture, generally based on a combination of language, religion, laws, customs, institutions, dress, music, crafts, architecture, even food. Fifth, the group must feel an attachment to a specific piece of territory, which it may or may not actually inhabit. Sixth and last, the people in a group have to think of themselves as a group in order to constitute an ethnic community; that is, they must have a sense of their common ethnicity. The group must be self-aware.<sup>2</sup>

At the risk of stating the obvious, an "ethnic conflict" is a dispute about important political, economic, social, cultural, or territorial issues between two or more ethnic communities. Some ethnic conflicts involve little or no violence. The struggle of French Canadians within Quebec to win more autonomy from the Canadian government is a case in point; Czechoslovakia's "velvet divorce" is another. Tragically, other ethnic conflicts involve full-scale military hostilities and unspeakable levels of savagery, as seen in Angola, Bosnia, the Caucasus, and elsewhere.

Two points should be kept in mind about these definitions. First, although Smith's conception of ethnic communities is a broad one—it would include many groups defined in terms of religious and tribal distinctions—many domestic disputes and civil wars are not ethnic in character. The war between the Sendero Luminoso and the Peruvian government, for example, is primarily political and ideological in nature, as is the continuing struggle between the Khmer Rouge and other factions in Cambodia; Cambodian persecution of ethnic Vietnamese is another matter, however. The problems in Georgia with South Ossetian and Abkhazian separatists are ethnic in nature; the struggle for power in Tblisi among various Georgian factions is not. The Burmese military's repression of Karen, Kachin, Naga, and Rohingya insurgents is an ethnic conflict; its suppression of the democracy movement in the country as a whole has other political motivations.

Second, many ethnic conflicts start out as domestic disputes, but become interstate conflicts when outside powers become involved. In some cases, trouble spills over into neighboring countries. In others, neighboring powers intervene in domestic disputes to protect the interests of their ethnic brethren. Disinterested powers may intervene in ethnic wars, which often involve attacks on civilian populations, for humanitarian reasons. For these and other reasons that will be discussed in more detail below, ethnic conflicts often become internationalized.

## CAUSES

The conventional wisdom among journalists and policymakers is that ethnic conflicts have sprung up in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and elsewhere because the collapse of authoritarian rule has made such conflicts possible. The "lid" on ancient rivalries, it is said, has been taken off, and long-suppressed grievances are now being settled. Scholars generally agree that this conventional wisdom offers an inadequate explanation of the causes of ethnic conflict. It fails to explain why conflicts have broken out in some places, but not others, and it fails to explain why some ethnic disputes are more violent than others. In short, this single-factor explanation cannot account for significant variation in the incidence and intensity of ethnic conflict.<sup>3</sup>

Serious academic studies of the causes of ethnic conflict develop explanations at three main levels of analysis: the systemic level, the domestic level, and the perceptual level.<sup>4</sup>

### Systemic Explanations

Systemic explanations of ethnic conflict focus on the nature of the security systems in which ethnic groups operate and the security concerns of these groups. The first and most obvious systemic prerequisite for ethnic conflict is that two or more ethnic groups must reside in close proximity. This condition is met in many parts of the world. As David Welsh observes, "Of the approximately 180 states that exist today, fewer than 20 are ethnically homogenous, in the sense that minorities account for less than 5 percent of the population."<sup>5</sup>

The second systemic prerequisite for ethnic conflict is that national, regional, and international authorities must be too weak to keep groups from fighting and too weak to ensure the security of individual groups. As Barry Posen explains, in systems where there is no sovereign—that is, where anarchy prevails—individual groups have to provide for their own defense.<sup>6</sup> They have to worry about whether neighboring groups pose security threats and whether threats will grow or diminish over time. The problem groups face is that, in taking steps to defend themselves—mobilizing armies and deploying military forces—they often threaten the security of others. This, in turn, can lead neighboring groups to take actions that will diminish the security of the first group. This is the security dilemma. Groups are often unaware of, or insensitive to, the impact their actions will have on others. In other cases, they are aware of this problem, but act anyway because they feel compelled to address what they see as imminent security threats. This, of course, is the situation in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union today. Imperial "sovereigns" have disappeared, and individual groups have to provide for their own defense.

According to Posen, instabilities develop when either of two conditions hold. First, when offensive and defensive military forces are hard to distinguish, groups cannot signal their defensive intentions by the kinds of military forces they deploy. Forces deployed for defensive purposes will have offensive capabilities and will therefore be seen as threatening by others. Second, if offensive military operations are more effective than defensive operations, due to the nature of military technology or the kinds of capabilities that are available, groups will adopt offensive military postures, and they will have powerful incentives to launch preemptive attacks in political crises.

Posen argues that these conditions are often generated when empires collapse and ethnic groups suddenly have to provide for their own security. First, under these circumstances, offensive and defensive forces are generally hard to distinguish. The military hardware available to newly independent ethnic groups is often unsophisticated from a technological standpoint, so defenses are based on infantry. Whether or not these forces are effective is essentially a function of the number, cohesiveness, and motivation of the troops in the field. Not surprising, newly independent ethnic groups often have large numbers of highly motivated, like-minded volunteers on which to draw. Cohesive, well-motivated infantries have inherent offensive capabilities against similarly configured forces, however, so they will inevitably be seen as threatening by other newly independent ethnic groups. This, in turn, will serve as a stimulus to military mobilization elsewhere.

Second, Posen argues that when empires break up, ethnic geography frequently creates situations that favor the offense over the defense. In some cases, ethnic groups will effectively surround "islands" of people from other groups. Defending these islands in the event of hostilities is generally quite difficult: All are vulnerable to blockades and sieges, and some are simply indefensible. Often, groups will try to expel pockets of minorities from their territory. The offense has tremendous tactical advantages in these "ethnic cleansing" operations; even small, lightly armed forces can generate tremendous amounts of terror in attacks on civilians. Posen is careful to note that ethnic geography is a variable, not a constant: Some ethnic islands are large, economically autonomous, and militarily defensible; others could be reinforced by nearby brethren. In short, ethnic geography can be stabilizing or destabilizing. In some cases, groups will be able to defend themselves and their brethren. In many cases, however, the offense will have the upper hand, and stability will be tenuous.

Posen identifies two other factors that have to be taken into account in analyses of the prospects for ethnic stability. First, windows of opportu-

nity and vulnerability will be created because newly independent groups will develop state structures at different rates. Groups that are further along in developing states and deploying military forces will have powerful incentives to go on the offensive—expelling minorities, rescuing islands of brethren, launching preventive attacks against potential adversaries—before rival groups are able to defend themselves or launch offensives of their own. Second, the presence of nuclear weapons will affect stability in important ways: Nuclear weapons make infantry less important, they make defense easier, and they can prevent windows of vulnerability from opening up. In the hands of a status quo power, nuclear weapons could enhance stability.

### Domestic Explanations

Other explanations of ethnic conflict focus on factors that operate primarily at the domestic level: the effectiveness of states in addressing the concerns of their constituents, the impact of nationalism on inter-ethnic relations, and the impact of democratization on inter-ethnic relations.

Jack Snyder argues that people look to states to provide security and promote economic prosperity.<sup>7</sup> Nationalism, he maintains, reflects the need to establish states capable of achieving these goals. Thus, it is not surprising that nationalism has flared up in parts of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, where state structures have weakened or collapsed altogether. New state structures have been, or are in the process of being, established, but in many cases they are not yet able to provide for the security and well-being of their constituents. In some cases, ethnic minorities feel persecuted by the new states in which they find themselves. More generally, many in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union feel that they are not being adequately protected from unregulated markets. Inflation and unemployment are high, and economic prospects are often grim. Ethnic minorities frequently find themselves being blamed for these economic difficulties.

These problems are compounded by the fact that, when state structures are weak, nationalism is likely to be based on ethnic distinctions, rather than the idea that everyone who lives in a country is entitled to the same rights and privileges. As Snyder explains: "By its nature, nationalism based on equal and universal citizenship rights within a territory depends on a framework of laws to guarantee those rights, as well as effective institutions to allow citizens to give voice to their views. Ethnic nationalism, in contrast, depends not on institutions, but on culture."<sup>8</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that there are strong currents of ethnic nationalism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, where state structures

and political institutions have diminished capacities, and in those parts of the developing world where state structures and political institutions are inherently fragile.

The emergence of ethnic nationalism makes some form of ethnic conflict almost inevitable. The rise of ethnic nationalism in one group will be seen as threatening by others and will lead to the development of similar sentiments elsewhere. This will sharpen distinctions between groups, make it more likely that minority groups will be persecuted and more likely that ethnic minorities will demand states of their own. Secessionist crusades might be launched—and opposed. Ethnic nationalism will also make it easier for groups to field large, highly motivated armies. This will lead others to be more vigilant and to build up their own military forces. This, in turn, can make preemptive attacks or preventive war between neighboring groups more likely.

Other scholars—such as Donald Horowitz, Arend Lijphart, Renée de Nevers, and David Welsh—have examined the impact that democratization and other domestic political factors have on the prospects for ethnic conflict.<sup>9</sup> Democratization, scholars agree, is particularly problematic in multiethnic societies. It often exacerbates existing ethnic problems.

Much depends on the level of ethnic tension when the democratization process begins, according to de Nevers.<sup>10</sup> If the old regime was an extension of a minority ethnic group that suppressed demographically larger groups, then ethnic problems will complicate negotiations over new political arrangements from the very beginning. If the old regime exacerbated ethnic problems by engaging in forced assimilation, forced relocation, ethnic expulsion, or extermination campaigns, then the democratization process is likely to be both highly problematic and emotionally charged; many ethnic problems will be on the agenda. If, on the other hand, the old regime drew from all major ethnic groups in a fairly representative way and pursued comparatively benign policies toward the ethnic groups under its sway, ethnic issues will probably play a less prominent role in negotiations over new arrangements. These negotiations, in turn, will be more likely to resolve those ethnic problems that do exist.

A second factor in the equation, de Nevers argues, is the relative size of the ethnic groups in the country. If one group is substantially larger than the others, then it is more likely that the majority group will be able to dominate discussions about new political arrangements and that minority interests will be neglected. If negotiations are between two or more groups of roughly equal size, however, it is more likely that all groups' core concerns will be addressed. Third, if the opposition to the old regime was led by only one or two groups and if the old regime itself was an

extension of another, the country's political system could easily fragment along ethnic lines as the democratization process unfolds. Ethnic tensions would intensify correspondingly. If, on the other hand, the opposition to the old regime emanated from all major ethnic groups in that society, these groups will have a cooperative foundation on which to build when they begin their discussions on new political arrangements. Fourth, if the military is loyal to a single ethnic group, rather than the state, then the prospects for managing ethnic conflict are not good. If the military is loyal to the state, however, the prospects are substantially better.

Finally, de Nevers points out that different kinds of democratization processes pose different problems for the management of ethnic conflict. If the fall of the old regime comes about suddenly, negotiations on new political arrangements will be conducted in great haste. Ethnic problems are more likely to be ignored, and power struggles, perhaps along ethnic lines, are more likely to take place. The euphoria experienced as the old regime passes from the scene might produce a moment of national unity, but this moment will not endure if underlying problems are neglected. If the demise of the old regime takes place over a period of months or even years, opposition leaders will have more time to address ethnic problems when they go about devising new political institutions and processes. They will also have more of an opportunity to develop a broad-based political alliance, and ethnic leaders will have a stronger cooperative foundation on which to build. One of the keys to minimizing ethnic conflict during democratic transitions, de Nevers maintains, is addressing ethnic problems early in the transition process. If ethnic grievances can be anticipated and dealt with early, ethnic conflicts are more likely to be prevented or at least mitigated.

A number of other domestic factors also affect the prospects for ethnic conflict. One problem, as Horowitz and Welsh point out, is the tendency in multiethnic societies for political parties to be organized along ethnic lines.<sup>11</sup> When this happens, party affiliations are a reflection of ethnic identity rather than political conviction. Political systems organized along these lines contain few independent voters, individuals who might cast votes for different parties in different elections. Under these circumstances, elections are mere censuses, and minority parties have no chance of winning power. In countries where parties are organized along ethnic lines and where winner-take-all elections are conducted—not uncommon in many parts of the world—democratic forms might be observed, but minorities remain essentially powerless, victims of a “tyranny of the majority.”<sup>12</sup>

A related problem is the tendency in multiethnic societies for opportunistic politicians to appeal to communal, ethnic, and nationalistic im-

pulses. This is often an effective way of mobilizing support and winning elections. Along the way, ethnic minorities are often blamed for many of society's ills; ethnic bashing and scapegoating are common features of electoral politics in many parts of the world. In many multiethnic societies, especially those coming out from under years or decades of authoritarian rule, political accommodation and compromise are alien principles. This, along with a lack of familiarity with and interest in coalition-building, undermines the prospects for ethnic rapprochement and the development of broad-based political communities. The mass media are often used for partisan and propagandistic purposes in ways that further damage inter-ethnic relations.

Finally, many countries have inadequate constitutional safeguards for minority rights. Even in places where minority rights guarantees exist on paper, they are often inadequately enforced. In short, constitutional and political reforms are needed in many places to address important ethnic grievances.

### Perceptual Explanations

Some explanations of ethnic conflict focus on the false histories that many ethnic groups have of themselves and others. As Posen and Snyder point out, these histories are not subjected to dispassionate, scholarly scrutiny because they are usually passed from generation to generation by word of mouth.<sup>13</sup> These stories become part of a group's lore. They tend to be highly selective in their coverage of events and not unbiased in their interpretation of these events. Distorted and exaggerated with time, these histories present one's own group as heroic, while other groups are demonized. Grievances are enshrined, and other groups are portrayed as inherently vicious and aggressive. Group members typically treat these ethnic myths as received wisdom.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the oral histories of groups involved in an intense rivalry tend to be mirror images of each other. Serbs, for example, see themselves as heroic defenders of Europe and they see Croats as belligerent thugs; Croats see themselves as valiant victims of oppression and Serbs as congenital aggressors. Under such circumstances, the slightest provocation on either side simply confirms deeply held systems of beliefs and provides the justification for a retaliatory response. Incendiary perceptions such as these, especially when they are held by both parties in a rivalry—which is generally the case—make conflict hard to avoid and even harder to limit. These kinds of beliefs and perceptions create tremendous escalatory pressures. The fact that opportunistic politicians use, propagate, and embellish these myths compounds the problem.

These problems are particularly pronounced in countries that have experienced long stretches of authoritarian rule. Authoritarian regimes invariably suppress ethnic histories and, in an effort to create their own political myths, manipulate historical facts to suit their own purposes. Furthermore, authoritarian regimes fail to promote objective historical inquiry or scholarly standards of evidence in political discourse. Therefore, it is no surprise that the pernicious effects of ethnic mythology are especially pronounced today in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

### Explaining the Causes of Ethnic Conflict

If political science was as advanced as the physical sciences, it might be possible to integrate these systemic, domestic, and perceptual factors in an overarching theory of the causes of ethnic conflict. Sadly, that is not possible. It is not yet clear what conditions are necessary and sufficient for the initiation of ethnic hostilities, nor is there a rigorous understanding of why some conflicts are more intense than others. Perhaps this is because, as Albert Einstein once remarked, politics is like physics, only harder.

However, it is possible to delineate some systemic conditions that are necessary for ethnic conflict to occur. First, two or more ethnic groups must reside in close proximity. Second, national, regional, and international authorities must be too weak to keep groups from fighting and too weak to ensure the security of individual groups. It is far from clear, however, that the presence of these and other systemic factors by themselves will be *sufficient* for ethnic conflict to break out. It seems more likely that systemic conditions will make conflict possible—and some of the systemic factors analyzed by Posen might even make it highly probable—but in most cases factors operating at the domestic and perceptual levels will have to be taken into account as well. More effort needs to be put into integrating explanations across these levels of analysis, as Posen and Snyder have begun to do. Equally important, more effort needs to be put into developing testable propositions about the incidence and intensity of ethnic conflict, as Posen, Snyder, Welsh, de Nevers, and others have done.

### IMPLICATIONS

What are the implications of ethnic conflicts for outside powers and the international community in general? The answer to this question depends on the type of conflict and its course. Three broad types of ethnic conflict outcomes can be identified: peaceful reconciliation, peaceful separation,

and war. In other words, groups might agree to live together, agree to live apart, or fight for control of the situation.

### Ethnic Reconciliation

In some cases, the ethnic groups involved in a dispute may stay associated with each other under some sort of overarching political and legal framework, although they may devise new constitutional arrangements to address specific concerns and grievances. Often, more local autonomy and more explicit minority rights guarantees will be incorporated into new schemas. Austria, Belgium, and Switzerland operate under federal arrangements of various kinds that have been altered in various ways without recourse to violence.<sup>14</sup> The onset of democratization provided the occasion for negotiations on more autonomy for Catalans, Galicians, and Basques in Spain. Disputes between the Indian government, on the one hand, and Naga, Mizo, and Gharo separatists, on the other, were resolved when internal statehood was granted to the latter.<sup>15</sup> Negotiations between Quebec and the other Canadian provinces about Quebec's constitutional status have been continuing for years; whether new, mutually acceptable constitutional arrangements can be devised remains an unresolved issue, however.<sup>16</sup>

When ethnic groups are able to resolve their differences peacefully, ethnic conflicts pose comparatively few problems for outside powers because the international status quo is, by and large, maintained. In cases in which negotiations are the main conduit for conflict resolution, the international community may be able to help mediate disputes, devise minority rights guarantees, and suggest possible constitutional changes. When these internal negotiations are completed, outside powers may have to devise new trading arrangements with newly autonomous regional actors, but little else would change as far as the outside world is concerned.

### Ethnic Separation

In other cases, groups may be unable to devise new constitutional arrangements that are satisfactory to all concerned. They may consequently decide to dissolve existing legal ties. In some cases—the breakup of the Soviet Union and the separation of Czechoslovakia into separate, independent republics—this process might involve comparatively little bloodshed. Velvet divorces are likely to be rare, however, because ethnic geography is generally complicated and because many groups will see fragmentation as a threat to their identity, their regional influence, and their place in world affairs.

Be that as it may, cases such as these pose several problems for the international community. Specifically, cases such as these disrupt the international status quo in at least six respects. First, what were previously internal borders will have to be accepted and respected as international borders.<sup>17</sup> Second, outside powers will have to decide if and when to extend diplomatic recognition to the new political entities. If diplomatic recognition is extended, outside powers will have to decide how to go about establishing and exchanging diplomatic missions with the new states. Third, outside powers will have to decide if and when to extend membership in regional and international organizations—such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Council of Europe (COE), the European Community (EC), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the United Nations (UN).

Fourth, international treaties signed by the defunct state will have to be reformulated. For example, the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I), signed by the United States and the Soviet Union in July 1991, had to be revised in 1992 to take into account the demise of the Soviet Union; Soviet strategic nuclear weapons were deployed in four republics—Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus—each of which had to be made a party to the agreement. In general, outside powers will want to receive assurances from new states that they will uphold the treaties and commitments undertaken by the defunct state, with reasonable allowances for the political and economic circumstances in which the new states find themselves. Fifth, new commercial and financial relationships will have to be developed with the new states. Decisions will have to be made about granting most favored nation trading status to new states and about providing economic, financial, and technical assistance to these states. Sixth, outside powers will have to assess the implications of these developments for regional stability and the international balance of power. These implications could be momentous indeed, as they were in the case of the breakup of the Soviet Union. At a practical level, outside powers will have to decide how these developments will affect their defense postures and alliance commitments, and how they will respond to requests from new states for security guarantees and membership in existing military alliances. Several Eastern European states and several republics of the former Soviet Union have expressed an interest in joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), for example.

Many of these issues will come up before negotiations between the disputing groups have been completed. Outside powers, therefore, will be

under great pressure to make the right decisions at the right time. If they fail to do so, they may find that they have disrupted the negotiating process and made war more likely.

The breakup of the Russian Federation, a possibility that cannot be ruled out, would present special problems for the international community. Although Russia's future is particularly murky, it is at least conceivable that economic collapse and ethnically based secessionist movements could lead to the disintegration of the Russian Federation. Bashkortostan, Chechnia, Kalmyk, Tatarstan, Tyumen, and Yakutia (now Sakha) have been lobbying for—and some have already received—substantial amounts of autonomy from Moscow. Should this process lead to the fragmentation of Russia and the collapse of the Russian military, effective control of Russia's 25,000 strategic and tactical nuclear weapons and 40,000 agent tons of chemical weapons could be lost, along with control of Russia's extensive nuclear weapons establishment. Should this occur, international efforts to control the transfer of assembled nuclear weapons, nuclear weapon components, nuclear weapon technology, fissile material, technical expertise, and chemical weapon stockpiles would suffer a cataclysmic setback. National and international security policies would have to be radically overhauled as a result.

### Ethnic War

In many cases, antagonistic ethnic groups will not be able to agree on new constitutional arrangements or a peaceful separation. Many ethnic disputes consequently become violent, some escalating into all-out inter-ethnic wars. The objectives of the combatants will of course vary from case to case. A minority group might insist on seceding and establishing an independent state of its own; it might demand an independent state within a confederation of states; it might insist on an independent political entity within a new federal structure; it might want more political, economic, cultural, or administrative autonomy within existing institutional arrangements; or it might be satisfied with democratic reforms aimed the implementation of a consociational democracy, ethnic power-sharing, or simply more equitable representation.<sup>18</sup> Groups of roughly equal size and power might fight about similar issues or control of the state. Majority groups might fight to retain or extend their influence and position in the rest of the country.

In some cases, those seeking more autonomy are defeated, and central authorities are successful in imposing their own conception of order on the vanquished, as in the case of Tibet. Cases such as these have few direct effects on the international community because the international status quo is unchanged. The issue that is added to the international



agenda is whether or not outside powers want to exert pressure on the winner to respect the rights of the loser. In other cases, secessionist groups are successful in breaking away and establishing states of their own, as in Bangladesh, Eritrea, and Slovenia, for example. Once this process is completed, the implications for the international community are similar to those for peaceful separation, with the added complication that outside assistance will probably be needed to help the combatants recover from the effects of war. In still other cases, neither party is able to win on the battlefield, and the conflict degenerates into a stalemate. This is the situation today in Angola, Cyprus, Kashmir, Lebanon, and Sri Lanka, for example, where neither political nor military solutions are in sight. It is not yet clear how other conflicts—in Afghanistan, Bosnia, the Caucasus, Liberia, and Tajikistan, for example—will eventually play out.

Why should outside powers care about ethnic wars? Why should they even think about intervening in these potential quagmires? The short answer to these questions is that some ethnic conflicts create moral imperatives for intervention, and some threaten the strategic interests of outside powers and the international community as a whole. Specifically, ethnic wars can affect the outside world in seven respects.

#### *Ethnic Wars and Civilian Slaughter*

Ethnic wars almost always involve deliberate, systematic attacks on civilians. Why is this so? First, ethnic conflicts are rarely high-technology affairs. They are usually fought by recently formed or recently augmented militias composed of ordinary citizens. A group's civilian population, therefore, is the wellspring of its military power; it is the group's main source of military manpower and an essential source of economic and logistical support. Civilian populations are attacked to weaken the military resources on which adversaries can draw. Second, militarily weak groups will have strong incentives to conduct guerrilla campaigns and launch terrorist attacks against soft, high-value targets—cities, towns, and villages—in an attempt to force powerful adversaries into acquiescence. Third, the civilian populations of warring groups are often intermingled. When battle lines exist, they often cut through cities, towns, even neighborhoods. Civilians are inevitably killed under such circumstances. Fourth, ethnic conflicts are often fought for control of particular pieces of territory. To secure complete territorial control, militias seek to drive out civilians from other groups: intimidating, threatening, evicting, assassinating, raping, massacring, and committing genocide along the way. Many ethnic conflicts involve forced expulsions and systematic slaughter of civilians, now known as ethnic cleansing.<sup>19</sup>

Why should outside powers care about civilian slaughter in distant lands? One reason is that it poses a direct challenge to important international norms of behavior, the maintenance and promotion of which is in the interest of the international community as a whole. The international community has tried to distinguish between combatants and noncombatants in formulating rules and laws about the conduct of war; it will find its distinctions and norms hard to sustain in the long run if it allows them to be trampled in ethnic conflicts, in which civilians are attacked not just indiscriminately, but deliberately and systematically. Another reason for caring about—and taking action against—civilian slaughter is that tolerating it is morally diminishing. The savagery in Bosnia, it could be argued, has been proscribed by the Genocide Convention. If so, the international community has a moral obligation—as well as a legal right—to intervene.

#### *Ethnic Wars and Refugees*

Ethnic conflicts often generate staggering numbers of refugees, precisely because they typically involve systematic attacks on civilian populations. It has been estimated, for example, that 100,000 Hindus have fled their homes because of the war in Kashmir, and an equal number of South Ossetians have become refugees as a result of their conflict with Georgia. The war between Armenia and Azerbaijan has generated an estimated 500,000 refugees, and 600,000 people—roughly one-quarter of the total population—have been displaced by the war in Liberia. Conflict in the former Yugoslavia has uprooted an estimated 3 million people, 600,000 of whom have fled the Balkans altogether. In addition, huge numbers of refugees have been generated by the ethnic conflicts in Bhutan, Burma, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Tajikistan.<sup>20</sup>

Refugee problems, especially of this magnitude, affect the outside world in several ways.<sup>21</sup> First, offering sanctuary to refugees can invite military reprisal, thereby drawing the host country into the conflict. Often, fighters mingle with refugee populations, using refugee camps for rest, recuperation, and recruitment. Second, if refugees flee to neighboring countries where large numbers of their ethnic brethren live, their plight can lead their compatriots to become more involved in the original conflict, thereby widening the war. Third, refugees impose tremendous economic costs on host states. Large numbers of impoverished people have to be housed and fed for long and sometimes indefinite periods of time. Fourth, refugees can be seen as potential threats to the cultural identity of host states, especially when refugee communities are large and when they establish their own schools, newspapers, cultural

organizations, and places of worship. Fifth, refugees can become political forces in host countries, particularly regarding foreign policy issues relating to their homeland. Some host governments worry that refugee communities will turn against them if they pursue ungenerous policies. Sixth and last, when refugee problems pose threats to "international peace and security," as they often do, the United Nations has a right, if not an obligation, to consider intervening in the crisis.

#### *Ethnic Wars and Weapons of Mass Destruction*

The proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has added a new dimension to ethnic conflicts: the possibility, however remote, that these weapons could be used in interstate or intrastate ethnic wars. Both India and Pakistan have nuclear and chemical weapon capabilities, and tensions between the two have risen to high levels on more than one occasion in recent years.<sup>22</sup> One of the main sources of tension between the two is India's claim that Pakistan is supporting Kashmiri separatists and Pakistan's claim that India is supporting Sindh insurgents. India and Pakistan are also involved in a prolonged, bitter battle over the Siachen Glacier and their northern border. Russia and Ukraine both have nuclear weapons stationed on their territory, although the latter does not yet have operational control of the weapons on its soil. Although military hostilities between the two are unlikely at present, they cannot be ruled out for the future.

Another possibility is that central authorities could use weapons of mass destruction against would-be secessionists in desperate attempts to maintain the integrity of their states. China has both nuclear and chemical weapon capabilities, and the current regime in Beijing would presumably use every means at its disposal to prevent Tibet, Xinxiang, or Inner Mongolia from seceding, which many in these nominally autonomous regions would like to do. Iran has chemical weapon capabilities and is trying to develop or acquire nuclear weapon capabilities. One suspects that Tehran would not rule out using harsh measures to keep Azerbaijan northwestern Iran from seceding, should they become inclined to push this course of action. It is not inconceivable that Russian, Indian, and Pakistani leaders could be persuaded to take similar steps in the face of national collapse.

Use of nuclear or chemical weapons in any of these situations would undermine international taboos about the use of weapons of mass destruction and, thus, would be detrimental to international nonproliferation efforts, as well as international security in general. Although the possibility that a state would use weapons of mass destruction against its citizens

might appear remote, it cannot be dismissed altogether: The Iraqi government used chemical weapons in attacks on Kurdish civilians in the 1980s.

#### *Ethnic Wars and Chain Reaction Effects*

Ethnic conflicts can spread in a number of ways. If a multiethnic state begins to fragment and allows some ethnic groups to secede, other groups will inevitably press for more autonomy, if not total independence. This is happening in the former Soviet Union, where 14 republics successfully broke away from Moscow. Now, other groups want to redefine their relationships with the Russian Federation; as noted earlier, Bashkortostan, Chechnia, Kalmyk, Tatarstan, Tyumen, and Yakutia (now Sakha) have been lobbying for—and some have already received—substantial amounts of autonomy from Moscow. India is fighting tenaciously to retain control of Kashmir because it fears that Kashmiri secession would be the first step in a process that would lead to disintegration of perhaps the most heterogeneous state in the world. The view in Delhi, a view not unsupported by logic and history, is that fragmentation is easier to prevent than control.

Other problems are created when state A fragments, allowing B to secede and form its own state. A minority group in B might attempt to secede from B. If it has ethnic ties to A, it might prefer to be associated with its brethren in A. When Croatia seceded from Yugoslavia, for example, Serbs in Croatia attempted to secede from Croatia to maintain ties with Serbs in what was left of Yugoslavia. Similarly, when Georgia seceded from the Soviet Union, South Ossetians attempted to secede from Georgia and pressed for union with their Ossetian brethren in Russia. Other problems are created when the minority group in question has a distinct ethnic identity. It might want its own state, C, either because it fears persecution or simply because establishing an independent state appears to be within the realm of the possible. When Moldova seceded from the Soviet Union, for example, the Gagauz attempted to secede from Moldova and form their own state.

Many of these chain reactions have been accompanied by extremely high levels of violence. This has important international implications and not just because fragmentation and violence can combine to create chaos. The more worrisome prospect, at least from the West's perspective, is that fragmentation, violence, and chaos in and around Russia could provide a useful pretext for hard-liners in Moscow to seize power. A hard-line regime might then deploy large numbers of troops in unstable parts of Russia. This, in turn, might lead Moscow to attempt to reassert control over unstable neighboring states. This would inevitably lead to interstate war, and it would constitute a breach of Moscow's pledge not to use

military force to resolve international disputes. Developments of this kind, were they to take place, would have profound implications for Moscow's relations with the West and for international security in general, for all the obvious reasons.

Another kind of chain reaction effect is more indirect: Successful secessions in one part of the world could inspire secessionist movements in others. The growth of international telecommunications capabilities and international media networks makes these "demonstration effects" increasingly potent.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Ethnic Wars and Neighboring Powers*

Neighboring powers can become involved in ethnic wars in a variety of ways. First, if state A fragments, allowing B to secede and form its own state, a minority group in B might attempt to secede from B and join with its brethren in C. When Azerbaijan seceded from the Soviet Union, for example, Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh pushed forward with their demand to secede from Azerbaijan and join Armenia.

Second, when minority groups are persecuted, their brethren in neighboring states might come to their defense. If Serbia took steps to drive ethnic Albanians from Kosovo, for example, Albania might try to defend them. The war in the Balkans could consequently spread. Many in Moscow argue that Russia should come to the aid of ethnic Russians who are being denied their political and economic rights in Estonia and Latvia. In many cases, of course, those who come to the defense of their brethren have ulterior motives in mind—absorption and expansion. Many believe that Belgrade's assistance to Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia, for example, is part of a blatant campaign to create a "Greater Serbia." Similarly, Delhi believes that Pakistani support for Kashmiri insurgents in India reflects Islamabad's desire to control more of Kashmir.

Third, the establishment of new, ethnically defined states might create pressures in neighboring states for more autonomy or outright independence. As John Chipman points out, the creation of an independent Azerbaijani state has worried Iran, which has a large Azeri population. Similarly, the creation of an independent Kazakhstan has troubled China: China fears that Kazakhs in China's Xinxiang Province might try to develop ties with their newly independent brethren or agitate for more autonomy. Similarly, India feared that a federal solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka would give more autonomy to Tamils there than India was willing to grant to Tamils living in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.<sup>24</sup>

Fourth, if an ethnic group spread over two (or more) states is persecuted in one, the group as a whole could become more nationalistic and militant. This, in turn, could lead to trouble with central authorities in

other states. Iraqi persecution of its Kurdish population, for example, has intensified Kurdish sensitivities and, along with the creation of large numbers of Kurdish refugees, has led to increased agitation in Turkey.

Finally, in some cases, states might take advantage of ethnic troubles in neighboring states to further their own strategic and political ends. Indian support for Sindh separatists in Pakistan, for example, is at least in part motivated by a desire to weaken a regional rival and create another lever in Indian-Pakistani relations.

#### *Ethnic Wars and Distant Interests*

In some cases, the interests of distant powers will be affected by ethnic conflicts. In 1990, for example, the United States sent military forces into Liberia to rescue US citizens trapped and endangered by the conflict there. France and Belgium sent forces into Rwanda in 1990 for the same reason. In other cases, states intervene to protect or promote broader strategic and political interests. Saudi Arabia, for example, has tried to contain Iranian influence by opposing Shi'a factions and the Persian-speaking Tajiks in the Afghan civil war; it has thrown its weight behind fundamentalist Pashtuns instead.<sup>25</sup> Although unlikely at the moment, it is possible that intensified ethnic warfare in Iraq in the future could lead Western powers to intervene in an effort to safeguard the Kirkuk oil fields in the north, on Kurdish lands, and the Rumaila oil fields in the south, where large numbers of Shi'a live.

#### *Ethnic Wars and International Organizations*

Finally, ethnic wars affect outside powers because they can undermine the credibility of regional and international security organizations. Among its functions, the CSCE is supposed to help European powers anticipate, prevent, and resolve European conflicts. One of the reasons for preserving NATO, it is often said, is that it helps maintain stability in Europe. Neither of these organizations has played an effective role in the Yugoslav crisis, which can only diminish their viability and long-term prospects. Similarly, Bosnian Serb defiance of UN Security Council resolutions and UN humanitarian initiatives, a prominent feature of the Yugoslav crisis, will inevitably impede the development of the United Nations' peacemaking and peacekeeping capabilities. This, in turn, will have an impact on the prospect for ethnic violence and international conflict in general: Just as effective intervention would bolster the credibility of international action and possibly have a deterrent effect elsewhere, ineffective intervention has a demonstration effect of its own.

More generally, casual defiance of international norms of behavior—with respect to minority rights and the use of force, for example—will

undercut principles that the international community would do well to maintain and extend. In short, ethnic wars can undermine the long-term ability of outside powers to preserve international order.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

What, if anything, can outside powers do to minimize the potential for ethnic violence? The conventional wisdom among many journalists and policymakers is that there is little outsiders can do because these conflicts are driven by implacable ancient hatred. Their implicit policy recommendation, as Snyder points out, is to steer clear and let conflicts play themselves out.<sup>26</sup> In fact, the causes of ethnic conflict are complex. A number of variables affect the probability and intensity of ethnic conflict, and some of these variables are manipulatable; that is, they can be influenced by outside powers.

Jenonne Walker argues persuasively that the best course of action is to address ethnic problems early, before concrete disputes materialize and violence erupts. If ethnic conflicts are easier to prevent than resolve, then the first question to be considered should be: What can outside powers usefully do to ease tensions between and among potentially hostile ethnic groups?<sup>27</sup>

At the systemic level, as Posen argues, groups worry about immediate, imminent, and potential security threats. One of the keys to dampening the potential for ethnic violence, therefore, is to address these security concerns. This will not be easy, however. Providing arms to a group, thus enhancing its ability to protect itself, will often increase its offensive military capacities. This, in turn, will be seen as threatening by others. Providing arms to several rival groups in an attempt to establish a balance of power will be problematic as well. Vague security commitments from outsiders who do not have much at stake will not be particularly credible. Security commitments will be more credible—and, therefore, more effective—if an ethnic war would have important security implications for powerful outside actors.<sup>28</sup>

At the domestic level, three main avenues are open. First, as Snyder suggests, outside powers should help groups develop effective states. This will dampen nationalism in general and ethnic nationalism in particular. Therefore, international economic initiatives should be framed with these overriding political objectives in mind; imposing harsh economic medicine on groups already in turmoil could weaken fragile state structures and trigger a nationalistic backlash. Similarly, outside powers should be careful not to bully groups in turmoil, as this could also weaken already fragile states.<sup>29</sup>

Second, outside powers can help groups develop more representative political institutions. Welsh explains: "No salient group should be pro-

hibited from a share of effective power. Political institutions should be designed to ensure that minorities are proportionately represented in parliaments and bureaucracies and that their interests—political, cultural, and economic—are heeded."<sup>30</sup> Ideally, governments would be based on broad coalitions. To achieve this, winner-take-all elections should be proscribed.<sup>31</sup> In addition to playing an advisory role, outside powers can help shape political institutions and processes in troubled countries by withholding diplomatic recognition and economic assistance from those who retain or advance unrepresentative schemas.

Third, outside powers should insist that cultural diversity be respected, even nourished, in multiethnic states.<sup>32</sup> At a minimum, outside powers should insist that discrimination against minorities be prohibited. All ethnic groups should be equal before the law. All should have the same political and economic rights and opportunities. All should be entitled to worship as they see fit. As far as possible, ethnic groups should be allowed to use their own languages in schools, bureaucracies, parliaments, and courts. Legal mechanisms for redress of grievances should be established if they do not already exist.

In December 1992, the UN General Assembly passed a Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities that outlined the international community's views on these issues. However, as Kathleen Newland points out, this declaration, like other UN human rights instruments, contains no implementation or enforcement provisions. On the whole, Newland maintains, the UN human rights regime is weak.<sup>33</sup> To improve the situation, outside powers and the United Nations should do more to help states draft effective minority rights safeguards. They should develop more effective capabilities to detect minority rights violations and be more aggressive in deploying monitors in potentially troubled areas. Indeed, deploying monitors might help deter violations in the first place. In addition, outside powers should withhold diplomatic recognition, economic assistance, and membership in regional and international organizations from new states until they develop effective minority rights safeguards. Trial memberships in regional and international institutions should be granted in cases in which the prospects for minorities are uncertain. Finally, outside powers should impose sanctions—diplomatic, economic, even military—on states that fail to grant and protect these rights. In short, outside powers should do more to help develop and enforce minority rights standards and utilize more effectively the considerable leverage they all too often squander.

At the perceptual level, outside powers should try to help ethnic groups develop better histories of each other. Posen suggests that oral histories

should be openly discussed with other groups and assessed by disinterested parties. Where possible, competing versions of events should be reconciled. This process should involve outsiders, including academics and representatives from nongovernmental organizations. Obviously, as Posen points out, a few conferences will not undo "generations of hateful, politicized history, bolstered by reams of more recent propaganda."<sup>34</sup> However, these exercises would cost little and, therefore, should be tried.

What should outside powers do if preventive measures fail, violence erupts, and an ethnic war breaks out? Under what conditions should outside powers intervene in such a war? Drawing on the arguments developed by Robert Cooper and Mats Berdal, five conditions should be met before action is taken.<sup>35</sup> First, there should be either a strategic or moral imperative for action. Second, those contemplating intervention should have clear political objectives. If military forces are to be used, political objectives must be translatable into clear military objectives. Third, one must have options—diplomatic, political, economic, military—that will lead to the attainment of one's objectives. Fourth, one must be willing and able to persevere in the face of adversity. Ethnic wars tend to be both long-lasting and intense: Warring groups are highly motivated because, in many cases, they believe their existence is on the line. If outsiders are to impose their will on such combatants, they will have to be determined. Multinational or international efforts, therefore, must be based on a strong, sustainable political consensus; legitimization in the form of strong backing from the UN Security Council is extremely important in this regard. Fifth, before one intervenes in an ethnic war, one should identify the circumstances that would lead one to withdraw. These are general guidelines, to be sure, but policymakers need to keep such considerations in mind when they contemplate intervening in ethnic wars. Discrete decisions should be made one way or the other; otherwise, leaders run the risk of gradually becoming involved in conflicts about which they care little and can do less.

In contemplating intervention in ethnic wars, it is important to note that diplomatic efforts are unlikely to be successful unless they are backed by the threat of economic and military sanctions. It is also important to note that military operations will be more effective at keeping combatants apart than bringing people together. Military interventions, by themselves, will not resolve the underlying strategic, political, and perceptual problems that propel ethnic conflicts. The key to true conflict resolution is the development of civil societies in genuine political communities. That, however, is something about which the international community still has much to learn—and not just in conjunction with ethnic conflict.<sup>36</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Anthony Smith, "The Ethnic Sources of Nationalism," chapter 2 in this volume, pp. 28–29.

<sup>2</sup> This discussion is based on *Ibid.*, pp. 28–31.

<sup>3</sup> See Jack Snyder, "Nationalism and the Crisis of the Post-Soviet State," chapter 5 in this volume; Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," chapter 6 in this volume; Kathleen Newland, "Ethnic Conflict and Refugees," chapter 8 in this volume; Smith, "Ethnic Sources."

<sup>4</sup> For an erudite exposition on levels of analysis and the study of international politics, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

<sup>5</sup> David Welsh, "Domestic Politics and Ethnic Conflict," chapter 3 in this volume, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> The discussion that follows is based on the account in Posen, "Security Dilemma," pp. 104–111. See also Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley, 1979), chapters 6 and 8; Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, vol. 30, no. 2, January 1978, pp. 167–213; Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), chapter 3.

<sup>7</sup> The discussion that follows is drawn from Snyder, "Nationalism," *passim*.

<sup>8</sup> Snyder, "Nationalism," p. 86.

<sup>9</sup> See Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1985), especially chapters 7–10, 15; Arend Lijphart, "The Power-Sharing Approach," in Joseph V. Montville, ed., *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1990), pp. 491–509; René de Nevers, "Democratization and Ethnic Conflict," chapter 4 in

this volume; Welsh, "Domestic Politics."

<sup>10</sup> See de Nevers, "Democratization," *passim*.

<sup>11</sup> See Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*, chapters 2, 7–10; Welsh, "Domestic Politics," *passim*.

<sup>12</sup> Welsh, "Domestic Politics," p. 48.

<sup>13</sup> See Posen, "Security Dilemma," p. 107; Snyder, "Nationalism," pp. 92–93. For a thorough discussion of perceptual issues and how people learn from history, see Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, especially chapters 4–7.

<sup>14</sup> This is not to say that internal Austrian, Belgian, and Swiss relations have been relentlessly amicable, only that some political and constitutional adjustments have been implemented at various times without recourse to violence.

<sup>15</sup> It is important to note that Indian military superiority cast a long shadow over these negotiations.

<sup>16</sup> For more discussion of this general issue and more details on these cases, see Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*, pp. 601–628; Welsh, "Domestic Politics," *passim*.

<sup>17</sup> For more discussion of the implications of border changes, see Daniel Franklin, "International Boundaries: Ex-Soviet Union and Eastern Europe," *The World Today*, vol. 48, no. 3, March 1992, pp. 38–40; James Eberle, "International Boundaries: The Security Angle," *The World Today*, vol. 48, no. 4, April 1992, pp. 68–71.

<sup>18</sup> See International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), *Strategic Survey, 1992–1993* (London: Brassey's for the IISS, 1993), pp. 16–23.

<sup>19</sup> Ethnic cleansing was a prominent feature of the early stages of the India–Pakistan and Arab–Israeli conflicts in the 1940s, for example. It is currently being practiced, *inter alia*, in Bhutan, Cambodia, the Caucasus, Kashmir, Tajikistan, and Tibet. For more discus-

sion, see Paul A. Goble, "Some Russians Now Talk of 'Cleansing,'" *International Herald Tribune*, August 14, 1992, p. 4; Kunda Dixit, "'Cleansing': The Agony of Bhutan," *International Herald Tribune*, September 17, 1992, p. 4; A.M. Rosenthal, "A Model: Cleansing in Tibet," *International Herald Tribune*, April 28, 1993, p. 6.

<sup>20</sup> For more details and discussion, see Newland, "Ethnic Conflict and Refugees," passim.

<sup>21</sup> This discussion is based on Gil Loescher, *Refugee Movements and International Security*, Adelphi Paper 268 (London: Brassey's for the IISS, Summer 1992), pp. 46–51.

<sup>22</sup> International experts generally agree that India and Pakistan have the ability to assemble nuclear weapons on short notice, although neither claims to have (or admits to having) fully assembled, ready-to-use weapons in its military arsenal. It is believed that India has to capacity to field 15–50 weapons and Pakistan, 5–20.

<sup>23</sup> See IISS, *Strategic Survey, 1992–1993*, pp. 22–23.

<sup>24</sup> See John Chipman, "Managing the Politics of Parochialism," chapter 12 in this volume, pp. 246–253.

<sup>25</sup> See IISS, *Strategic Survey, 1992–1993*, pp. 178–179.

<sup>26</sup> Snyder, "Nationalism," pp. 79–81, 94–98.

<sup>27</sup> See Jenonne Walker, "International Mediation of Ethnic Disputes," chapter 9 in this volume, p. 168.

<sup>28</sup> See Posen, "Security Dilemma," pp. 119–121.

<sup>29</sup> See Snyder, "Nationalism," pp. 94–98.

<sup>30</sup> Welsh, "Domestic Politics," p. 56.

<sup>31</sup> See *Ibid.*, passim; Lijphart, "Power-Sharing Approach," passim; Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*, chapter 15.

<sup>32</sup> See Newland, "Ethnic Conflict and Refugees," pp. 154–161; Jonathan Eyal, "Eastern Europe: What About the Minorities?" *The World Today*, vol. 45, no. 12, December 1989, pp. 205–208;

L. Michael Hager, "To Get More Peace, Try More Justice," *International Herald Tribune*, July 30, 1992, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> Newland, "Ethnic Conflict and Refugees," p. 155.

<sup>34</sup> Posen, "Security Dilemma," p. 120.

<sup>35</sup> See Robert Cooper and Mats Berdal, "Outside Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts," chapter 10 in this volume, pp. 197–203.

<sup>36</sup> See Walker, "International Mediation," pp. 168, 177–180; Cooper and Berdal, "Outside Intervention," pp. 200–203; Chipman, "Managing the Politics of Parochialism," pp. 253–259.

## Chapter 2

### The Ethnic Sources of Nationalism

Anthony D. Smith

For more than 40 years following the World War II, few new states were created through ethnic secession. From Iceland's independence to the secession of the Baltic states, only two new ethnic states emerged: Singapore and Bangladesh. Of course, the world saw the creation of many new states in Africa and Asia through decolonization. Yet, ethnicity was not the decisive factor in their formation (with the exception of Israel). In the past two years, however, more than 10 ethnically defined states have emerged. Others may follow.

Is there anything peculiar about this sudden resurgence of ethnicity and its use as a criterion for statehood? Can it be explained simply as the result of the abrupt removal of a "totalitarian lid," which kept smoldering ethnic tensions in check? Would the same phenomenon not be occurring elsewhere, but for the ability of states in other regions to contain the aspirations and demands of their ethnically heterogeneous populations? Did not the Kurdish and Shi'a revolts in Iraq portend the dissolution of that state? Is it not the superior force of the Indian and Sri Lankan governments that has prevented the secession of their Sikh, Naga, Kashmiri, and Tamil populations? Is not the same true for the Kurds in Iran, the Moro in the Philippines, and the Uigurs and Tibetans in China? In Africa, apart from Ethiopia, Sudan, and Angola, are there not other ethnic candidates for autonomy and secession?

Because only a few ethnic communities—out of the many that could (and may) demand autonomy and independence—have obtained states of their own, a more discriminating analysis of the causes of ethnic separatism is required. This analysis must take into account a range of variables—geopolitical, socioeconomic, and historical-cultural. This article will focus on the historical and cultural factors in the resurgence of ethnic nationalism. This is not to deny the importance of strategic, economic, and political factors in providing conditions for ethnic conflict and secession and of the uses to which such conflicts may be put by elite manipula-