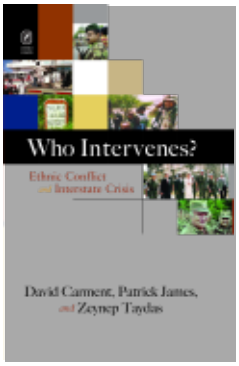
# 1. Ethnic Conflict: The Neglected Interstate Dimension



CHAPTER ONE

# Ethnic Conflict:
## The Neglected Interstate Dimension

> The conflicts which are of global concern involve deep issues of ethnic and cultural identity, of recognition and of participation that are usually denied to ethnic minorities in addition to issues of security and other values that are not negotiable. (Burton 1987: 5)

## 1. The International Politics of Ethnic Conflict

Seemingly banished to the sidelines of international politics by the Cold War, ethnicity is back at center court. Two decades ago, Brecher and James (1986) argued that many interstate crises have their origins in political, economic, and social upheavals at the domestic level, while in other cases, these events have fueled the fires of internal disruption.[1] Ethnicity is at the forefront of such processes, regardless of the direction that is emphasized for cause and effect. The politicization of ethnicity in general and ethnic parties in particular is regarded as a "major threat" to democratic stability (Chandra 2004: 1). Although the crises of the late-twentieth century and new millennium no longer are subsumed within overarching ideological competitions and rivalries—conflict settings that shaped perceptions for the almost half-century-long Cold War—the assertions from Brecher and James (1986) remain no less valid today.[2]

While sources and manifestations of ethnic conflict are studied primarily at the domestic level, the epigraph to this chapter points out that much of today's ethnic strife is internationalized and naturally associated with foreign or interstate events. In this context, interstate ethnic conflict entails a set of deliberate strategic interactions and processes by which the behavior of one state creates a crisis for one or more state actors who perceive a core threat to values, finite time for response, and a heightened likelihood of military hostilities (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997a; Carment and James 1997b; Goertz and Diehl 1997; see also Weiner 1992).

Various questions need answers: Why do some ethnic conflicts lead to interstate crisis and even war while others do not? When interstate ethnic strife does erupt, why do some states pursue covert involvement while others adopt open and conciliatory approaches? In answering these questions, this book contributes to an understanding of the interstate dimension of ethnic conflict in three ways. First, the book develops a framework to account for the origins and patterns of interstate crises in relation to the combination of ethnicity and political institutions for a given state. Second, five case studies of ethnic intervention are used to assess the framework's performance in practice by testing propositions derived from it. Third, and finally, specific policy recommendations are derived from the case studies.

More advanced understanding of interstate ethnic conflict is important for several reasons. For example, Brecher and Wilkenfeld (1997a) find that ethnic conflicts with state-to-state interactions generally are more violent and involve more coercive crisis management techniques than do their nonethnic counterparts. They also discover that interstate ethnic conflicts tend to be more protracted and therefore more difficult to resolve within a single crisis. Given the high stakes involved, intense interventions can be difficult to sustain and control (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997a). This is because leaders and their constituencies may be deeply divided about issues related to support for an ethnic movement. In such instances, the relative autonomy of the leader, in combination with the distribution of political gains and losses at the domestic level, is fundamental to the credibility of, and commitment to, crisis escalation. More importantly, if internal constraints do impose significant limitations on what leaders can do in the foreign policy domain, it may be possible (and desirable) to address the interstate dimensions of ethnic conflict by tackling its sources at the domestic level.

To advance this argument, a framework is developed to link the causes of ethnic conflict at the domestic level to interstate conflict, crisis, and war. This process begins by building on the work of Heraclides (1990, 1991, 1997), Lake and Rothchild (1996, 1998), Saideman (1997, 1998a, b), Taras and Ganguly (1998), and the Minorities at Risk Project (Marshall 1997), among others, through an assessment of interactions between affective and instrumental interests that influence a state's choice about whether to intervene in ethnic strife. Affective motivation refers to the pursuit of self-esteem through ethnic group identification, while instrumental interests pertain to material desires such as land or employment (Chandra 2004: 8–9). A comprehensive vision of ethnic politics in general and intervention in particular must take account of both affective and material interests. The framework identifies how leaders pursuing an ethnically oriented goal might respond to, and even

take advantage of, incentives within both the international system and domestic political structures. Carment (1994a, b; see also Davis and Moore 1997; Davis, Jaggers, and Moore 1997) establishes that interstate ethnic crises are driven primarily by a combination of opportunities represented by ethnic divisions in neighboring states and ethnic alliances and constraints that correspond to a state's institutional configuration and ethnic composition. In other words, ethnic crises are products of the classic combination of opportunity and willingness (Most and Starr 1980; Siverson and Starr 1990).

This argument couples purposiveness, rather than inevitability, with escalation. Interstate ethnic conflict is not a predetermined outcome. Nor do the roots of a conflict necessarily lie in centuries-old hatred (Kaufman 2001). By attaching a sense of purpose to political ambitions, the framework asserts that leaders choose strategies to maximize their security and that of their followers. Accordingly, ethnic leaders sometimes can be anticipated to generate crises as a means of holding on to, or increasing, their share of domestic political power (Saideman 1998a, b). This expectation is based on the fact that in many emerging states, political participation and opportunities are defined along narrow bands of ethnic sensibility. Coupled with deliberate suppression of nonethnic issues, the result is a narrowing of policy options, which leads to interethnic confrontation, crisis, and war.

Decision makers' strategies, according to the framework, are limited by two factors. First, strategic choice is constrained by ethnic arrangements inherent within a state. Structural factors of primary concern include the relative size of ethnic groups and divisions between and among them. Second, preferences for nonviolent strategies are a function of institutionalized forms of political order. Thus the state is much more than a unified actor that reacts to domestic strain by extending it into the international system. Instead, the state is a rational actor constrained by *both* internal and external forces. This point can be established in three ways.

First, the vast majority of ethnic leaders respond to incentives, threats, and coercion in rational and predictable ways (Fearon 1998). Collectively, ethnic conflict appears to be irrational because it leads to undesirable social outcomes over the short term, such as destruction of property and economic decline. However costly and irrational it might seem in human and material terms, conflict is a means of regulating behavior and maintaining social order. In short, a collectivity, much like a state, will pursue conflict, even violence, if it safeguards advantageous and long-term political and economic outcomes (Kriesberg 1997).

Second, and related to the first point, conflict itself can have positive attributes. For example, ethnic conflict plays a role in building group solidarity. It

also creates mobilization opportunities through which free-riders can be identified and more readily sanctioned. Under such conditions, performance expectations are one way to ensure mobilization, cohesion, and stronger support (Kriesberg 1997; Marshall 1997; Fearon 1998). In this sense, conflict serves a functional and positive role for ethnic elites and their followers; leaders may generate strife as a means of increasing cohesion among the groups. Identification of a common enemy provides an opportunity for a group ridden with antagonisms to overcome them (Coser 1956; Rummel 1963; Wilkenfeld 1973; Carment 1994a, b; Carment and James 1995, 1996, 1997a, b, 1998).

For example, from the perspective of an ethnically oriented leader, long-term gains from a dispute, such as territorial consolidation, enhancement of political power, and increased ethnic homogeneity, are enhanced dramatically if a conflict can be pursued within limits. On occasion, leaders may not even be interested in resolving a violent dispute: Since representing an ethnic group can provide specific benefits like prestige and military power, leaders may be more interested in prolongation and even future escalation of a conflict. For elites who play on the fears of their constituency, the perceived and real benefits of escalation can be appreciable.

Third, and finally, the label "ethnic conflict" itself reveals very little about what underlies intergroup tensions (Lake and Rothchild 1998). A widely held belief still exists that ethnic conflicts are distinct from others. This outlook assumes, on the one hand, that all identity-based disputes possess similar underlying causes and, on the other hand, that identity is what makes these conflicts distinct. In essence, this perspective holds that ethnicity is a primordial sentiment reactivated in the modern context. Ethnic conflict arises out of the systematic denial by the modern state of minority aspirations, goals, and values. From this sense of exclusion and denial, ethnic struggle arises and becomes violent (Taras and Ganguly 2002). However, it also should be noted that ethnic identification can be manipulated. For example, Chandra's (2004: 102, 260) authoritative study of politics in India establishes that ethnic parties with a nonexclusionary basis, all other things being equal, enjoy greater success because of their ability to incorporate new sources of support without permanently marginalizing ongoing member groups that may temporarily lose leadership positions to those coming onboard later on.

Interstate ethnic conflicts are not new. More than two decades ago, Connor (1978) described the pervasiveness of multiethnic societies and predicted at the time a decline in the congruence between the nation and the state. More recent studies of state- and nation-building argue that creation of national societies is very much a process, just as it is in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and much of the rest of the world. It generally is

assumed that ethnic conflicts now are more numerous and violent, even though the evidence, as will become apparent momentarily after three points are considered, does not support this conclusion.

First, much of what has been called a resurgence of ethnic strife in Central Asia and Southeastern Europe, for example, is in fact conflict between groups that have been in confrontation with one another for a long time. The most prominent example of that is the ethnic-based violence in the Balkans during periods of regime crisis and breakdown, such as the last phase of Ottoman control leading to the Balkan wars, the final throes of Hapsburg rule, and the collapse and dismemberment of the Yugoslav state in 1941. In general, nationalist wars and ethnic violence follow the collapse of empires. The examples that follow are especially notable; in each instance, the location and name of the empire(s) appears, respectively: South America in the nineteenth century (the Spanish Empire), Europe after World War I (Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Ottoman Turkey), and Asia and Africa after World War II (Belgium, Holland, France, Britain, and Portugal).

Second, an upward trend in ethnic conflict reached its peak in the mid-1990s, but it began in the 1960s and is associated most closely with decolonization. Indeed, since 1945, over sixty protracted conflicts involving more than one hundred ethnic groups came into being; expand the criteria to include interstate conflicts with ethnic dimensions, and the numbers increase to well over that many in progress for the same period (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997a).

Third, the end of the Cold War did not create many of the animosities or aspirations that triggered these conflicts. In quite a few conflicts, preexisting problems have played key roles in escalation (Stack 1997). To be sure, as long as superpower bipolarity shaped the character of the international political system during the Cold War, the tendency for peripheral conflicts to acquire an East-West dimension militated against overt involvement by the major powers. Within the context created by this struggle, international instruments developed to hold in check the aggressiveness of some states and prevent ethnic conflicts from spreading. Maintaining international stability became a systemwide concern.

Today, despite a change in the matrix of competing claims and entrenched interests, the internationalist ideal persists in the belief that sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of states within the established international system, and the principle of self-determination for peoples—both of great value—are compatible. The most recent evidence indicates that ethnic violence is in modest decline. According to analysts at the Integrated Network for Societal Conflict Research (INSCR), ethnic rebellion and

nonviolent protest gradually increased between 1945 and 1980 (http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/home.htm). Levels of rebellion reached their peak by the early 1990s and have declined after that time (Gurr, Marshall, and Khosla 2001).

While it may be true that ethnic conflicts reflect problems related to human rights, participation, justice, and distribution, the manifestation of these issues becomes ethnic only because that is the basis for exclusion or repression (Gurr, Harff, and Speca 1996). Indeed, many conflicts are only superficially ethnic and are stimulated by a combination of nonethnic factors (Ryan 1998). More generally, ethnic conflict refers to the form the conflict takes, not to its causes. To say that ethnic conflict arises because there are distinct ethnic groups is tautological. By themselves, ethnic differences are insufficient to guarantee either political mobilization or intergroup conflict. The important fact is that groups are organized and draw their strength and resilience from ethnic attachments and seek benefits for members on that basis (Gurr 1996). Such factors usually become salient because they are invoked by contemporary ethnic leaders to mobilize support (Gurr 1997; Lake and Rothchild 1998).

This inquiry unfolds in seven additional chapters. First, a framework specifying the precise causal relationships among the selected variables and their interaction effects is presented, along with propositions, in chapter 2. Second, case studies—the Indo-Sri Lankan crisis, Somali irredentism, Thai Malay separatism, the breakup of Yugoslavia and its immediate aftermath, and the Cyprus puzzle—are used in chapters 3 through 7 to evaluate the propositions. Third, and finally, based on the degree of support for the propositions from the case studies, the framework is refined and contributions to theory and policy are presented in chapter 8. The remaining sections of this chapter pertain to internationalization of ethnic conflict, vertical escalation, the institution of ethnic conflict, and a more detailed overview for the rest of the book.

## 2. The Move to Internationalize

Analysts recently have argued, in an effort to make sense of ethnic strife in the post–Cold War world, that these conflicts constitute a salient threat to international peace and security. In many more cases, little agreement exists on the extent of the threat or the likelihood that such conflicts could become uncontrollable beyond a state's borders. The combination of conceptual innovation and a desire to embrace unorthodox approaches has led some

scholars to elevate ethnic conflicts to the domain of high politics—a realm previously occupied exclusively by ideological conflict, international crisis, and war.[3]

Viewed as high politics, the collective claims of the literature on the relationship between security and ethnic conflict are that ethnic strife leads to internationalization in three different ways: (1) ethnic diversity and weak institutions compound existing political and economic problems within states, which leads to intensified competition for resources and a weakening of the state; (2) ethnic conflict carries serious risks of contagion and diffusion through processes known as *horizontal* escalation; and (3) ethnic conflict leads to *vertical* escalation that culminates in interstate confrontation, crisis, and war (Lake and Rothchild 1998). All of these claims have some basis in reality. Each is examined in turn, and the third and final process is the focus of this book.

Ethnic conflicts weaken state structures and can lead to both state collapse and intervention; this point is self-evident. According to Ted Robert Gurr, founding director of the world-renowned Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project from the University of Maryland, over twenty new post–Cold War new states have experimented with democratic institution building. Much of the recent upsurge in communal conflict, Gurr argues, is under way in precisely these states and as a direct consequence of opportunities for institutional change, through which communal groups can pursue their objectives more openly (Gurr, Marshall, and Khosla 2001).

Since ethnic disputes are prone to disagreement about abstract values that serve as basic organizing principles for other political activity, the potential for spillover into the international domain is high (Marshall 1997). For example, in an exposition on international law and minorities, Ryan (1988, 1998) argues that self-determination is a key legitimizing principle for mobilization; structural incompatibilities between the ideology of nationalism and national minorities significantly influence whether a group will seek out external support in its struggle. Similarly, Azar and Burton (1986) argued that internationalization begins with denial of separate identities, the absence of security for minorities, and a dearth of effective participation for these minorities. For Smith (1986a), internationalization is associated largely with the growth of an ethnic intelligentsia and emergence of a repressive, "rational" state that is dominated by a specific nationalist group (see also Marshall 1997). Internationalization occurs when a state's treatment of its minorities fosters noncompliance with the prevailing norms of international relations (Väyrynen 1997; Goertz and Diehl 1997).

Posen (1993) applies the realist concept of the security dilemma to ethnic

conflict. He argues that after the fall of imperial regimes, the race for power and the security dilemma helped ethnic conflicts to emerge. According to this logic, when ethnic groups feel insecure, due either to violence or assimilationist policies, they ask for outside help in order to obtain protection. At that point, ethnic groups believe there is no way that the state, on its own, will guarantee their survival. In other words, when ethnic groups start to experience fears collectively about assimilation and physical safety, violence is to be expected. It is therefore not a coincidence that heightened mutual distrust and fear coincide—creating a security dilemma—and requests for outside help naturally follow (Snyder 1993; Posen 1993; Kaufman 1996; Lake and Rothchild 1998; Taras and Ganguly 2002).[4]

Horizontal escalation is a process related to a weakening of state structures. It refers to a situation in which events in one state change directly the ethnic balance of power in a neighboring state (Lake and Rothchild 1998). Through this means, ethnic displacement, refugee flows, and spontaneous population transfers constitute a form of contagion (Lake and Rothchild 1998). Movement of displaced ethnic groups directly changes demography and thereby creates regional instability. For example, the violent outflow of Tutsis and moderate Hutus alike from Rwanda to Zaire and Burundi in 1994 and from Kosovars to Albania in 1999 had the potential to create a new class of militant ethnic leaders in these neighboring states.

Ethnic conflicts also expand horizontally when groups in one country prompt those in another to make more extreme demands. This takes the form of a demonstration effect. Groups in one state, witnessing ethnic mobilization by those in another, may as a result increase their own political activities. The latter recognize that internationalization of their demands can both simultaneously encourage internal mobilization and weaken the salience and effectiveness of the state by creating international forums for substate grievances. This legitimization process is facilitated by the existence of supranational and human rights organizations that provide a forum for subnational ethnic claims. Consider, for instance, the 25 June 1991 declarations of independence by Croatia and Slovenia, in turn, as a demonstration effect that emboldened both states to commit to full separation from the Yugoslav Federation.

Finally, horizontal escalation occurs through information flows and transnational media networks that condition the behavior of ethnic diasporas. Information flows directly influence the levels of protest, rebellion, and mobilization among ethnic brethren. Ethnic diasporas provide both material and nonmaterial support for politically mobilized ethnic groups. These affective links are crucial for an ethnic separatist movement to prosper and grow

(Davis, Jaggers, and Moore 1997). Diffusion has come under scrutiny within political science only in the last two decades (Most and Starr 1980; Most, Starr, and Siverson 1989; Starr 1990; Siverson and Starr 1990, 1991), and its application as a concept to the study of ethnic conflict is even more recent (Zartman 1992; Marshall 1997; Lake and Rothchild 1998). Contagion and diffusion often are used interchangeably, but contagion should be defined as a subset of diffusion because the latter is systemwide, whereas contagion is first and foremost a process that alters the behavior of states within that system (Marshall 1997). The MAR Project defines contagion as the spread of protest and rebellion throughout a region and measures it as a function of those actions for a particular ethnic group within a region. Information flows shape the level of communal protest and rebellion and the extent of ethnic mobilization.[5]

Horizontal transmission of ethnic conflict appears, in sum, to be tied inexorably to transnational identities and associated movements of people, resources, and ideas. Groups that believe they are threatened may seek out support from their ethnic brethren in two notable ways. The first is the linkage entailed by shared particularist identities between groups that straddle borders. The second is the impact that a global diaspora can have on development of ethnic leadership pools in nonneighboring states. While the former, according to Horowitz (1991) and others, may lead to mutual restraint between states, the latter is a more explicit and well-known foundation for development of ethnic protest and rebellion (Davis and Moore 1997).

While horizontal escalation can occur in the absence of directed state activity, vertical escalation refers to a set of deliberate strategic interactions and processes by which the behavior of one state creates a crisis for one or more state actors who perceive a core threat to values. Vertical escalation means internal ethnic conflict that leads to crisis, intervention, and possibly war with other states.[6]

When the word "escalation" is mentioned, the first thing that comes to mind is a potential armed assault on one state by another. Two points are worth noting about escalation. First, any effort to interfere with or disrupt the internal affairs of states can lead to escalation. Both covert and overt activities would be included in this definition. Intervention of this kind may include the calculated use of political, economic, and military instruments by one country to influence the domestic or foreign policies of another. The second point is that escalation will not be and, indeed, has not been confined solely to interactions between states through military means. It encompasses a broader range of state-to-state activities. The next section examines these activities in greater detail.

## 3. Vertical Escalation and the Neglected Interstate Dimension

Vertical escalation leading to interstate ethnic conflict is a dynamic process in which stages of escalation and deescalation can be identified (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997a; Kriesberg 1997).[7] These include (*a*) a latent stage in which differences between ethnic groups are made salient but without overt interstate conflict or crisis; (*b*) an onset phase whereby a "trigger" creates the conditions for interstate violence; (*c*) a peak point that leads to large-scale confrontation between states; (*d*) a deescalation phase; and finally (*e*) a termination phase that either resolves or transforms the conflict (Kriesberg 1997; Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997a). Interstate ethnic conflicts can last months, years, and even decades. The most salient are "protracted" conflicts, fluctuating in intensity over the course of several decades and involving entire communities, with periodic outbreaks of violence. Prominent examples of protracted conflict include Arab-Israel, Kashmir, and Cyprus (Bercovitch, Diehl, and Goertz 1997).

Today's world features a great deal of variation in types of ethnic groups and conflicts associated with them. By one estimate, fifteen years ago over five thousand ethnic groups could be identified (United Nations Report on Ethnicity and Development 1987). This substantial number, however, signaled an impending global crisis in the waning days of the Cold War. The forms that ethnic conflicts take vary widely across time and space, and the sheer number of groups is not a cause for concern, at least in isolation. Only a handful of ethnic groups—fewer than 20 percent—have the capacity for political activity. An even smaller number of groups are engaged in violence. For example, in the 1980s, the MAR Project identified 233 such groups which, in 1990, made up 17.3 percent of the world's population; the comparable figures for 1995 are 268 groups and 17.7 percent. (See http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/home.htm for full details.) Within this subset of groups, over a five-year span, approximately eighty were involved in significant protracted conflict and a small number engaged in interstate crisis or war (Wallensteen and Sollenberg 1996: 354; Ellingsen 1996).

Characteristics of interstate ethnic conflict are identified readily using the logic of opportunity and willingness, derived from the work of Siverson and Starr (1990; see also Most and Starr 1980 and Starr 1978) and applied by Davis, Jaggers, and Moore (1997) and Marshall (1997) in the context of ethnic conflict. According to Davis, Jaggers, and Moore (1997), many, but not all, interstate ethnic crises are dyadic and involve dispersed ethnic groups across borders. Geographic contiguity, therefore, is crucial to escalation of interstate ethnic strife (Most and Starr 1976, 1978, 1980; Vasquez 1992;

Zartman 1992). Within the context of interstate ethnic crises, borders establish the opportunities for, and parameters within which, most hostile and friendly interactions occur between states (Davis, Jaggers, and Moore 1997). In a similar vein, Zartman (1992), Marshall (1997), and Maoz (1997a) argue that ethnic conflict does not necessarily diffuse across the entire system, but rather is constrained by interactions among sets of states within a specific region (see also Fearon 1998).

Willingness is determined by the presence of ethnic affinities—a kind of nonstate alliance—that influence state behavior (Carment 1994a, b; Davis, Jaggers, and Moore 1997). Aside from instrumental reasons such as the desire to make gains at the expense of another state (Grieco 1990), ethnic affinities influence a state's willingness to support brethren (Zartman 1992). A potential intervening state always faces a trade-off between supporting minority ethnic brethren in a neighboring state and maintaining or developing a cooperative relationship with the government of that state. The willingness of an intervening state to expend resources on behalf of ethnic brethren is assumed to be a direct function of its relative interest in the issue (Carment, James, and Rowlands,1997). Elites not only view ethnic affinity as useful, but specific groups on whom they rely for support also perceive these international linkages as potentially helpful. For example, transnational affinities may enhance a state's interest in a conflict (if not for leaders directly, then at least through pressures from constituents) and, under certain conditions, can determine the intensity of preference for intervention (Carment, James, and Rowlands 1997). Different levels of willingness, defined by ethnic affinities, therefore distinguish the opportunities generated by respective interstate ethnic crises.

For the purposes of this study, irredentism and separatism provide the basis for comparative case studies. Such conflicts are specific classes of hostile, occasionally violent, military-security interactions that take place at the international level (Brecher 1993; Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997b). Both geographic contiguity and ethnic affinities are present by necessity. Thus, after having reviewed the components of interstate ethnic conflict, a basic question of definition and an answer to it can be presented at this point in relation to crises in world politics: Is an *interstate conflict* also an *interstate ethnic crisis*?[8]

For the answer to be yes, two criteria must be met. One is that the case must correspond to an international crisis as defined by the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) Project, that is, a disruption in process and a challenge to the structure of the international system.[9] The case therefore also will fulfill requirements for a foreign policy crisis for at least one state, as follows:

> a situation with three individually and collectively sufficient conditions, deriving from changes in a state's internal or external environment. All three perceptions are held by the highest-level decision makers of the actor concerned: a threat to basic values, awareness of finite time for response to the value threat and a high probability of involvement in military hostilities. (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997b: 3)

The other criterion is that the case must fulfill either or both of the conditions for an irredentist or separatist conflict. Each of these types of conflict is defined below.

Irredentism means a claim to the territory of an entity—usually an independent state—wherein an ethnic in-group is a numerical minority but forms a regional plurality (or even majority). The original term "terra irredenta" means territory to be redeemed. It presumes a redeeming state, as well as such territory, so irredenta are interstate ethnic conflicts by definition. Either an ethnic nation-state or a multiethnic plural state may seek redemption. The territory to be redeemed sometimes is regarded as part of a cultural homeland or historic state (or as an integral part of one state). The claim to territory is based on existing or cultivated transnational ethnic affinities and is conditioned by the presence of cleavage between the minority in-group and its state-center (see also Saideman 1998b for a similar interpretation).

Irredentist conflict entails an attempt to detach land and people from one state in order to merge them into another, as with Somalia's claim to the Ethiopian Ogaden, Serbia's claims to parts of Croatia and Bosnia, or Germany's claims (at different times) to the Sudetenland.[10] This summary follows Weiner's (1971: 668) classic exegesis of irredentism, which assumes the existence of a "shared" ethnic group crossing the international boundary between two states. Two subvariants exist: (*a*) an ethnic group transcends multiple borders but does not itself constitute a state (e.g., the Kurds in Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Russia) and (*b*) irredentist claims are made only with respect to territory "cleansed" of the ethnic claimant (e.g., Armenian claims to eastern Anatolia). This study focuses on those irredenta that include both an ethnic group and territory to be redeemed (for examples, see Sullivan 1996: 115–17).

Irredentist conflicts are by definition interstate in scope and involve third-party support, as with Pakistani patronage of an Islamic Kashmir. Since the conflict involves two or more states in dispute over a specific territory and claims about an ethnic group, there is a high potential for crisis, violence, and war. Pursuit of aggressive tactics may result from an ethnic ideology (e.g., Panslavism), a sense of historic injustice (e.g., Danzig), or even a perceived

threat to values that justify some kind of future society—perhaps one in which all of the relevant territory and people are reclaimed (e.g., Greece and Macedonia). A high threat to values is more likely to be perceived in such situations because irredentism pertains to another state's territory, a core value (Carment 1994a). Thus an irredentist conflict can produce an interstate ethnic crisis in three overlapping ways: (1) by triggering a foreign policy crisis for one or more states through an internal challenge supported by the redeeming state; (2) external threats made by one or both states; and (1) and (2) can trigger (3), that is, foreign policy crises for allies of the two states.

For example, throughout the 1950s, Great Britain had attempted to create a viable political structure in Oceana that would include Brunei, Sarawak, Sabah, Singapore, and Malaya. All of these states had majority Muslim Malay populations that shared a strong cultural and religious heritage. Plans for a Federation of Malaysia, however, conflicted with the territorial claims of the Philippines and especially the Muslim-Malay state of Indonesia. In February 1963, President Sukarno announced that Indonesia opposed a Malaysia Federation. Indonesia set about disrupting the ethnic and political cohesion of the fragile federation through a policy of "confrontation" that included covert military incursions in West Malaya. On 11 July the federation was formalized, which triggered a foreign policy crisis for Indonesia. In response, Indonesia requested that the federation be delayed until a UN-monitored election could be held to determine the interests of the people. On 14 September 1963, the results of the vote indicated that preferences lay with a Malaysia Federation. Indonesia responded by refusing to endorse the results. On 17 September the new state of Malaysia severed diplomatic ties with Indonesia and the Philippines, and both sought and obtained important international support. For example, the International Monetary Fund withdrew its offer of promised credit to Indonesia—a significant action with respect to a relatively poor developing state. The crisis faded with both sides claiming victory (Brecher and Wilkenfeld et al. 1988: 262).

Separatist interstate ethnic crises are less easily defined. These crises are generated from within a state but spill over into the international domain. Separatist interstate ethnic crisis refers to formal and informal aspects of political alienation in which one or more ethnic groups seek, through political means, reduced control by a central authority (this may not be formal or declared separation as in secession sensu stricto). The ensuing confrontation may involve politically mobilized, organized, ethnic insurgency movements and the use of force. As Heraclides (1990: 344) points out, the separatist threat includes (1) a degree of in-group legitimation that endorses the aims and means of the conflict; (2) a military capability; and (3) some tangible or

political support from external states. Both the state-center and/or separatist group can be expected to seek out external support. This competition exacerbates internal disruption and leads to interstate conflict and possibly crisis. In some cases, the minority group may make a formal declaration of independence that certifies it as secessionist sensu stricto.[11]

When ethnic groups refuse to recognize existing political authorities, ensuing conflict can lead to an interstate ethnic crisis in four nonmutually exclusive instances: When ethnic groups refuse to recognize existing political authorities, they can (1) trigger a foreign policy crisis for the state in question (i.e., internal challenge leading to external involvement); (2) trigger foreign policy crises for the state's allies, which leads to an international crisis; (3) invite external involvement based on transnational ethnic affinities (including threats of involvement) of one or more state interlocutors that support the separatist group, which triggers an international crisis; or (4) invite external involvement by one or more states based on ethnic affinities that support the state-center, which triggers an international crisis.

For example, the international crisis over Bangladesh took place from 25 March to 17 December 1971. In mid-February 1971 the military rulers in West Pakistan decided to suppress the growing fervor of East Bengal nationalism (i.e., what later became Bangladesh). They posted military personnel in the east. On 1 March, President Yahya Khan postponed opening of the assembly in East Bengal. The Awami League protested that action and launched a noncooperative movement on 6 March. Approached by Bangladesh in March 1971, the UN declared the matter internal to Pakistan but could not disregard the effect of the war on ethnic minorities, referring respectively to Muslims in eastern India and Hindus in East Bengal. While fighting raged over the spring and summer, an estimated nine million refugees fled from East Bengal to Bengal in India. On 21 November, the Indian Army crossed into West Pakistan, already at war with East Bengal. Indian forces quickly overwhelmed the Pakistani troops in the seceding territory. The war ended on 17 December 1971 with Pakistan's surrender and the emergence of Bangladesh, a new sovereign state on the Indian subcontinent (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997b).

Not all domestic ethnic conflicts leading to interstate crisis, to be sure, have reached the level where either irredentism or separatism are readily identified. Some international crises exhibit the characteristics of both irredentism and separatism, which makes the task of identification more difficult. In the former instance, ethnic leaders may prefer low-intensity conflict with the stated goal of a separate state or reunification to follow if the struggle ultimately succeeds. In the latter context, irredentist impulses and sepa-

ratist tendencies interact considerably (Heraclides 1997). For example, Horowitz (1981, 1991) argues that many irredenta have their origins in third-party support for separatist movements. From a third-party state's perspective, a short-term strategy of strengthening a separatist movement, which may lead to restoration of territories and peoples over the long term, generally is preferred to an outright and potentially costly irredentist struggle (Horowitz 1991). The net result is a hybrid of irredentist claims and separatist struggle interacting to create a unique type of interstate crisis. Support for a separatist movement may entail lower probable costs than irredentism (Horowitz 1981, 1991). Leaders of separatist movements and supporting states use ethnic connections to advance their interests. These leaders initially may espouse reunification. A crucial point is reached, however, when leaders of separatist groups no longer rely exclusively on external state support; separation then becomes viable and self-sustaining, with the irredentist goal as a secondary consideration.

## 4. Outline of the Book

Development and assessment of a framework in order to identify the origins, manifestations, and patterns of interstate ethnic crisis is the goal of the remainder of this book. Seven chapters follow this introductory one.

Chapter 2 develops a framework for the analysis of interstate ethnic crises. Key explanatory variables, such as ethnic composition and political constraint, are identified, and their interaction effects are assessed. Contingency factors, including ethnic affinities and ethnic cleavage, also are examined.

Chapters 3 through 7 convey case study research. Chapter 3 covers a secessionist case, the Indo-Sri Lanka Crisis of 1983–96, in which the Indian government sent a "peacekeeping" force into Sri Lanka to prevent the Tamil secessionist conflict from spilling over onto Indian soil. This case provides an opportunity to examine interactions between institutionally constrained, ethnically diverse states.

Chapter 4 examines Somalia's recurring irredentist crises. No fewer than seven international crises are related to Somalia's quest for a "Greater Somalia," the most notable being the Somalia-Ethiopia war of 1977–78. This chapter determines how changes in institutional constraints, in combination with ethnic affinities, can account for interstate ethnic conflict in a protracted setting. The case is notable because the most intense period of interstate conflict occurred when Ethiopia experienced very high ethnic cleavages while Somalia's military junta went through the process of consolidating power.

Chapter 5 examines the Thai Malay secessionist conflict in southern Thailand. Since the turn of the twentieth century, a minority Malay community continues to seek secession from Thailand. This case is selected not only because it exhibits all of the important elements of an interstate ethnic conflict with its intense interstate violence. The Thai Malay conflict also encompasses both irredentist and secessionist dimensions. While not unique, this combination of factors may provide insights for both refinement of the framework and principles of conflict management. The Thai Malay conflict also is unique among those included because it does not feature an interstate ethnic crisis, which makes the case potentially useful in producing insights about how such events can be averted.

Chapter 6 deals with the Yugoslav conflict, which also exhibits both irredentist and secessionist characteristics. This conflict is selected for two additional reasons. First, its complex nature, which includes multiple actors, issues, and crises, should prove useful for development of the framework. Second, from a policy perspective, the case presents an ongoing challenge to the international community. Greater understanding of this conflict would provide insight into the future of ethnic conflict management and resolution.

Chapter 7 examines the Cyprus conflict, one of the most complex ethnic problems in the world. This chapter explains how the domestic and institutional characteristics and the perspectives of Turkey and Greece, in combination with ethnic ties, can account for an intense and violent interstate ethnic conflict. This case is chosen for several reasons. First, it is a protracted ethnic conflict that spilled over into the international arena. Second, the case of Cyprus shows how difficult it is to solve deeply rooted conflicts between ethnic groups and how third-party activities can prove insufficient to solve the key issues. Third, it is an interesting example because two democracies have struggled with each other for so many years. Fourth and finally, the case shows not only irredentist but also secessionist characteristics. Investigating this case should reveal much about the characteristics, motivations, and actions of two ethnically dominant states.

Chapter 8 summarizes the contributions of the preceding chapters in order to assess how interstate ethnic crises might be more amenable to management and even prevention. In this final chapter, contributions to theory and policy are presented in light of the findings.