The Resolution of Ethnic Conflict: Towards a Typology

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ABSTRACT. The set of policies adopted by states to deal with their ethnic minorities, ranging from genocide, population transfer, and boundary alteration to assimilation and accommodation, is presented in a typology. The nature of the policies adopted depends on such characteristics as the source of differentiation of the minority, its relationship to other groups in the state in demographic terms, the nature of the cultural division of labour, the tradition of the state in terms of its recognition of individual and group rights, and the state's autonomy in the international domain. The issue of which strategies are appropriate in dealing with ethnic questions is ultimately a political one.

Introduction

As the dismantling of a set of authoritarian political systems in Eastern Europe and elsewhere proceeds, the world has been witness to a remarkable resurgence of ethnic conflict in an area where, up to recently, such unrest has been contained with apparent ease. Like ethnic conflict in the past, the new wave of ethnic tension varies in intensity from symbolic posturing to formal mobilisation of armies or paramilitary forces against each other. The concern of social scientists to understand and explain the nature of ethnic conflict with a view to devising strategies for its resolution is thus reinforced by the need of policy makers to reduce or eliminate ethnic conflict, or at least to devise a mode of government that minimises the effects of its continued existence.

The present issue brings together a set of articles that examines approaches to the resolution of ethnic conflict from a number of perspectives.[1] This review begins in the present article with an attempt to provide a general typology of the principal strategies for ethnic conflict resolution, stretching from generous policies of accommodation to the horrors of genocide. To make this enterprise more manageable, certain simplifying assumptions are made. The most important of these is the assumption that there are only two groups in conflict: a dominant ethnic group

associated with the state (which provides for the group not only a mechanism for executive action but also a legitimising function), and a subordinate ethnic group (which need not be but typically is a minority).[2] A subsidiary assumption is essentially a moral disclaimer: the emphasis in this article will be on logically *possible* "solutions" (in all of which at least one example of an attempted implementation may be found); no explicit normative comment on any of these, other than such as is unavoidably built into normal linguistic usage, is intended.

In the next section, an overview of the principal strategies available to the state to meet the challenge (real or perceived) of ethnic diversity is provided. The following section illustrates some of the ways in which they have been implemented, drawing heavily from the European experience. In the last substantive section, we examine the factors that appear to have been associated with the adoption of one or another of these strategies, drawing on the articles that follow as well as on additional material.

A Typology of Ethnic Management Strategies

The range of possible ethnic management strategies may be examined within the general context of mechanisms for procuring conformity between state boundaries and ethnic frontiers. In looking at this range, we must first isolate certain underlying dimensions, beginning with our assumption of a tension between the state (which typically is strongly associated with or controlled by a dominant ethnic group) and an ethnic minority. Since this tension is almost always closely related to tensions of a centre–periphery kind, we may find the literature in this area a useful theoretical starting point. In particular, a recently developed model of centre–periphery relations (Rokkan and Urwin, 1983) appears to have striking implications also for state–ethnic minority relations.

The principal feature of the Rokkan-Urwin model is the notion that centre–periphery relations are characterised by tensions within three domains, in each of which the centre's system-building efforts may encounter resistance: economic, territorial, and cultural (Rokkan and Urwin, 1983: 14–18). In Rokkan's earlier work (for example, Rokkan, 1969), a fourth, "political," dimension had been present; it is necessary to reintroduce this here, in freely reinterpreted form, to complete the list of domains within which relations between ethnic minorities and the state are worked out. In adapting this model to provide a framework for the classification of strategies for the resolution of ethnic conflict, two of the four dimensions need to be altered considerably. First, the economic dimension, which in Rokkan's work consistently referred to the material conditions of existence, is replaced by a more fundamentally material dimension: the very physical survival of the ethnic group. Second, the political dimension is reinterpreted to refer to an issue that is rather specific but that is nevertheless related to power distribution: the source (state or ethnic minority) from which the origin of a proposed conflict resolution strategy originates.

We may, then, seek to classify strategies for ethnic conflict resolution in terms of the four following dimensions: I. *Physical*: conflict between state and minority for physical survival; II. *Territorial*: conflict between state boundaries and the frontiers of the ethnic minority; III. *Cultural*: conflict between the culture (and especially language) institutions and symbols of the state and those of the ethnic minority; and IV. *Political*: conflict between the objectives of the state and the ethnic group in terms of the overall programme for ethnic conflict resolution.

Table 1. *A Typology of Ethnic Management Strategies.*

Dimension I Physical: survival of group	Dimension II Territorial: survival of borders	Dimension III Cultural: survival of culture	Dimension IV Political: change originates with state? *Yes*	*No*
		yes ⟶	1. indigenization	2. accommodation
	yes ⟶			
		no ⟶	3. assimilation	4. acculturation
yes ⟶				
	no ⟶		5. population transfer	6. boundary alteration
no ⟶			7. genocide	8. ethnic suicide

Each of these dimensions is, of course, individually very complex; any attempt to assess their collective impact must therefore rely on further oversimplification. An effort is made in Table 1 to classify ethnic management strategies along these dimensions, resting on the following simplifying assumptions: only two outcomes are envisaged in the case of each dimension, although more may be logically possible; dimensions I–III cover only cases where (1) the ethnic status quo is maintained, and (2) the minority is suppressed; and dimension IV assumes adoption of either (1) the state programme or (2) the minority's programme (or, perhaps, a programme sponsored by the minority's external allies, or by others).[3] This allows us to reduce to 16 the total number of logically possible outcomes.

It is assumed that the first and second dimensions may not meaningfully be cross-classified with each other or with the third (in that if a minority has disappeared physically, its exclusion from the state is irrelevant, and the cultural well-being of a minority which has disappeared or been excluded is equally irrelevant). This allows the total number of possible outcomes to be reduced to eight.

Aside from the simplifying assumptions noted above and the fact that variables of which some, at least, are continuous have been reduced to dichotomies, attention should be drawn to other consequences of any attempt to categorise the huge diversity of ethnic management strategies by cross-classifying a mere four dimensions. First, the logic of this method exposes certain possibilities whose occurrence in practice is extremely improbable: ethnic suicide is one of these. Second, the oversimplification of one dimension causes particular problems; "survival of borders" has been taken to refer to both the physical boundaries of the state and the spatial frontiers of the ethnic minority, though very different types of policies may be carried out by manipulating these variables, as we may see from the examples below. Third, a stark, academic exercise of this kind necessarily ignores the great complexity of the real political world, where states often pursue a mixture of policies, not all of them consciously chosen or explicitly put into effect. The usefulness of this approach lies not in its capacity to explain but rather in its function of seeking to simplify and to identify underlying uniformities in this complexity.

Examples of Ethnic Management Strategies

The complexity of the social and political realities that have been reduced to the eight elements in the grid in Table 1 may best be appreciated through examples of the strategies in question. Discussion of such strategies indeed forms the substance of the remainder of this issue, but some illustrative remarks may be useful at this stage. They are drawn mainly from the European experience.

Indigenization. This rather awkward term may be used, for want of a better, to describe a set of strategies that have something in common with affirmative action. Crudely translated from a Russian term that has similar implications, it is used here to refer to unsolicited state policies of cultivation of ethnic minorities in general. On the face of it, this appears highly unwise from the perspective of the state; the state is making concessions in the political and cultural domains where no concessions are sought. It is not surprising that most instances of this policy are to be found where multinational states are faced with serious problems of ethnic unrest, with certain groups demanding autonomy or independence. In these circumstances, the state may yield to more extreme demands by offering a degree of autonomy, but the consequences of such autonomy are undermined by the simultaneous imposition of autonomy on certain other groups where the demand for it is weak or non-existent.

Eastern Europe affords a number of examples of this policy. In the old Soviet Union, for instance, union republican status was conferred on certain nationalities (such as the Belorussians) which might have been satisfied with much less, while the Russian Federation conferred the status of autonomous republic, autonomous region, or autonomous area on groups with a very low level of ethnic consciousness or on areas in which the eponymous group constituted only a minority of the population.[4] Alongside these policies in the political–administrative domain have frequently gone corresponding policies in the cultural domain: many uncodified languages were standardised and given their own writing systems, rules of grammar and vocabulary—reforms which were calculated in the long term to permit the growth of ethnic consciousness, even if they could also lead ultimately to Russification (for a discussion of the early Soviet policy of *korenizatsiya* or "indigenization" see Safran, this issue; see also Bromley and Kozlov, 1974). In Yugoslavia, similarly, on the centre's initiative Macedonia was given the status of a separate republic and a distinct Macedonian language was cultivated.[5]

We may also find examples in Western Europe. The Italian constitution of 1947 made provision for the immediate granting of autonomy to five "special" regions that were marked by some form of cultural distinctiveness. While this may have been a response to vigorous demands for autonomy or even separation in some regions (such as the South Tyrol Germans in Trentino-Alto Adige), it amounted in other cases to the granting of autonomy where the demand for this was weak (as in Sardinia, for example). Similarly, when the territorial structure of the Spanish state was being reconstituted in the post-Franco period in response to demands from Basques and Catalans, autonomy was also offered to other regions, such as Galicia, where indigenous demands for autonomy had been weak. In both Italy and Spain, regional devolution in the longer term to other parts of the state (including those where there was virtually no demand for it) undermined the political distinctiveness of the "special" regions. A final example is the creation of the state of Northern Ireland in 1921. Opponents of autonomy or independence for Ireland were

concentrated in the northeast of the island but, though they succeeded in keeping themselves out of the new Irish Free State in the south, the British government insisted on bestowing on them unwanted autonomous political institutions.

In certain circumstances, the state may insist on recognising the separate identity of an ethnic minority even where this minority not only does not demand such recognition but even resists it. This was the position within those (typically, traditional) states where minorities were identified and recognised precisely so that they could be discriminated against. South Africa provides an example of such a state that survived into the 1990s (see Guelke, this issue).

Accommodation. The second possibility is that the centre may respond to demands from the ethnic minority by changing its own structure to provide formal recognition of the cultural or ethnic diversity of the state. Two issues arise here: the extent to which power remains concentrated in the centre rather than being devolved to the minority, and the domain in which concessions are made, political or cultural. Indeed, we may cross-classify these oversimplified dimensions, as in Table 2, to produce a typology of accommodationist strategies. The four strategies identified in Table 2 are examples of the four principal approaches, rather than being an exhaustive list. They are not, of course, mutually exclusive; but they are sufficiently distinctive to be used as headings for the discussion of four rather different types of accommodation of ethnic diversity.

The most striking example of the first category, where power is shared at the level of the central government, is *consociation*. Strategies in this category may range from attempts merely to guarantee minority representation in the cabinet in a form of executive *power-sharing*, as was attempted in Northern Ireland in 1973–74, to fully-fledged consociational government, where the notion of proportional sharing of posts and of political compromise extends well beyond the domain of government formation. The complex compromises that characterise both federal and cantonal government in Switzerland are examples. At the federal level, for instance, the convention has developed that the federal government is proportionately based on the four principal parties, but regional, linguistic, and religious balances are also maintained (on political compromises of this kind, see Lijphart, 1977).

The second approach is *federalism*, where autonomy is conceded to component units of the state in accordance with an ethnic principle, as in post-1968 Czechoslovakia's two republics, Yugoslavia's six, and the former USSR's 15 union republics. Falling short of this are various forms of *territorial autonomy*. This may take the form either of state-wide regional devolution or of ad hoc arrangements, where certain peripheral areas are granted autonomy, such as the Åland Islands within Finland, Greenland and the Faeroes within Denmark, Slovakia in pre-1968 Czechoslovakia, Kosovo and Vojvodina within Serbia and the various autonomous

Table 2. *A Typology of Accommodationist Ethnic Management Strategies.*

| | | Domain | |
		Political	*Cultural*
Location of power	*Centralised*	Consociation	Group rights
	Decentralised	Federalism	Cultural autonomy

republics, regions, and areas within the Russian Federation. "Autonomy" is, of course, a matter of degree, and there has been great variation in the instances mentioned above in the extent to which so-called autonomous areas have been able in reality to exercise it (for a fuller discussion, see Stanovčić, this issue; for a more general classical discussion of federalism, see Wheare, 1963).

Third, we come to the category labelled *group rights*. This refers to policies that go further than merely recognising the equality of individual citizens by also conceding additional rights to groups on the basis of certain distinctive ethnic or cultural characteristics. This may take the form, for instance, of the provision of a separate legal framework for the provision of rights in the areas of language, culture, and education. Limited provision for group rights of this kind, developed to its fullest under the League of Nations Minorities Treaties in the interwar period, has been traced back to the Congress of Vienna, which placed an obligation on Austria, Prussia, and Russia to respect the rights of their Polish subjects (Claude, 1955: 6–16), and, in the domain of religious freedom, on the United Netherlands, which had just incorporated Belgium, to respect the rights of its Catholic subjects (Mair, 1928: 30–31). While certain group rights are clearly distinguishable from individual rights, not all rights may be unambiguously assigned to one category rather than another (for further discussion see Janowsky, 1945: 3–4; Laponce, 1987: 160–164).

Fourth, in some circumstances ethnic minorities may be given devolved institutions whose jurisdiction is non-territorial. While this may, for want of a better expression, be described as *non-territorial autonomy*, the phrase *national cultural autonomy* has also been used. Here, too, power is devolved from the central state, but this time to authorities whose jurisdiction is over individuals defined not in territorial terms but in terms of some cultural or subjectively defined characteristic. This principle had medieval roots, as expressed, for instance, in the notion of "estate- " or "order-based" government that survived in places into the present century, which assumed the existence of several legally defined classes each with their own rights, though related to each other in a clear hierarchical system. It acquired something akin to ethnic significance in the Ottoman Empire, where the *millet* system conferred a degree of autonomy on the non-Muslim religious groups that made up the empire (see Davison, 1977), and in the Polish Commonwealth that disappeared at the end of the eighteenth century, where the dispersed Jewish population was given a measure of formal institutional autonomy. In its modern form, this approach was associated initially with Austrian Social Democrats Otto Bauer and Karl Renner at the beginning of the present century; they suggested a solution for the intractable ethnic problems of Austria-Hungary, where different ethnic groups were often inextricably intermingled, in "national cultural autonomy." Attempts were made to apply this in Moravia and Bukovina, and a similar initiative was undertaken after the First World War in Estonia's Cultural Autonomy Law of 1925. This allowed self-defined minorities to apply for the right to establish Cultural Councils, which would have modest revenue-raising powers and would exercise control over certain functions in the areas of culture and education; the dispersed German and Jewish minorities took advantage of this to attain a degree of self-government (for a discussion of the concept, see McRae, 1975).

These approaches, it has been suggested, are not mutually exclusive. Belgium since 1970 represents an instance of at least three in operation simultaneously. First, the state recognises three principal regions (Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels), to which power is gradually being devolved. Second, it also recognises two

principal cultural communities, the Dutch- and the French-speaking ones, to which power over certain non-territorial matters is also being devolved.[6] Third, the convention was first established and then written into the constitution that the Belgian cabinet should consist of an equal number of Dutch- and French-speaking ministers, not including the prime minister (see also Fitzmaurice, 1988).

Assimilation. This is, perhaps, the best-known and most widely practised of all ethnic management strategies. Expressions such as "one state, one nation, one language" translate easily from one culture to another, and find willing supporters in all. In many parts of Europe there has been a powerful momentum towards the forcible assimilation of ethnic and linguistic minorities, typically by denying them access to political and cultural self-expression and by limiting the availability of educational facilities. Historical examples abound. Thus the British state sought to extend English cultural influence over its Celtic peripheries; Russia subjected its non-Russian peripheries to intense Russification pressures during the last decades of the old regime; and the spread of standard Italian throughout the Italian peninsula proceeded further after the completion of the unification process in 1870. Much more recently, strongly assimilative policies have been followed in very different political contexts in France, Bulgaria, and Romania. Paradoxically, perhaps, vigorous policies of this kind have also been pursued by national groups which were themselves engaged to some degree in a struggle against similar pressures from above. In the Austro-Hungarian Empire, mild Germanisation of the Hungarian elite did not prevent that elite from itself pursuing uncompromising Magyarisation policies vis-à-vis its Slovak and Romanian minorities after winning autonomy in 1867; and in Galicia the Polish elite, while successfully resisting German cultural influence from Vienna, themselves insisted on the primacy of Polish culture even in the predominantly Ruthenian (Ukrainian) areas of East Galicia (see, for instance, Jászi, 1961).

The language in which assimilationist strategies are cloaked may sometimes appear particularly benevolent, and may, indeed, be so intended. Its advocates may argue that the withholding of recognition from groups within society is in the name of the principle of individual human equality, and it is true that classic formulations of individual human rights of the eighteenth century, as embodied in many contemporary state constitutions, do not include the right to education through the medium of one's own language, nor do they even refer to language. Although the "non-recognition of ethnicity" has been placed in a category separate from "assimilation" in one classification (van den Berghe, 1981), it is being treated here as the same type of approach.

Acculturation. This term is used here to refer to a process of steady disappearance of cultural distinctiveness as a consequence of unforced assimilation. In many cases, this is the terminal stage of a process that in earlier stages had an explicitly assimilative form. Thus, in Scotland and Wales the proportion of speakers of Gaelic and Welsh continues to decline despite a new benevolence on the part of the state; and in Ireland the Irish language continues to disappear despite an even more strongly supportive official attitude. In the former USSR, census evidence suggests that many Belorussians and perhaps even Ukrainians may have passively capitulated to Russian influence. In a variant of this process, certain subordinate groups may seek their *integration* in the dominant community in contexts where that community has sought to exclude them by formal or de facto discrimination. Examples are Blacks

in the United States, especially during the period of the civil rights movement, the non-white population of South Africa, and immigrant minorities in most Western societies.

Population Transfers. There are shorter, sharper ways of ensuring conformity between the boundaries of ethnic communities and states than waiting for assimilation to take its slow effect. Either the boundary of the state may be redrawn so that it matches the ethnic frontier, or the ethnic frontier may be redrawn so that it matches the state boundary.

There are several approaches to redrawing the ethnic frontier, all of them involving some kind of population transfer. The first is the simple device of *expulsion*. In the European experience, few examples have been as far-reaching as the expulsion of millions of Germans from various central and east European states immediately after World War II. The departure of some three million Germans from Czechoslovakia and of a much larger number from Poland transformed the ethnic structure of these countries and greatly reinforced the cultural supremacy of the dominant ethnic groups (see Schechtman, 1962).

A second variant is the strategy of population *exchange*. In this, two or more states agree to "exchange" populations in such a way that each is rendered more ethnically homogeneous. Among examples of this process the Balkan states feature prominently, most notably in the 1920s, when Greece, Turkey, and Bulgaria engaged in population exchanges (see Ladas, 1932). Despite the implication of fairness in this phrase, however, the minority in question normally has little say in what is essentially an involuntary process.

Third, especially in traditional states, rulers have been prepared to move populations from one area to another or to invite colonists from outside with a view to changing the ethnic balance by means of some kind of *settlement* policy. Thus, Great Britain pushed back the ethnic frontier of the Irish in the seventeenth century by "planting" English and Scottish colonists in Ulster, and similar policies were pursued at the same time in the Americas by several European states. During the 1920s, similarly, the Polish government attempted rather unsuccessfully to Polonise its eastern frontiers through a colonisation policy (Kulisher, 1948: 126–131); like Czechoslovakia, it was rather more successful after 1945 in settling its western frontiers. More recently, the ethnic structure of parts of the Soviet Union (and most notably of Estonia and Latvia) underwent fundamental changes in their ethnic structure, changes which, whether or not they were unintended consequences of economic and demographic factors, have far-reaching cultural and ultimately political implications.

It was implied in Table 1 that strategies designed to procure a match between ethnic and state boundaries by redrawing ethnic boundaries represent an initiative of the state. There is, however, one type in which the initiative allegedly rests elsewhere. This is *repatriation*, a process that is in many ways the reverse of expulsion in that the ethnic minority moves allegedly not because it is unwelcome in its old home but because it is welcome in its new one. Thus, in the early years of the Second World War thousands of Germans were "repatriated" to the Reich despite the fact that their ancestors had resided for centuries in their far-flung outposts. By this means both Estonia and Latvia lost their German minorities; for rather different reasons, Estonia lost its small Swedish minority at about the same time (see Schechtman, 1971). Large numbers of Poles were similarly "repatriated" from the Soviet Union after each of the world wars. Whatever language was used

officially to describe such population transfers, the underlying circumstances were that the minority's transfer was involuntary.

Frontier Adjustment. In some cases an ethnic minority may be sufficiently strong or its external allies may be sufficiently powerful to secure the redrawing of state frontiers to provide either for the birth of a new state or for the transfer of the dissident ethnic minority to an adjacent state. There are many examples of successful separatist nationalism from the period after the First World War and some from other periods.[7] Frontier adjustment between states has tended also to occur in the immediate aftermath of war: the transfer of South Tyrol from Austria to Italy, or of Transylvania from Hungary to Romania after the First World War, for instance, or the transfer of Subcarpathian Ruthenia from Czechoslovakia to the Ukrainian SSR, or of Vilnius from Poland to Lithuania during or after the Second World War, for instance.

Just as Table 1 implies that population transfers take place on the initiative of the state only, so too does it imply that boundary changes in which the state loses territory will take place only on the initiative of the ethnic minority. While it is difficult to imagine circumstances in which a state voluntarily cedes territory, such instances have occurred. They have typically taken place, however, during the process of *decolonisation*, in the course of which remote territories have sometimes been shed even against the wishes of the local ethnic group. A second approach is the former *Bantustan* policy of the South African government, whose aim was to create a core territory in which the proportion of whites would be increased by hiving off sections of the black population into nominally independent "homelands."

Genocide. This most brutal of all ethnic management devices also presents too many examples. While others could be cited, such as the deaths of Armenians in the course of the Turkish deportation policies of 1915, the most notorious is, of course, the extermination of millions of Jews during the Second World War, a policy that has left a permanent mark on the ethnic structure of Poland, Lithuania, and other states (see Dawidowicz, 1975). Though on a less complete scale, and not necessarily always under direct government control, the size of certain minorities in other states has also been reduced by similar means, especially during times of war.

Ethnic Suicide. This option is fundamentally irrational and has been retained in Table 1 only to maintain logical consistency. While the number of suicides motivated by ethnic passions is striking, there have not thus far been any instances of collective suicide, or of anything approaching this, on the part of an entire community. An entire religious community, the People's Temple sect, engaged in a mass suicide in Guyana in 1978 in which 914 people died, but ethnically-motivated group suicide is much rarer and is normally justified as being intended to save the whole group through the self-sacrifice of a few of its members. The ten nationalist hunger strikers who died in Northern Ireland in 1981 are an example of this, even though their formal demands were very specific.

Selection of Ethnic Management Strategies

The remaining articles in this issue illustrate a number of approaches to the resolution of ethnic conflict and explore the circumstances associated with them in a variety of geographical and cultural contexts, ranging from general comparative

analysis (Stanovčić, Esman) through more restricted comparisons of France, the USSR, and Israel (Safran) and of Canada and Norway (Thomson) to a case study of South Africa (Guelke). The subordinate groups analysed vary in type, including ethnic minorities in general (Stanovčić), linguistic minorities (Esman, Safran), racially defined groups (Guelke), and minorities defined in terms of their adhesion to indigenous culture or to exclusivist religious norms (Thomson). Finally, the authors inevitably vary in political perspective, ranging from a concern with the preservation of political community in modern, democratic societies, giving priority to individual human rights (Esman, Guelke), to a concern with the protection of cultural values of minorities in modern, pluralist societies, stressing the importance of group as well as individual rights (Stanovčić, Safran, Thomson).

Despite differences in substance and perspective, these articles, together with the broader literature of which they are a part, permit us to arrive at some tentative generalisations on the circumstances associated with the adoption of particular ethnic management strategies. We may distinguish between characteristics of the subordinate ethnic community itself (some of which are of intrinsic importance, while others are important in a relative sense, in terms of the kind of relationship they establish between the subordinate and dominant groups) and certain characteristics of the host state. The most significant features of the subordinate group appear to be (1) the type of group, in terms of the factors that distinguish it from the dominant group; (2) the demographic characteristics of the group, including its relative and absolute size, its growth rate, and its settlement pattern; and (3) the group's location in any cultural division of labour.[8] To these may be added two characteristics of the political system: (4) the state tradition in terms of the relationship between individual and group rights; and (5) the state's autonomy in the international environment.

Group Type. The manner in which the subordinate group is *differentiated* from the dominant one clearly has implications for ethnic management strategies. Physical differences, such as racial ones, though ineradicable (except through interbreeding in the long term), need not of themselves prove intractable to policy makers. Linguistic differences, however, are intrinsically problematic. They pose a real threat to the unity of the state, given the ubiquity of language in government and everyday life and the tendency of each human being to identify with a single, personally-dominant language (see Laponce, 1987: 5–23). Other cultural characteristics, such as distinctive religious values and indigenous lifestyles, are likely to pose difficulties only to the extent that they conflict with the norms of the host society. But the importance of this factor relates not merely to the nature of the differentiation, whether racial, linguistic, religious, or cultural; it relates also to the depth of this differentiation. The more adjacent the minority to its host society (as measured by "objective" linguistic distance, for instance), the less the probability of mutual mistrust, other things being equal. In addition to this, the *origin* of the group is important: in general, immigrant groups may be absorbed more easily than indigenous ones.

Demographic Characteristics. In terms of their demographic characteristics, three attributes of ethnic minorities are important. The first is their relative and absolute size. Clearly, the larger an ethnic minority, the greater the threat it may be seen as posing to the state; the smaller, the greater the ease with which it may be either tolerated or ignored. The second consideration is the extent to which this position

is changing, that is, the growth rate of the minority relative to that of the majority; one which is increasing as a proportion of the total population obviously appears more menacing than one which is stable or declining. Third, the pattern of geographical dispersal of the minority is important: the greater the extent to which it is scattered geographically, the easier it is for the state to withhold group rights from it, and if such rights are conferred they are more likely to take non-territorial than territorial forms.

Cultural Division of Labour. Ethnic coexistence almost always coincides with a cultural division of labour, and this has implications for ethnic policy from two perspectives. First, the greater the extent to which members of the minority occupy distinctive, high status positions in the labour force, the more likely they are to be portrayed as a threat to the majority and the greater the pressure on the state to withhold group rights from them. Second, and more typically, if the minority is associated with low social status its culture tends to be stigmatised and acculturation is one possibility. When André Siegfried asked over eighty-five years ago (1966: 185), in generalising from the experience of a Quebec hotel, "Is it not pitiful that English should be the speech of the managers, and French of the menials?", he was drawing attention to just such a relationship. As in Belgium, where the expression "French in the parlour, Flemish in the kitchen" was an effective domestic metaphor for the broader, societal imbalance between the two groups, and in very many other cases in Europe, upward social mobility was inevitably linked with acculturation to the dominant group, and perhaps also with assimilative state policies. It was only when, as Deutsch (1966) pointed out in another context, the pace of such mobility began to far outstrip the speed of assimilation that mobilisation behind demands for alternative kinds of ethnic settlement took place.

Although the theory of the cultural division of labour normally implies the coexistence of two or more groups in a shared space, we also find the special case where the groups are spatially segregated. When the politically subordinate group occupies a region that is economically dependent on the centre and when certain other conditions are satisfied we get the phenomenon of *internal colonialism*, which in particular circumstances is conducive to resistance to assimilation; the Celtic peripheries of the British Isles have been cited as an example (Hechter, 1975). As Hechter's critics have pointed out, however, some peripheries that resist assimilation are more economically developed than the centre (in addition to the well-known cases of Catalonia and the Basque country within Spain, there are the instances of Slovenia and Croatia within Yugoslavia). Although such instances reverse the characteristic conditions of internal colonialism, they retain, as Hechter (1985) has pointed out, elements of a cultural division of labour.

State Tradition. In general, the western state has undergone a slow transition from monarchical to democratic government, corresponding with a parallel change from a conception of society as comprising a small set of groups with discrete rights and obligations to one of society as comprising a large number of individuals (see Bendix, 1978). This transition from corporate to individual-centred statehood has in principle been inimical to the recognition of ethnic or other group rights, and such rights have been particularly difficult to vindicate in societies with a Jacobinistic conception of the state. This element of the state tradition, then—the degree of progress in the direction of an individual-centred society—has important implications for the protection of ethnic rights. Such rights are most likely to be

protected in societies which either have not yet fully recognised individual rights (such as Yugoslavia; see Stanovčić, this issue) or have transcended this stage and moved in the direction of group recognition. A separate but related consideration is the extent to which the state has a tradition of tolerating sub-system autonomy; the notion of devolved or federal government may be more traumatic for some states than for others.

State Autonomy in the International System. The degree to which a state may have a free hand in dealing with its ethnic minorities varies enormously, and depends not only on its location in the international power system but also on the extent to which other states feel that they have a vested interest in the way in which it treats its minorities. States may be bound by the formal provisions of international agreements, as in the Minorities Treaties adopted by the League of Nations, by the de facto balance of power, as in inter-war and post-war Europe, and by pressure exerted by international organisations, as in the case of UN-sponsored pressure on South Africa.

Important though it is to establish which types of characteristics are associated with the adoption of the kinds of strategies reviewed above, it is extremely difficult to arrive at reliable generalisations. It appears not to be the case that "liberal" strategies are associated with one set of characteristics and "coercive" ones with their opposites. An ethnic minority that is small in size, for instance, or one that is widely dispersed among the host population poses little threat to the state, which may thus be disposed to treat it generously; on the other hand, these very characteristics also *permit* the state, should it so wish, to engage in the most coercive of policies. By contrast, if the minority is large in size and is territorially concentrated it not only constitutes a greater threat but also possesses superior resources for its own defence; while the state may thus be ill disposed towards it, its capacity for naked coercion is also reduced.

Conclusion

Since this article began by drawing attention to the respects in which policy makers and scholars have a common interest in the analysis of ethnic conflict and its resolution, it may be appropriate to close on a similar note. The path from social scientific analysis to political prescription is, of course, strewn with shattered reputations; the approach must, therefore, be extremely tentative.

The perspectives of the contributions included in this issue span a continuum that is defined by two poles, which give priority respectively to the ethnic community and to the state (and to the entire political community associated with it). The first is illustrated by Barker's formulation of the classic principle of self-determination: "In some form a nation must be a state and a state a nation. . . . A democratic state which is multinational will fall asunder into as many democracies as there are nationalities, dissolved by the very fact of will which should be the basis of its life" (cited in Cobban, 1969: 128). The second is van den Berghe's (1981: 353–354) affirmation that "that government is best which pays least attention to ethnicity." It is interesting, however, to note that these extremes (ethnic minority-centred and state-centred) converge in one important respect: they agree on the unsatisfactory nature of polyethnic or multinational states, and even van den Berghe concedes that for very large groups self-determination may be a realistic option.

The realistic options facing ethnic policy makers are, however, normally more

limited. Of the options outlined in Table 1, some are excluded from the realm of political acceptability. Dimension I, with its barbaric implications, is not relevant, though it would be naive to assume that the idea of genocide is altogether absent from the minds of all political leaders in all parts of the world. This is less true of Dimension II: though generally rejected in western societies as unacceptable on a human level, voices advocating population transfers are sometimes heard, and the notions of separation and boundary change are, of course, much more widely supported. The international community has, however, been strikingly reluctant to endorse any change in existing frontiers, especially in contexts where, as in Africa, the mismatch between ethnic frontiers and political borders is almost complete. Fear of the "domino effect" has similarly discouraged European states from welcoming the advent of new members in their midst since 1918. In this context, the speed with which western states recognised the secessionist republics of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia is surprising. Policy makers are also acutely conscious of the fact that as a solution to ethnic unrest the creation of a new state normally leads to a reproduction of the same problem in microcosm: a minority has become the majority, but new minorities have been created.[9]

For most purposes, then, the politically relevant options are the first four in Table 1. Here the central issue is the extent to which the state insists on treating its citizens as individuals or is prepared to concede formal group rights, whether on a territorial or a non-territorial basis. While this might appear to be determined directly by the political preferences of the policy maker (who may be concerned either to assert the primacy of the state or to defend the rights of minorities), we should note more complex possibilities, such as the formula advocated by Esman (this issue), which may be paraphrased as: "monoethnic where possible; polyethnic only if necessary, but not necessarily polyethnic." This reminds us that formal recognition of ethnic and cultural differences may be an important instrument of their elimination. Three remarks about the implications of group- and individual-centred policies are appropriate in conclusion.

First, it has been pointed out that certain systems of recognition of group rights may not only interfere with the exercise of individual rights but may also immobilise the state, as in the case of Yugoslavia, where a complex "ethnic veto" system operated and the federal government lacked sufficient executive powers (see Stanovčić, this issue). Such systems may also be ineffective in protecting the very groups in whose interests they are allegedly designed. As van den Berghe (1981: 348) put it, "the overwhelming majority of group-oriented ethnic policies have been premised on the inequality of the groups concerned, and have resulted in the perpetuation of these inequalities, *whatever the stated intent of these policies*."[10] While Lijphart and others would argue that such defects are not intrinsic to group-based systems, it must be acknowledged that they are sometimes present.

Second, it is important to point out that individual-based systems may be similarly deceptive. At worst, the withholding of group rights may serve to enhance minority identity and to make an ethnic problem more intractable; at best, it may lead to the disappearance of languages and cultures which have had their own vitality. In the context of the modern, interventionist state, the apparent "absence" of policy may, indeed, disguise an authentic policy of deliberate inaction, whose assimilative effects may have been foreseen. In other words, the velvet glove of individual human rights may hide the mailed fist of ruthless Jacobinism.

Third, the effects of different components of the same process may be contradictory. Thus, the concession of certain forms of group recognition to Blacks in the

United States was actually associated with their assimilation; differentiation and integration proceeded simultaneously. By contrast, it was a striking and paradoxical feature of Irish nationalism that linguistic assimilation to English from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards was accompanied by increasing anti-English ethnic sentiment (Deutsch et al., 1957: 36); cultural integration and political differentiation proceeded simultaneously.

The consequences of different types of ethnic policies depend, then, on the concrete circumstances of individual cases. Historical experience and comparative analysis permit us to predict with some accuracy the consequences of certain types of policy. Resolution of the problem of ethnic conflict depends, however, on the definition of the problem; whether this is seen as intolerance on the part of the state or intransigence on the part of the minority is ultimately a political question.

Notes

1. Earlier versions of the present article were presented at the workshop on "Repression, State Terrorism and Genocide: Conceptual Frameworks, Theories on Etiology and Empirical Findings" at the Annual Joint Sessions of the European Consortium for Political Research, University of Essex, 22–28 March 1991, and at the panel on "Terminating Ethnic Wars: Accommodation versus a Struggle to the Finish" at the XV World Congress of the International Political Science Association, Buenos Aires, 21–25 July 1991. Earlier versions of the other articles in this issue were presented at the Roundtable Meeting of the Research Committee on Politics and Ethnicity of the International Political Science Association, "Ethnic and Linguistic Minorities and the State: Problems and Solutions," University of Limerick, 4–7 July 1990.

2. By ethnic minority is meant a group which is differentiated from the dominant group within the state in terms of some "objective" characteristic, almost always of a cultural nature and with language as its most important determinant; a minimum degree of "subjective" self-identification as belonging to this minority is also important. In freer usage, a "minority" may actually constitute a numerical majority, but its status must remain subordinate (see Allardt, 1984).

3. For a discussion of a fuller range of logically possible positions, see Laponce, 1987: 154. The approach here excludes options where the state itself ceases to exist or where its dominant ethnic group is wiped out or is culturally assimilated.

4. Under the old system, the Russian Federation recognised 16 autonomous republics, Georgia recognised two and Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan one each; there were five autonomous regions in the Russian Federation and one each in Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Tadzhikistan; and there were 10 autonomous areas, all in the Russian Federation. In most of the autonomous republics the eponymous nationality constituted only a minority of the population, with Russians accounting for a majority; in the Karelian Autonomous Republic, for instance, the proportion of Karelians in 1979 was only 11 per cent.

5. The motivation, admittedly, for Yugoslav and earlier Serbian interest in Macedonian was not to draw attention to the distinctness of that culture from Serbian, but rather to differentiate it from the adjacent Bulgarian language and culture.

6. In fact, as the Flanders Region and the Dutch-speaking community correspond closely, the Flemish Regional and Cultural Councils have been merged. Recognition is also granted to a small German-speaking community and to a small German region; for most purposes, the latter is regarded as part of Wallonia.

7. An enormous literature covers this area, and deals also with other strategies mentioned in this paper. Examples which rely largely on historical material are Breuilly, 1982; Seton-Watson, 1977; Williams, 1982. For more specific analyses of the independence process in Europe, see Alter, 1989: 92–103, and Sharpe, 1989; for a review of separatist movements that have been unsuccessful, see Snyder, 1982.

8. For a discussion of the impact of variables of this kind, see Stanovčić, this issue; see also the eight "laws" of ethnic assimilation formulated 70 years ago by Otto Bauer (1980), and van den Berghe's (1987: 218) six generalisations about ethnic assimilation, each of which relates to conditions similar to those discussed here.

9. For example, none of the states created after 1918 out of the ruins of the Russian, German, Austrian, and Ottoman empires came close to being monoethnic. It is nevertheless worth noting that the national minorities in the seven of these that continued after 1945 dropped from 25.0 percent of the population in the 1930s to 7.2 percent in the 1970s (Horak, 1985: 4). Only a small amount of this change was a consequence of boundary alteration; the rest was accounted for by population transfers, genocide, and assimilation.

10. Van den Berghe (1981: 349) also criticised consociation more explicitly: "Consociation boils down in practice to a conservative cartel of ethnic elites sharing power by giving priority to their *class* over their ethnic interests. The success stories are few; the problems are many; and the democracy is largely a fiction." Junghahn (1932: 26–28) has also made the point that recognition of groups may be either positive or negative from the perspective of the minority, as is implied in his classification of state policies on cultural rights of minorities. These are, in descending order of favourability to the minority: (1) granting of cultural self-determination; (2) creation of special minority institutions; (3) concession of individual rights only, premised on equality; and (4) enactment of laws discriminating against the minority.

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