

## **Ancestral and instrumental in the politics of ethnic and religious conflict**

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### **Abstract:**

Ethnicity, like race, religion, and nationality, is a feature of group identity that is contested. There are literatures devoted to each, and in each there are those who see the origins of identity and affiliation in ancestry and deeply rooted affect and those who see these as socially constructed and instrumentally used by elites. Yet all recognize that the ancestral is socially constructed and that social constructions make use of existing cultural features, and that the vertical cleavages of race, religion, ethnicity, and nationality dominate the horizontal ones of class. This generates implications for institutional changes, for the pursuit of extraterritorial interests, for the selection of explanatory narratives for conflict when multiple attributions are possible, for intracommunal conflict, and for policies for ethnic conflict regulation.

**Keywords:** Ethnicity; nationalism; race; primordialism; constructivism; instrumentalism

### **Introduction**

Ethnicity is a feature of group identity whose nature, origins, and consequences remain contested. As to its nature and origins, academics debate its primordial and essentialist roots in contrast to its constructed, strategic, or modern evolvments; and as to its consequences, they argue about its importance as a basis for competition and conflict. Although the word is less than half a century old, ethnicity is a long-standing as well as contemporaneous feature of political and social life. Social life embodies different forms of conflict. Scarcity is the basis for economic competition, and the collective character of political rule underlies political competition for power. Such competitions and the conflicts they can generate may or may not reflect ethnic bases of affiliation, organization, and mobilization.

Political competition reflects the organization of politics, which represents both the cleavages in society, and the mobilizational strategies of political

elites. Given a world in which there exist a multiplicity of ethnic groups and the fact that many, if not most, extant nation-states are ethnically heterogeneous, political contestation is likely to reflect, to some degree, conflicting ethnic policy preferences. Yet neither political competition nor political conflict need necessarily revolve around ethnicity. Political alliances and cleavages can reflect ethnicity, but they can also reflect race, religion, region, nationality, ideology, or material interest.<sup>1</sup> But in each case, boundaries are demarcated between those in the group and those outside of it.<sup>2</sup>

Most political violence in the current global political environment is internal, and governments must cope with inter-communal conflict that threatens both internal political stability and interstate relations. By dealing with minority communities, governments must perforce balance considerations of internal governance with concerns about international spillovers. Ethnic conflict is a staple of internal and international politics in many parts of the globe. This special issue focuses on these matters through the lenses of political struggles in the Middle East and Asia, in order to comprehend the dynamics of ethnic politics. In most states in these areas, since the political regime is typically not ethnically neutral, certain levels of ethnic exclusion are implemented by the political system in both formal and non-formal ways. In many states, ethnic competition becomes ethnic conflict. And in an international system numerically dominated by relatively fragile states in which ethnicities spill across national borders and states have extraterritorial interests, severe conflicts and instability are frequent. The regulation of such conflict perforce depends on the bases of ethnicity and both the internal and international sources of political competition and conflict. As described below, the papers draw upon and transcend the standard debates in the field and focus on the bases of political competition and the political use of particular identities for framing political contestation and conflict.

The relationship between ethnicity and politics is developed in general terms yet instantiated in regional and national histories and analyses. Scholarly work on ethnicity initially “drew on the works of those who sought to describe and explain the rise of modern Europe” (Bates 2006, 168), but concerns about the universality of that experience and the different paths of political development in the non-Western parts of the world resulted in shifting the focus to post-colonial societies, a shift reflected in this special issue as well.

Through the myriad ways that ethnicity conceptually informs each contributing author’s research, collectively these pieces examine the deep interconnectedness of political competition and ethnicity at the international, national, local, and individual level. This issue emphasizes the multiple ways ethnic and religious conflicts intersect with political competition and political violence. The contributory disciplinary perspectives range from anthropology to political geography, history, political science, international relations,

psychology, and sociology. The pieces reflect, in part, different attitudes and approaches to the study of political, religious, and ethnic conflicts.

### **A stale debate: primordialism versus constructivism**

Scholars debate the relationship between ethnicity, race, religion, and nationality. As Brubaker (2009, 22) notes, although “the literature on ethnicity, race, and nations and nationalism [has been] fragmented and compartmentalized”, it can be construed “as a single integrated family of forms of cultural understanding, social organization, and political contestation”.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the concept of ethnicity, like those of race, religion, and nationality, has been essentially contested. Regarding each, scholars have addressed two questions: where identities come from and what impact they have. As to origins, a debate has pitted primordial accounts versus constructivist ones. The former stress the long-standing and deep-seated nature of these elements of identity and interest,<sup>4</sup> whereas the latter stress the malleability and socially constructed features of identification. As to the impact of identity, there is a presumption by all scholars that it matters, but for some the impact of these features becomes an issue of how they are used. A subset of constructivists are instrumentalists who argue that social constructions reflect the instrumental choices of elites mobilizing supporters or of individuals selecting ethnic status for social advantage.<sup>5</sup> Since identities and groupings can be socially constructed without the presumption of instrumentality, in this section we just use constructivism to characterize this perspective, and the role of instrumental choice is discussed below.

#### *Race*

Race was widely used in the past as an analytic category, but came under assault, and is now thought of quite differently. The case for a primordial basis of identification is the easiest to make for characteristics that are genetically transmitted, and so race can be characterized as a biological category. The use of racial classification, however, has a problematic history (Banton 1998) and associated with pernicious policies and practices that are now widely rejected. Race came to be criticized on factual grounds, that genetic research did not provide a basis for racial classification, and on epistemic grounds, that there are “no effective criteria to establish membership in races” (Gracia 2007, 3). The epistemic challenge resulted in the widespread view that race is a social construct.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, race continues to be used as a category of identification.<sup>7</sup> The US has included race as a category since its first census in 1790, but over the years the number of categories has grown, the labels have changed, ethnicity has been added, and the system moved in 1960 from having enumerators

classify people to having people choose their own racial (and ethnic) identity (Ahmad and Hagler 2015).<sup>8</sup>

The debate about race is evident in the area of public health. Race and ethnicity “are among the most commonly used epidemiological variables” (Afshari and Bhopal 2010), with ethnicity increasingly replacing race (Afshari and Bhopal 2002, 2010; also see Bhopal 2004), but nevertheless generating a debate about whether “research into ethnicity and health [is] racist, unsound, or important science” (as in the title of Bhopal 1997), whether “as an epidemiological determinant? it is “crudely racist or crucially important” (as in the title of Chaturvedi 2001).

### *Ethnicity*

Although ethnicity replaced race in much academic work because the latter was seen as socially constructed, a similar debate exists regarding ethnicity.<sup>9</sup> Primordialists point to the continuity of features of group identity, such as language and religion, as items that are culturally rather than genetically transmitted across generations. As such, irrespective of how these came into being, they function, and thus can be treated, as the equivalent of naturalized categories. Indeed, some go so far as to argue that there is a biological basis to ethnicity to the extent that human beings acquire their ethnic status cognitively and their “ethnic cognition is at core primordialist” (Gil-White 1999, 789; more on cognition below). That is, if people are biologically hard-wired to categorize one another in particular ways, then the groups into which they sort themselves can be thought of as primordial.

The common and multi-pronged retort to primordial conceptions of ethnicity is that they are socially constructed.<sup>10</sup> First, ethnic categories have shifted over time. The scale of human organization has grown over time and this has shaped the nature of identification, moving from those who are biological kin to tribe to larger groupings that come to be seen as brethren.<sup>11</sup> Second, elites have often used ethnic appeals instrumentally for social mobilization and thus activated sentiments that are not at the forefront of consciousness in many cases (Brass 1985). Third, individuals in many cases have a choice of group affiliation, can shift their alignment as needed, and thus the politics that emerges is not inherent in any society but an emergent property of aggregated individual choices (Posner 2004, 2005).

### *Nationality*

Finally, the same debate exists regarding nationality and has been characterized as that between perennialists versus modernists (Smith 1986).<sup>12</sup> The former are those who point to long-standing historical nations. They point to the existence of nations before there were states,<sup>13</sup> of even modern

states drawing on ethnic origins, and nationality as a core aspect of identity that transcends individuals and generations.<sup>14</sup>

Here too constructivists and modernists fundamentally disagree. They point to the recency of modern nationalism and the self-conscious creation of traditions and rituals in efforts to construct a sense of nationality. There is much evidence of the creation of nation-states and nationality as an emergent identity in the past two centuries (among others, Ben-Israel 1992, 1994). Projects of nation-building are replete with the creation of founding myths, rituals, and a host of created symbols (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).<sup>15</sup>

Numerous examples exist of nation-building exercises, of efforts to construct and imprint new categories of identification on residents, on the construction of citizenship. Indeed, citizenship laws themselves vary, and some states use blood ties as the basis for membership.<sup>16</sup> Rwanda provides a recent example of an attempt to reconstruct the bases of identity through citizenship rules and discourse. Initially following independence, citizenship was limited to ethnic Hutus and excluded Tutsis. Following the genocidal conflict of the 1990s, the government has undertaken the construction of a national identity with citizenship based on Rwandanness and the elimination of ethnic differences in public discourse (Buckley-Zistel 2006).

### *Problems and truths*

In short, the scholarly debates about race, ethnicity, and nationality, all reflect a division between primordialists and constructivists. Both schools of thought contain cores of truth, yet remain problematic. On the one hand, primordialists rely on conceptions of ancestry, with race relying on perceived physical features, ethnicity focusing on beliefs and practices culturally transmitted across generations, and nationality dependent on these combined with geographic location. The social groupings of identity and affiliation – race, religion, ethnicity, nationality – have survived centuries and millennia. They are social constructions, but they are rooted in the past, in sustained physical and cultural differences. To suggest that such forms of identification can be reconfigured and recombined as needed at will is to miss a dominant feature of continuity of human communities.

On the other hand, the categories of identification and affiliation are indeterminate and subject to change, to construction and reconstruction. People have multiple characteristics that can be the basis for identity and alignment. Amartya Sen (2006) argues against what he calls the “solitarist” approach to human identity in which individuals belong to just one group. Second, even the features of identity that are transmitted across generations are also subject to transformation. And the multiplicity of bases of identification and

affiliation imply that there are multiples axes along which competition might occur and conflict might arise.

Finally, the social constructivist position regarding group identity is reinforced by the social identity approach from psychology, which presumes that people make us-and-them distinctions based on social identity in categorizing themselves. Although the experiments that gave rise to the literature suggested that purely arbitrary group identities could be constructed, "SIT [self-identity theory] argued that intergroup relations were governed by an interaction of cognitive, motivational, and socio-historical considerations" (Hornsey 2008, 207).<sup>17</sup>

In short, race, ethnicity, religion, and nationality are social constructions which typically have roots in long-standing self-conceptions of community.

### **An alternative formulation: ancestral and instrumental**

The features emphasized in the debate, however, point to a different analytic cleavage. On the one hand, there are those who point to affective ties as the bases for cleavage, for conflict and alignment. Such vertical cleavages of race, ethnicity, nationality, and religion provide the affective glue for the construction of community, alignment and interest, while also establishing the bases of difference and conflict. Were political divisions and alignments driven solely by material interest, the horizontal cleavage of class or interest group should dominate. Yet modern politics provides recurrent evidence of the centrality of vertical rather than horizontal cleavages.<sup>18</sup> That is the point that underlies arguments about the long-standing, if not necessarily primordial, character of religious conflict, ethnic conflict, and racial conflict. Characterized in this way, these are conflicts of affect and of identity.<sup>19</sup>

The contrast is with those who point to interests and political mobilization. Conflicts are about competing interests and not conflicting identities. Individuals are mobilized by political appeals by elites interested in emerging triumphant in a contest for power and control. Changing interests imply changing coalitions. This argument is akin to an electoral one of constructing a winning coalition. The necessary components will change as a function of group size and the appeals, or combination of appeals, may change as a function of the requisites for at least a minimum winning coalition.

The contrast can be seen in the bases for political parties. There are parties that are loose coalitions, which in some institutional settings are regularly reconfigured and created to win power. Elites assess the characteristics and interests of their citizens at any point in time and construct mobilization strategies to secure the requisite support to come to, or to stay in, power. In the 1960 election in the US, the electorate was broken down into 480 groups, dramatized in the novel by political scientist, Eugene Burdick (1964). Over time, marketers of products and politicians have divided the US population

into dozens of clusters that cut across gender, race, ethnicity, and wealth (Weiss 1988, 2000) and have given us phrases such as narrowcasting and microtargeting. In this view, politicians cobble together coalitions from numerous clusters whose composition is ever changing, and individuals are presumed to vote for the candidates whose policy positions are closest to them. There is no affective component underlying alignment, it is merely a matter of interest.

But there are also parties built on cross-generational affective ties. In some countries, there are ethnic and religious parties, in which deep affective ties are the basis for interest alignments and identity.<sup>20</sup> Even in societies without ethnic and religious parties, one finds ethnic groups, for example, who systematically support one party and whose affective ties to the party are transmitted across generations. More broadly, there is a sociological model of voting in which people are thought to vote their party identification, which is transmitted across generations, and in which they adopt the positions of their party. In such cases, people do not vote their narrow material interests. Rather, the affective tie of party determines one's allies and one's policy positions. This stands in contrast to a political economy view in which interests shape one's party ties, which are merely temporary links of convenience.

The two perspectives can agree that both affect and interest matter, but they disagree on their causal priority. Ancestralists emphasize affect and argue that interests derive from affective bases of identity. Races, religions, ethnicities, and nationalities can have conflicting interests, but those derive from their affective ties. And at any point in time, religion, ethnicity, nationality, and their markers are exogenous and underly interests.

In contrast, instrumentalists emphasize that interests drive identity. Shared interests create categories of identification, but these can be as readily changed as suits of clothing by either the mobilizational efforts of leaders or changing circumstances and how they affect individuals.

Those using an economic or rational choice approach to ethnic conflict require some logic for why the horizontal cleavages of class which underly material divisions and interests are overwhelmed by affective concerns. Bates (2006, 169) argues that "ethnic groups provide low-cost means for rallying constituents". An alternative argument is provided by Esteban and Ray (2008, 2186) who argue that the rich have few material incentives for class conflict while the opportunity costs for engaging in such conflict are high for the poor. In contrast, ethnic alignments sustain within-group economic inequality in which the poor provide the labor and the rich provide the resources for conflict. The result is "a definite bias in favor of ethnic conflict" over class conflict.<sup>21</sup>

Although many couch the debates regarding race, ethnicity, and nationality as conflicts of isms, primordialism versus constructivism, there are those

who combine the ancestral and the instrumental. They recognize that race, ethnicity, and nationality are social constructions, many of which are quite modern. But they are built on existing features on which appeals to group identity can be founded. As Gellner (1964, 168) notes, “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist – but it does need some pre-existing differentiating marks to work on.” Put differently, “the social structural environment constitutes what is ‘ethnically realizable’” (Arfi 1998, 198).<sup>22</sup>

This has been reinforced by what can be called the cognitive turn. A recognition that people categorize themselves and others and on the basis of some pre-existing attributes has led to a focus on the cognitive underpinnings of identity and affiliation. As Brubaker, Loveman, and Stamatov (2004, 47) put it,

what cognitive perspectives suggest, in short, is that race, ethnicity, and nation are not things in the world but ways of seeing the world. They are ways of understanding and identifying oneself, making sense of one’s problems and predicaments, identifying one’s interests, and orienting one’s action. They are ways of recognizing, identifying, and classifying other people, of construing sameness and difference, and of ‘coding’ and making sense of their actions.<sup>23</sup>

## **A world of regions**

The study of ethnicity, like that of religious conflict, state formation, nationalism, modernization, development, governance, democracy, and capitalism, among others, has been affected by the historical experience of modern Europe. Based on this setting, scholars developed a variety of propositions, presumed to be universal, about politics and ethnicity (Bates 2006).

Yet the historical experience outside of Europe differed. Many countries in the world today achieved autonomy and independence only after centuries of European colonization and settlement.<sup>24</sup> Their borders and institutions are external creations and their path to their contemporary condition historically foreshortened. Just as scholars contrast late industrializers to initial industrializers, so too it is important to assess independently the experience of late state-developers, late nationalizers, and late democratizers.

Analysing the politics of ethnicity in areas that have achieved their independence recently provides fertile grounds for assessing the viability of new social constructions and the continuing impact of the ancestral (and how far back it extends). It makes possible an assessment of universal elements of political organization and competition as well as that of the combination of circumstances and features that are characterized as unique. The Middle East and the Asian cases of Indonesia and India provide an opportunity

to assess the impact of both intra-religious and inter-religious conflict on ethnic politics and conflict.

## **Contributions**

The articles in this special issue delineate the implications of both the ancestral and instrumental, of the affective and material, bases of ethnicity.

Ancestral communal identities pose a challenge to international politics. In many instances, national boundaries do not circumscribe ethnic and religious communities. And in such cases, Arthur Stein points out in “Ethnicity, Extraterritoriality, and International Conflict”, it is not unusual for interstate relations to reflect more than the pursuit of narrow state survival, as in the realist argument that states define survival as the maintenance of the physical and territorial integrity of the state. Rather, those who control the state pursue extraterritorial interests on behalf of ethnic kin or co-religionists. In such cases, they define the core interest of the country to be the survival of a transnational community and not merely the maintenance of the physical and territorial integrity of the state. Although realist arguments can be provided for supporting particular factions in other countries, the pursuit of extraterritorial concerns on behalf of those seen as communal brethren constitutes a case in which ancestral affiliation defines identity and drives interest. As Stein also notes, people are willing to fight and die on behalf of those seen as kin and in order to transmit cultural values, and implicitly not on behalf of purely material interests.

In contrast, Daniel Posner, in “When and Why Do Some Social Cleavages Become Politically Salient Rather than Others?”, articulates a model of political competition in which individuals have a repertoire of identities, which are both situational and instrumental. Individuals choose the social identity which lands them in a group with the highest return that is also part of a minimum winning political coalition. In Posner’s parsimonious model, social identity is not about affect or a product of deep attachments, rather it is about the utility of a mobilizable coalition (as also in Posner 2004, 2005), which is solely a function of its relative size in a particular political setting. One implication of Posner’s analysis is that the “depth of attachment may be more productively viewed as a product of identity mobilization rather than as a prior, innate condition that can be treated as an input to the identity choices we observe”, and thus “group labels become simply conveyors of information about the coalition to which a person belongs”.

At the extreme, constructivists and instrumentalists argue that ethnic groups and ethnic attachments are endogenous to the political process. Posner’s claim is more limited. First, at any point in time, people already have pre-existing categories of social identification and thus the issue is one of the salience of cultural difference and social cleavages and the

limited recombination of alignments and categories that are possible. Central to his argument is the assumption that powerholders share, or are believed to share, resources with only members of their own social group (evidence of this is in Horowitz 1985 and Posner 2005), because this excludes the possibility of cross-group coalitions.<sup>25</sup>

One implication of the kind of instrumental approach described by Posner is that changes in the institutional rules of representation change the nature of political alignment and both identification and interest. Rebecca Kook, in “Representation, Minorities and Electoral Reform: The Case of the Palestinian Minority in Israel”, shows that a change in the electoral threshold for representation in Israel provided an incentive for the unification of what had been smaller minority parties representing Palestinians. But she shows that this did more than change the form of representation, but also the very claims of representation. A change in the rules had the instrumental impact of leading to a more inclusive representational form which in turn resulted in more inclusive claims which reflected more of Palestinian society in Israel.

Communal competition can lead to ethnic conflicts which become violent, and at the extreme, result in civil war. Such conflicts demonstrate in a heightened sense the impact of affect, interest, and the organizations that embody them. The communal divisions and conflicts that characterize Lebanon resulted in a prolonged civil war and a tense postwar settlement. In “The Paradox of Powersharing: Stability and Fragility in Postwar Lebanon”, Amanda Rizkallah focuses on the strength and longevity of the organizations that have represented different sectarian communities in Lebanon during and after the civil war. She demonstrates that postwar power sharing arrangements that simply leave intact the representational arms of previously warring communities simply retain sectarian networks and sow the possibility for mobilization and subsequent violence. Violent conflict presupposes more than competing communities, but also the organizations and resources that can be marshaled in a confrontation. Sectarian communities that fought successfully with their own militias in a civil war retain their resources and bases of support in a power-sharing arrangement that ends the civil war. In contrast, new political post-conflict constructions (i.e. new political parties) have neither the resources nor the mobilizational possibilities of more long-standing sectarian associations. This difference gets played out in any subsequent crisis or conflict that arises.

Not only can individuals select from a multiplicity of social identities, but when conflicts occur in such a setting, there are multiple possibilities for framing the conflicts. This implication of competing frames for conflict is addressed in Kirsten Schulze’s paper, “The ‘Ethnic’ in Indonesia’s Communal Conflicts: Violence in Ambon, Poso and Sambas”. Communal conflicts broke out around the same time in three Indonesian provinces, all evinced ethnic targeting and motivation, and were all initially characterized as ethnic

conflicts. In the conflicts that were sustained, non-Muslims advanced an ethnic narrative, while Muslims advanced a religious narrative and in both cases one of the reasons was the way in which the regional conflicts would be seen and the implications for wider support from within Indonesia. The arrival of outside fighters served to recast the conflict as a narrative of religious conflict which better served the interests of elites than one of ethnic conflict. Both communities adopted a religious frame as one side sought support from Muslims from other parts of Indonesia and as Christians looked for support from the international community. Schulze shows that in situations in which multiple attributions and narratives are possible, there is a strategic element in the framing of a conflict.

Even in regions with a common religion (and ethnicity), deeply rooted ideological and affective differences can create profound cleavages, competing visions of the past, and deep and violent political conflicts. In “Changing Islam, Changing the World: Contrasting Visions within Political Islam”, Eli Alshech and Nimrod Hurvitz assess disputes among Muslim movements in Muslim-majority states and characterize a profound religious schism between moderates and militants. The two are distinguished by their views of the legitimacy of using violence to achieve social and political change, and also by their attitudes towards non-Muslim social and political institutions, such as “modern states, political parties, the contemporary global order, or pre-Islamic social entities such as tribes and ethnic groups”. These ideological differences, between “violent purifiers” who reject Western ideas and espouse violence to reform society and “pacific unifiers” who accept ideas such as political parties and reject violence, are rooted in competing religious interpretations and views of the past that go back to the founding of the religion. Islam always had to deal with “pre-Islamic ethnic and tribal worldviews and loyalties”, and in modern times has also had to confront the challenge of non-Muslim institutions. Not only has the acceptability of political parties and democracy been contested, but so have nationalism and international institutions, including international law. Alshech and Hurvitz bring into stark relief the relationship between religion and ethnicity in the Middle East and North Africa, and the religious cleavages that shape political contestation in the region. They highlight areas in which Muslim movements have made their accommodations with modern realities, and which groups and on what issues have fundamentally rejected the possibility of adapting to both the ancient realities of tribe and the modern realities of states and parties.

Gender is a basis for interest and mobilization and yet is typically subordinated to the vertical cleavages of race, ethnicity, religion, and nation. In “Gendering Ethnic Conflicts: Minority Women in Divided Societies and the Case of Muslim Women in India”, Ayelet Harel-Shalev brings this into stark relief in her analysis of women in India. She demonstrates that the cleavage between

Hindus and Muslims predominated in post-colonial India and that there was a failure to incorporate women's interests in post-colonial negotiations.

Moreover, she points out that ethnic conflicts are often resolved through the provision of group rights for previously suppressed ethnic communities, and that this often subordinates the individual rights of women. Although the conflict between Hindus and Muslims in India was not in general resolved by providing group rights, religious autonomy was guaranteed and thus each community retained its distinct approach to family law and no uniform civil code was adopted.<sup>26</sup> The result adversely affected the interests of women. Religion trumped gender and women had to fight within their respective communities for their rights.

### **Ethnicity and conflict regulation**

The contributions in this special issue highlight the roles of affect and interest not only in ethnic conflict, but in the prospects and possibilities for ethnic conflict resolution and regulation. "Structural prevention strategies ... includ[ing] electoral system design, autonomy arrangements, [and] power-sharing arrangements", have been proffered as policies for mitigating, if not resolving, conflict (Bennett, Stern, and Walker 2003, 89). Yet with each solution, the divisions that are the basis of conflict remain and bedevil efforts at conflict resolution.

Partition has been recommended as a way of resolving inter-communal conflict. The argument is plausible in as much as most conflict in the world is intra-state rather than inter-state and this suggests that the problem of deterring war between states has been resolved and the problem that remains is that of preventing internal conflict between factions. Transforming inter-communal conflicts into inter-state ones via partition then has a certain appeal. The contributions in this issue point out obvious problems with partition. Posner notes that partitions simply redistribute the number and distribution of groups within any society. This does not do away with cleavages but simply changes them. Moreover, given the multiplicity of identities and the heterogeneity of population distributions, partition is likely to still result in the existence of communities splayed across borders and this raises the extraterritorial concerns for co-ethnics and co-religionists discussed in the Stein article.

Much the same can be said of changes in institutional rules. These too transform the nature of mobilizational strategies and alignments, but these are built on existing bases of identity and affect. In Posner's analysis and in Kook's, changes in institutional rules change ethnic alignment, but the ethnic identities remain. Kook's analysis of the emergence of a unified Arab party in Israel in the wake of a change in the electoral rules provides an example. What do not emerge are the kind of coalitions across group lines

that are evident in societies with little evident ethnic competition and conflict.<sup>27</sup>

Power sharing is also considered to be one of the most prominent solutions for ethnic conflicts in deeply divided societies (Lijphart 1968). Yet power sharing agreements retain and reinforce the very divisions that led to conflict and which power sharing is intended to ameliorate and resolve. Rizkallah's analysis emphasizes how power-sharing agreements enabled participation of militias-turned-parties in politics, which gave them access to state resources, but left their population networks and organizations intact. Powersharing between armed communities leaves intact the very organizational structures that sustained violence during a civil war.

Another structural strategy for ethnic conflict is the provision of autonomy. The assumption is that grievances of particular communities can be politically assuaged by the provision of a degree of community control. This solution simply maintains and sustains the cleavages and bases of mobilization in the hope of avoiding direct inter-communal conflict. Yet this can function in much the same way as a partition, simply refocusing power disparities, cleavages, and alignments to those within each area of autonomous community control. Harel-Shalev's argument about the subordination of gender concerns in family law through the provision of autonomy to the conservative Muslim elite, provides one example.<sup>28</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Political mobilization draws on both affect and interest. Self-interested political entrepreneurs use the resources available to them to animate the support of individuals. Affective attachments of ethnicity and religion both generate group interests on their own, but also prove useful as bases for political mobilization. Thus, even as elites can select from a range of extant social identities with which to mobilize and are able to reconfigure and recombine them at the margins, they also use the affective sentiments of group identity and not purely material incentives.

## **Notes**

1. There is a "fluidity between the conceptual borders" of race, ethnicity, and nationality (Morning 2008, 242) and ethnicity has replaced race (Fenton 2010) and also often subsumes religion and region as well. Moreover, "the boundary between nationalism and ethnicity remains ill-defined" (Bates 2006, 167).
2. For boundary making in constructing identity, see Barth (1969), Eisenstadt and Giesen (1995) and Wimmer (2008).

3. In noting the ill-defined boundary between ethnicity and nationalism, Bates (2006, 168) notes that “the logic mobilised by the students of the one often parallels that invoked by students of the other”.
4. Primordialism is an unfortunate term for something long-standing and even naturalistic, for the word technically means something existing from the beginning of time, and no primordialist actually means that.
5. See the discussion in Gil-White (1999) for the evolution of the views of anthropologists regarding ethnicity.
6. The factual challenge is subject to empirical results and a vigorous debate continues to rage among geneticists as to whether race is a useful category, with arguments about how measures of genetic similarity and genetic variation are to be assessed in determining whether there is such a thing as race and its utility in various fields (Jorde and Wooding 2004). For entry into this debate, see Andreasen (1998, 2000, 2005), Glasgow (2003), Sesardic (2010), Smaje (1997), Smedley and Smedley (2005), and Yudell et al. (2016). Using genetic similarity and variation to define a race, Ostrer (2012) concludes that Jews are a race, a view that can be seen as quite troubling and contested (Lebens 2012).
7. Although the racial and ethnic enumeration practices of countries vary, the practice remains widespread (Kertzer and Arel 2002; Morning 2008).
8. The process has been criticized and politicized and each recent census has made changes. For an assessment by a former head of the census, see Prewitt (2013).
9. For reviews of the extensive literature on ethnicity, see, in addition to items referenced elsewhere in this article, Calhoun (1993), Chandra (2006), Cordell and Wolff (2016), Kaufmann (2005), Varshney (2007), and Yinger (1985).
10. See the essays in Chandra (2012).
11. This occurs in the sense that individuals identify themselves, or how others identify them or both.
12. For the subtle difference between Smith’s distinction and that between primordialism and instrumentalism, see Conversi (2007).
13. There are many examples of people who see themselves as nations and are in search of a state (Rosecrance and Stein 2006a). Moreover, nations pre-existed modern nationalism (Armstrong 1982).
14. For this position, Walker Connor (1978, 1992, 1993, 1994, 2004) and Anthony Smith (1986, 1989, 1991, 1994, 2004) are critical figures, only some of whose works are referenced here. In addition, among others, see Gat with Yakobson (2013) and Roshwald (2006).
15. The predominant view of nationalism as a social construction is in Anderson (1983), Gellner (1983), and Hobsbawm (1990).
16. On citizenship rules and identity, see, among others, Brubaker (1992).
17. In a famous set of experiments, psychologists assigned participants to purely arbitrary groups, ones that had no history, would have no future, and in which individuals did not know who else was in the group and with whom they had no interaction. Nevertheless, participants allocated more of some distributable resource to members of their own group. There was an evolution in the analytic arguments made to explain the results. Henri Tajfel (1978) settled on an argument he called social identity theory, and his student John Turner extended it in social categorization theory (Turner et al. 1987). For reviews see Ellemers and Haslam (2012), Hogg (2006), and Turner and Reynolds (2012), and for a critical examination see Huddy (2001). The two are quite similar and can usefully be characterized as the social identity approach (Hornsey 2008).

Numerous experiments by economists and psychologists have sought to assess the bases of group discrimination. For a meta-analysis of the experiments done by economists, see Lane (2016).

18. At the outbreak of the First World War, for example, workers of the world did not unite, but fought for their nation-states.
19. In addition to material interests, identity concerns include dignity, self-respect, and recognition (Varshney 2003), as well as linguistic and cultural interests.
20. Even if such parties reflect the manipulative self-interested mobilizational choices of politicians, they make use of affective ties for their impact. 21. It may also be that the class or ethnic basis of preference differs by issue area and its assessment is affected by the prospect for preference falsification (Corstange 2013).
22. Or as Eisenstadt (2002,40) puts it, elites engage in the “activation of the predispositions to and search for some such order which are inherent, even if not fully articulated, among all, or at least most, people”. Also see Geary (2002).
23. Whereas Brubaker, Loveman, and Stamatov (2004) see the cognitive turn as a result of the triumph of constructivism and the view that classification is inherently subjective, Gil-White (2001) argues that cognitively individuals are essentialists.
24. This led to a scholarly shift that is broadly evident not only in the analytic approach and substantive focus of many scholars, but even the labels of “postcolonial” and “decolonial” theory adopted by those with the aim of “decentering” the West.
25. Cross-group alignments being an implication of the argument about clustering in US politics (Weiss 1988, 2000).
26. For more on autonomy and family law/personal law, see Harel-Shalev (2009), and Stopler (2007).
27. For the argument about the role of cross-cutting cleavages in reducing social conflict, see Coser (1956), Lipset (1960), and the more recent empirical contribution of Dunning and Harrison (2010).
28. The provision to Scotland, at the time of unification, of autonomy in matters of law and religion, provided the groundwork for a subsequent renewal of Scottish nationalism centuries later (Rosecrance and Stein 2006b).

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