

March 8, 2005

## 10 ETHNIC CONFLICT I

Read: Fadiman, Anne, 1997. War.

Eller, Jack, 2002. Rwanda and Burundi: When two tribes go to war?

### I. Introduction

A. I will first discuss a typology of ethnic conflict based on the characteristics of the parties and the structure of the conflict

B. I will then illustrate how to construct a typology based on historical origins of conflict

1. Please remember that typologies allow sorting; can aid in analysis

2. But sooner or later will be found to be inadequate or distorting

### II. Types of Ethnic Conflict based on characteristics of the parties and the structure of the conflict

#### A. Ethnic/State

1. Examples?

a. Chechnyans in Russia

b. Zapatistas in Mexico

2. Forms it can take

a. Expulsions

1) Chinese from Vietnam

2) Asians from Uganda

b. Enclaves and other types of restrictions

1) Apartheid in South Africa

2) Ghettos—Jews in parts of pre-WW II Europe

c. Other forms of repression intended to put down ethnic separatism, nationalist movements

- 1) Basques
  - 2) Native Americans in Canada and US in 19<sup>th</sup> century
  - 3) Islamic separatists in Philippines
  - 4) Tibetans and the Peoples' Republic of China
  - 5) Berbers in Morocco and Algeria
3. Note that the *kind* of state is extremely important
  4. A colonial power will deal with its minorities in a different manner than an independent state
    - a. Although knowing this does not allow us to predict what kind of ethnic/state conflict will occur in a given independent state
- B. Ethnic group vs. ethnic group within a single nation-state
1. Examples?
    - a. Sri Lanka
    - b. Nigerian civil war
    - c. India Muslim and Hindu Nationalists
    - d. Belgium (Flemings and Walloons)
  2. Note that international interests almost always are involved
- C. State/state conflicts that are highly inflected ethnically
1. Examples?
    - a. Somalia invading Ethiopia
    - b. Turkish invasion of Cyprus
  2. Often issue is ownership of a territory and ethnicity is involved
    - a. Cyprus (Greece and Turkey)
    - b. Kashmir

c. Argentina and Britain dispute over Malvinas was state/state conflict that did not involve ethnic conflict

1) But a great deal of nationalist rhetoric was involved

D. Third-party states involved

1. Lebanese civil war (religious-based militias rather than ethnic)

2. Kosovo

3. Hmong case

4. India playing a substantial role in Sri Lanka

a. Migration of Tamils out of India

III. Construct a typology based on historical origins of conflict

A. Struggles against colonial domination

1. Not all independence struggles have involved ethnicity or race

a. US's struggle against England was *not* an ethnic one

1) Spoke same language, same culture in many respects, religion, etc.

2) Characteristic of earliest independence movements

3) Latin America

b. But race and ethnic divisions in those colonies were extremely important in shaping the arguments in favor of independence

2. Most anti-colonial struggles that followed did have ethnic and race aspects

3. The earlier British colonization of Ireland and Scotland (the Celtic frontier) can be seen to involve ethnic dimension<sup>1</sup>

a. The "wild Irish"

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<sup>1</sup> See William Christie MacLeod, 1928. Celt and Indian: Britain's old world frontier in relation to the new. In MacLeod, *The American Indian Frontier*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf. Reprinted in Paul Bohannon and Fred Plog eds., *Beyond the Frontier: Social Process and Cultural Change*. Garden City, NY: The Natural History Press: 25-42.

- b. Queen Elizabeth's nobles determined that in order to assure success of the colony the Irish had to be exterminated and labor from England brought in
  - c. Discuss: other examples of extermination policies?
    - 1) Tasmanians in Australia
    - 2) Mapuche and other indigenous groups in Argentina
    - 3) Native Americans in the US west in 19<sup>th</sup> century (not national policy, though)
    - 4) Armenians in Turkey
    - 5) Jews and Roma in Nazi Germany
4. Algeria: war of independence 1954-1962
- a. France's colonial policy was to claim colonized peoples as "citizens of France"
  - b. Hasn't worked; Jews and Muslims prime examples
    - 1) French colonial settlers confiscated land, stripped Algerians of political, economic rights
  - c. Algerians fought against Germans in WW II; Algiers was capital of "Free France" during occupation
    - 1) Algerians expected to be granted independence
  - d. Film "Battle of Algiers" shows struggle against French colonial domination
    - 1) Film shows how Algerian militants take advantage of ethnic/racial assumptions of French colonists
    - 2) One woman dyes her hair blond
    - 3) Her gender and non-Arab appearance mean her purse won't be searched at the gate
    - 4) Leaves a bomb in a restaurant frequented by French

- 5) Are the militants “freedom fighters” or “terrorists”?
5. Most colonies contained several or many culturally distinct groups
    - a. Deliberate partitioning of colonies by European countries to cut across ethnic geography
    - b. Developing various ways of exacerbating inter-ethnic tensions to avoid alliance-building against the colonial administration
      - 1) For example, “ethnic soldiering”
      - 2) Carib Indians were used as “cannibal soldiers” against Arawaks by European powers on Guianese coast of South America during conquest<sup>2</sup>
      - 3) United Fruit Company policies in Panama provide an example<sup>3</sup>
        - a) Company was a para-state in that region—acting like a state
        - b) Deliberately favored indigenous Kuna employees
        - c) To create resentment among Emberá employees
    - c. Some analysts argue that British policies in Ireland deliberately exacerbated religious conflict
    - d. The use of the Hmong by the CIA in Laos during the Vietnam war explicit “ethnic soldiering”
  6. Many situations where a culturally distinct group straddles one or more boundaries
    - a. Tuaregs in Chad and Niger
    - b. Kurds in Turkey, Iran and Iraq
    - c. Maya nationalism growing; Mayas are found in Belize, Mexico (Chiapas), Guatemala

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<sup>2</sup> See Neil L. Whitehead, 1988. *Lords of the Tiger Spirit: A History of the Caribs in Colonial Venezuela and Guyana 1498-1820*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications Holland.

<sup>3</sup> See Philippe Bourgois, 1989. *Ethnicity at Work: Divided Labor on a Central American Banana Plantation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

7. Post-colonial states have found it difficult to engage in nation-building due to these legacies of colonialism
  - a. Indonesia a prime example
    - 1) Not only Timor
  - b. Rwanda
    - 1) Ethnic conflict results in part from Belgian colonial policies of setting up minority Tutsi to dominate majority Hutu
  - c. Partition of India and Pakistan
    - 1) Horrible violence; legacy continues<sup>4</sup>
    - 2) Kashmir a good example
      - a) Population is predominately Muslim
      - b) But the Raj was Hindu, so he arranged for Kashmir to be within India's borders
  - d. Bangladesh—horrible conflict too, over religion
- B. Struggles within a national state or neighboring states that were never colonies
  1. Because of fairly long-standing cultural diversity within present boundaries
    - a. France
      - 1) Bretons
    - b. Yugoslavia
    - c. Greece (Macedonia)
    - d. Catalans in Spain
    - e. Basques in France and Spain

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<sup>4</sup> See Veena Das, 1995. *Critical Events: An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

2. Or because of more recent migrations
  - a. Labor
    - 1) Second largest Turkish city is Berlin
      - a) Anti-Turkish violence in Germany
    - 2) Persecution of Chinese brought over as laborers in 19<sup>th</sup> century in US and Canada
3. Or war elsewhere—refugees
  - a. Hmong in California
  - b. Laotians and Vietnamese fishers on Texas coast
4. Or relatively recently established states that favor one ethnic group for nation-building
  - a. Israel
    - 1) Israeli non-Jewish citizens: Arabs, Christians, Druze

IV. Remember: typologies may be useful tools, but they invariably distort and never tell the whole story