Review Article

SEPARATIST CONFLICT IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION AND BEYOND

How Different Was Communism?

By BENJAMIN SMITH*

Henry Hale. 2008. *The Foundations of Ethnic Politics: Separatism of States and Nations in Eurasia and the World*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 278pp.
Philip Roeder. 2007. *Where Nation-States Come From: Institutional Change in the Age of Nationalism*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 417pp.
Christoph Zürcher. 2007. *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus*. New York, N.Y.: NYU Press, 289pp.

Introduction

BECAUSE its subject matter naturally straddles traditional subfields in political science, the study of separatist mobilization[1] has grown into a substantial research program in both comparative politics and international relations. New states in the last two decades have emerged either from the ashes of collapsed larger ones (that is, the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia) or from protracted and violent struggles (that is, East Timor, Eritrea, and South Sudan). A proliferation of new states overturned decades of "sticky" international boundaries once the Cold War ended.[2] Moreover, within what was once the Soviet

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[1] In this essay I use the terms "separatism," "separatist mobilization," and "nationalist mobilization" interchangeably, not because they are always identical but because the authors to whose work I refer use these multiple terms in speaking of the same phenomenon.

[2] Thanks to Valerie Bunce for suggesting this language.

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Union and Yugoslavia, the international community handled aspirations to statehood unevenly, endorsing independence efforts by Kosovo and Montenegro while rejecting those by South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia and Transnistria in Moldova. Given all of this, it is understandable how central analysis of the collapses of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia have become to the empirical study of separatist violence. Yugoslavia alone has seen more independent states emerge from its ashes since 1995 than the rest of the world, and the 1990s saw the emergence of fifteen independent successor states from the former Soviet Union. However, scholars have yet to reach consensus on the value of the comparative lessons of separatism in the former communist space for the rest of the world. On the one hand, scholars have concluded that different determinants of secession appear to be at work inside and outside Eurasia.[3] On the other hand, a theory of "segment-states" leading to nation-states derived from the Soviet experience arguably explains "where nation-states come from" around the globe.[4] Hence, it remains an open question just how far theories of separatism and nation-state crisis derived from the Soviet collapse travel.

The study of separatist mobilization has centered heavily on the postcommunist world over the last fifteen years or so. It has done so in much the same way that democracy studies followed a wave of transitions in Latin America and that civil war studies followed such conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s. The corrective studies that followed each regionally particular set of explanations suggest a need to keep regional particularities in mind. Therefore, this article seeks to outline the extent to which the same might be true in this case, especially given the heavy focus on institutions as constitutive of nationalist mobilization in the former Soviet Union. The most important reason is that recent studies focused on cases outside the postcommunist world rarely focus on ethnofederalism[5] as a key determinant of separatist conflicts.[6]

It is also worth exploring the extent to which ethnofederal institutions in the Soviet system are best thought of as causes or as effects of nationalist mobilization, a variant on the bigger question of whether to

[3] Hale 2008, 250.

[4] Roeder 2007. Roeder's term "segment-state" is for all purposes identical to ethnofederalism, defined below.

[5] Here I use "ethnofederalism" as defined by Bunce 2007, 7: "a spatial division of the state that enables political subunits to exercise some of their own powers and [in which] at least some of the subunits exist for the purpose of representing and empowering specific cultural communities."

[6] See, for example, Walter 2008; Sambanis and Zinn 2006; Sambanis and Milanovic 2011; Englebert and Hummel 2005; and Bakke and Wibbels 2006.

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focus on institutional genesis or on institutional effects. In other words, we should ask whether ethnofederal institutions produce nationalist mobilization by helping to craft and harden identities or whether they are endogenous to past episodes of mobilization, a concession by central authorities to quell regional rebellions.

This article explores these questions. It does so in the first section by reviewing three recent books on separatist wars, all of which focus primarily on the former Soviet Union but are also interested in engaging a broader range of cases. Together they provide several useful points of departure. First, to a significant extent they all dovetail in focusing their attention squarely on ethnofederalism as the main structural cause of separatist activism, drawing inspiration from earlier scholarship.[7] From very different theoretical foundations and methodological approaches each concludes that the Soviet system of ethnicized subnational institutions was crucial to its collapse and to subsequent episodes of separatist mobilization. Second, despite focusing on different outcomes, they show, and my aggregate data analyses confirm, that the same basic factors are tied to a range of separatist activism, whether violent or peaceful and whether aiming at independence or at greater autonomy within a host state.[8] In other words, the different dependent variables under study in these three books and in the data analyses that follow illustrate a set of common causes and suggest that we ought to think of separatism more broadly than as a single expressed goal or mode of mobilization.

In the second section of the article I take up these issues empirically by analyzing aggregate data at the ethnic minority group level between 1946 and 2005, employing two data sets. One is based on data from the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) project and one is based on the data set originally used by Roeder. In addition to making it possible to test for the basic validity of the propositions of the three books, the two data sets also use different measures for separatist activism, providing a supportive robustness test. Analysis of these data through the lenses of the books under consideration here suggests three main conclusions. First, the historical determinants of separatist mobilization in the communist bloc are not solely a function of ethnofederalism. In many cases, that mobilization followed a long historical trajectory of periodic nationalist rebellions against central authorities. My analysis of preincorporation rebellion and/or brief periods of independence in-

[7] Brubaker 1996; Suny 1993.

[8] To a large degree, in this article I draw on a conception of separatist activism that derives from Treisman 1997 in capturing a range of actions from initial political mobilization to violent rebellion.

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dicates that a legacy of resistance is as important for explaining today's postcommunist separatism as it is for the postcolonial world. Indeed, the causal force of those past legacies appears to have durably survived decades of communist rule.[9] Second, seen in that light, ethnofederalism during the communist era was a key factor, but it was often a response to past mobilization as much as it was a catalyst of future mobilization. In short, ethnofederalism in many Soviet republics was endogenous to contentious ethnic politics, a game-saving response by central authorities to nationalist mobilization. Nonetheless, national identities—shaped in part by historical experience—were reinforced by Soviet nationality policies. Combined with less actual autonomy than those policies promised, they reemerged in a serious way in the context of central collapse in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Finally, the fact that a range of separatist activism across the globe appears to follow a similar causal logic suggests that we would do well not just to look geographically broadly but also to reconsider how we think about separatism.

I. Separatism and the Collapse of the Communist Bloc: The State of the Art

In significant part because of the numerical predominance of the Soviet bloc's disintegration—more from the USSR and Yugoslavia alone than in the rest of the world since 1990—scholars of the region's conflicts have written the lion's share of books and articles on comparative separatism. In this section I summarize their major conclusions and theoretical insights, highlighting how in important ways those findings differ from the study of separatism elsewhere. As we shall see, there appear to be differences between the former communist bloc and the rest of the world, across particular questions, samples, and data set delimitations. Moreover, those differences do not yet gel into a consensus: there is simply not yet much agreement on why separatist conflict in the former communist bloc looks so different from what is found in the rest of the world. But how do scholars generally explain why ethnic groups rebelled against some central states in the communist world and not against others? In particular I point here to the independent effect of institutions (especially in Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia) in reinforcing powerful ethnic identities and interests.

[9] In this way, the analysis presented here argues for a return to the long-range historical lens that characterizes not just Beissinger 2002, Suny 1988, and Suny 1993 but also more recent work by Darden and Grzymala-Busse 2006 and Darden forthcoming.

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A corollary to this point is a general trend to deemphasize preexisting ethnic identities and more concretely to suggest that presocialist history was less important in catalyzing ethnic identity formation than what took place under socialist rule.

Valerie Bunce[10] went far to argue that political institutions determined the demise of the Soviet bloc and the shape that the end took. The disintegrations of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, she argues, were a result of the tensions between national federalism and socialist dictatorship. Put a bit more simply, the promise of ethnic self-determination coupled with heavy-handed socialist centralism built self-destruction into these systems; thus, they came apart in the early 1990s while their unitary Soviet bloc counterparts remained whole. The mobilizing impetus of national history—by which I mean a past legacy of conquest by imperial powers and/or rebellion against it and whether it plays a part in contemporary nationalist narratives—comes into play in Bunce's narrative only in the cases of the Serbians.[11] Other republics in these three federal socialist states do not invoke the same reference to a historical trajectory of resistance. In short, Bunce's account of the Soviet collapse mirrors in some important ways the works under consideration here in its institutional foundations: institutions are at the front of the causal story.

Brubaker took a similar approach, focusing our attention on the ways in which Soviet ethnofederalism had powerful effects at two levels.[12] First, at the individual level ethnic federalism made titular identity (that is, based on the ethnic group around which subnational units were built) largely definitive of how people imagined themselves, others around them, and most importantly their life chances. Second, ethnofederalism led to the "pervasive institutionalization of nationhood and nationality as fundamental social categories."[13] In short, the prospects for collective contentious politics could by the late 1980s be imagined only in ethnic terms defined by prior institutions.

Ronald Suny also stressed the independent identity-shaping nature of Soviet institutions, but highlighted two aspects of Soviet nationalities policy that helped to situate the policy itself in historical context.[14] First, between the imperial collapse during World War I and the consolidation of Soviet borders, there was substantial variation in

[10] Bunce 1999.
[11] Bunce 1999, 93–94.
[12] Brubaker 1996, chap. 2.
[13] Brubaker 1996, 37.
[14] Suny 1993; Suny 1994.

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both the strength and the nature of national identities across the Soviet periphery.[15] In some cases, such as in Armenia and Georgia, national identities were well established at the mass level. In others, especially in Central Asia, there was little in the way of collective national identity, despite some rebellions against Soviet incorporation.[16] Here the important contribution is to note that in some Soviet republics institutions *followed* nationalist mobilization—central concessions were an effort to placate rebellious regions—whereas in others institutions catalyzed the formation and hardening of national identity.

Mark Beissinger's exhaustive analysis of thousands of events before and during the collapse of the Soviet Union complements these earlier studies.[17] He notes, for example, that ethnofederalism followed, rather than preceded, nationalist mobilization in a sizable number of Soviet republics.[18] That is, the Soviet center during its vulnerable early years responded to rebellion on the periphery by granting republic status and other concessions to restive nationalities. This point is important for two reasons. First, it puts nationalist mobilization at the front of a causal account rather than suggesting that it is a downstream function of institutional effects. Second, it refers us back to historical legacies of mobilization in facilitating both national identity and mobilization on its behalf. As Beissinger observes, contentious histories vis-à-vis other groups within the same republic were frequently capable of overcoming nonpermissive structural conditions and catalyzing nationalist mobilization in the late 1980s and early 1990s.[19] In short, he suggests, similar levels and types of nationalist mobilization in the last years of Soviet rule sometimes emerged from groups with weak permissive conditions but strong historical legacies of past rebellion, just as they did from groups with strong permissive conditions and relatively weak pre-Soviet identities.

One major factor that distinguishes these analyses and that comes up in the three newer works under consideration here is the precise outcome under exploration. For Bunce, the questions are why some post-Soviet states but not others held together and why some but not others came apart violently. For Beissinger, the questions revolve around why it was that some nationalities but not others mobilized and why some did so violently. As I discuss below, similar differences exist between Hale, Roeder, and Zürcher. Nonetheless, the important point

[15] See especially Suny 1993, 20–90.
[16] Pipes 1954, 84–85, 89, 173–74.
[17] Beissinger 2002.
[18] Beissinger 2002, 41, 119–21.
[19] Beissinger 2002, 223–29.

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is that these works collectively engage the sources of nationalist mobilization and whether the form it takes is peaceful or violent, secessionist or autonomy seeking. In the next two sections, I make the case that despite different types of mobilization there are striking commonalities at work in the study of separatist conflict.

From Local to Global: Three Recent Efforts to Understand Soviet and Post-Soviet Separatism

Three recent books tackle the variation in separatist mobilization across the Soviet and post-Soviet space from different methodological and theoretical perspectives. In important ways they also reengage the debate between institutionalists and their skeptics. In this section I discuss their respective levels of analysis, choice of methods, and explanations for why it was that (1) some Soviet republics seceded early while others struggled to hold the Union together and that (2) some subnational ethnic regions catalyzed violent nation-state crises while others did not. I present them below in ascending order of empirical scope, but I wish to make clear up front that this implies no hierarchy of accomplishment: these are three superb books that in different ways provide both innovation and insight for scholars of postcommunist politics, as well as for those of us who focus on separatist struggles in other parts of the world.

Christoph Zürcher's *The Post-Soviet Wars* seeks to explain why some subrepublic ethnic minority regions of Soviet successor states devolved into violent conflict while others, similarly at risk for conflict, managed to avoid it. In doing so he skirts a major problem inherent to studying the secession of the Soviet republics, namely, that in the end there was no variation in whether or not they seceded. Zürcher's approach relies on comparative historical analysis of three regions that experienced four wars—Chechnya, Abkhazia, and Karabakh—and two that did not—Dagestan and Ajaria. While this is geographically the most limited in scope of the three books under discussion here, it is more than an effort to understand a small portion of the Caucasus. On the contrary, Zürcher's narrative draws frequently on prevailing theory and econometric analysis of global data both to situate these cases and subsequently to use the cases to interrogate those econometric findings.

Rather than focus on the actions of republic leaders, Zürcher drops a level to that of autonomous regions in the successor states. There are some good methodological reasons for this: every Soviet republic declared and accomplished independence in the end despite variation in timing (the focus of Hale's analysis, discussed below). In focusing

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at this level, it becomes possible to set aside the republics themselves and to assess why it was that some subrepublican regions and groups rebelled violently while others did so peacefully or not at all. There are equally good empirical reasons: the explicit hierarchy between titular nationalities and subrepublican ones created a powerful distinction between republican haves and other have-nots.

Zürcher develops his theory inductively over the course of the book and it begins with a common set of structural conditions: ethnofederal institutions that provided titular ethnic elites with symbols and resources as well as motives, and overriding state weakness caused by the Soviet center's collapse. Given these conditions, the appalling violence in some regions and the absence of it in others is a function of two interrelated factors: elite cohesion in the regions (which facilitated peaceful solutions to conflicts) and continuity of patronage resources (enabling networks to persist). Where elites could hold together both themselves and the old nomenklatura networks that bound them under Soviet rule, they managed the breakup peacefully and were even able to restore state capabilities in its aftermath. Where they could not, the result was violent conflict.[20]

Central to setting the stage for violent conflict, as it has been in a number of other studies, is the "ethnic demography" induced by Soviet institutions that formalized titular ethnic primacy in republics and subregions but also in practice put them at the service of ethnic Russian second-in-commands to enact policies made in Moscow (p. 7).[21] Over time, pseudofederalism[22] catalyzed grievances, motives, and opportunity for potential secessionists, providing them with grievances in the form of unrequited formal promises, motives in the form of institutional and material resources to grab, and opportunity in the form of those same resources. All of these could then be put to the use of nationalist rebellion given a weak center. The construction of titular ethnicity was crucial in this historical trajectory: every one of the movements that rebelled violently against its central government held titular subrepublican status.[23] As we shall see below, the political role of these second-order institutional privileges extends well beyond the former Soviet Union, but in different ways.

[20] Note here that the distinction between titular ethnic versus nontitular elites is an important one. In some cases, such as in Chechnya, the leader of the resistance was a Soviet general. In such cases, regional rebellion and ethnic or nationalist rebellion are not necessarily synonymous. Thanks to Valerie Bunce for making this point.

[21] Zürcher 2007, 7.

[22] So termed in Suny 1993, 101.

[23] Zürcher 2007, 54.

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State weakness is central to Zürcher's argument as well. Whereas scholars of separatism elsewhere[24] argue that weak states have made secession an unappealing option, Zürcher suggests the opposite and notes that Russia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan all failed to win wars against their separatist rebels. State-rebel conflicts, more than asymmetrical battles, resembled "war between two start-up firms."[25] This was the case, however, less because of prior weakness and more because elite disunity in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse left some republics with little ability to hold on to their monopoly of violence. The narratives of war suppliers in Georgia, Chechnya, and Azerbaijan are loaded more with the names of businessmen and their militias than with formal military units.

This elite disunity was the third condition: together these conditions provided "atypically high opportunities, a massive commitment problem [on the state's part]," and a "climate that was highly favorable to ethnic entrepreneurship."[26] By contrast, where for contextually specific reasons elites were able to maintain unity and hold together the old nomenklatura networks that had enabled previous patronage politics, they were able to provide continuity of state capability, even under rough conditions. For example, the region of Dagestan arguably *should* have descended into violent conflict given the strong effort made by Chechen rebels to expand their conflict across the border. Yet, as Zürcher details, locals fought back until receiving assistance from Russian troops. Moreover, state capacity survived the Soviet collapse in Dagestan in a way that it did not in Chechnya (pp. 192–96).

Zürcher's analysis, in short, suggests that the macrostructural conditions of ethnofederalism and central disarray in Moscow were necessary but not sufficient for the outbreak of violent ethnic rebellion in the successor states of the Caucasus. Further, it suggests a crucial role for local ethnic elites in holding together both their own social networks and the coherence of the state apparatus. When they can/do, violent conflict is unlikely. The strength of the analysis here is in the micrologic of elite unity and disunity. Too few truly comparative studies of separatist violence achieve such fine-grained yet systematic microanalysis, and the parallels across these very different cases suggest strongly that there is something to Zürcher's theoretical hunch. Moreover, the presence but causal irrelevance of two key predictors—mountainous terrain and resource wealth—suggest that we need more studies of this

[24] See, for example, Englebert 2008.
[25] Zürcher 2007, 8, 215.
[26] Zürcher 2007, 63.

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kind precisely in places like Azerbaijan and Chechnya, to test not only whether they are compatible with the theories but also whether they are actually at work in the dynamics we observe. In this regard, Zürcher's comparative contribution is at its most valuable. The one real weakness in the argument is that the overarching institutional-structural variable doing so much of the heavy lifting—ethnic demographics borne of ethnofederalism—was common to each of these cases, begging the question of whether the theory would apply outside of postcommunist ethnofederal systems. A legacy of rebellion by the regions comprising Zürcher's sample comes up periodically in the analysis, but never as a central issue. To be fair, one of the three main cases of violence—Georgia—faced two rebellions from Abkhazian and Ossetian minorities with no discernible past grievances or contentious legacies upon which to draw in building a narrative of resistance.[27] Nonetheless, past legacies of rebellion constitute only a minor part of the theoretical story here, and when they do appear it is more as background then as causal forces in their own right.

In *The Foundations of Ethnic Politics*, Henry Hale focuses on the republican level in the Soviet Union and endeavors to parse out why it was that some republics seceded before others. It is without doubt an important question, especially since, as Hale notes, some early movers had an impact on what happened to the Union itself.[28] The quest to solve this puzzle is built on the starting premise that there was nothing inevitable about the Soviet collapse and that in particular Ukraine's elites might have saved the Union had they acted differently.[29] The argument Hale develops relies on prospective assessment of the likely future of one's ethnic group under independence or continued union. Where ethnic groups expect to fare worse under union, they opt for independence (as was the case in Ukraine). Where they expect that saving the union will put them on a better future trajectory, they opt to support unionist solutions (as was the case in Uzbekistan). Hale conceptualizes and measures this outcome in terms of the relative timing of republican declarations of independence.

So why did ethnic identity become such a central engine of contentious politics during this time of turmoil? Hale drops to the individual-cognitive level to construct his answer to this foundational question. Drawing on recent progress in cognitive and social psychology that has brought the earlier seminal findings of Tajfel and others into question,

[27] Zürcher 2007, 149.
[28] See also Beissinger 2002.
[29] Hale 2008, 8.

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Hale suggests that ethnicity is a particularly powerful form of prerational uncertainty reduction. Humans, desperate to make sense of the overwhelming social complexity confronting them, strive for shorthand markers. Ethnicity is among the most powerful, although it does still require group-level dynamics to work itself out (collective action problems foremost among them).

How, then, does one link ethnic identity (which to Hale's mind is prerational) and ethnic politics? His answer is succinct: ethnicity is about uncertainty reduction and ethnic politics is about interests. To the extent that the former shapes the way we view our world and our life chances within it and to the extent that politicized ethnic identities actually do shape our life chances, ethnic cues will powerfully influence how we think about our interests. The development of this framework both for dissecting identity and interests and for thinking about how emotive/affective ties interact with rationality takes up the first half of the book. These are pages well worth reading.

How does this microlevel theory of ethnic politics link up with the macrodynamics of separatism? Hale argues that the respective economic status of the various republics relative to the Soviet mean offered different incentives. Richer republics had good reason to fear being exploited in a restored union, while poorer ones had a strong incentive to support unionism for the advantages it could provide them. In his framework, national federalist institutions also mattered greatly because they "effectively resolve the microlevel collective action problems and thus isolate the macrolevel problem."[30] The ethnofederal system endowed titular ethnic identities with the institutional and symbolic resources to become the marker that more than any others shaped one's life chances. Moreover, under conditions of central incapacity it provided local elites with an opportunity to rectify the "pseudo" in pseudofederalism. Here again ethnofederalism plays the central role by casting elite and mass interests at the level of the titular ethnic republic and thereby making decisions a function of the question: What is best for my (republican) group and therefore for me? The answer drives nationalist mobilization: the "politics of separatism is fundamentally about shaping regional beliefs regarding the nature of the (potential) central government."[31]

While the argument in Hale's analysis is similar to commitment problem theories of ethnic violence, it is a more economic one. Moreover, it falls victim to a relative lack of variation on the dependent variable:

[30] Hale 2008, 63.
[31] Hale 2008, 73.

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all fifteen republics declared independence, such that within two years of the earliest Baltic declaration, the Soviet Union had ceased to exist. So the puzzle on which Hale focuses is that of timing: why did some republics declare independence earlier than others? The answer to *this* question is a function of perception about the central government. Secession becomes a viable strategy the less it appears that union will protect the group. (To be clear, it is not a preferred outcome but rather is a strategy to achieve another outcome, namely, group benefit.) How do we justify the classification of Ukraine as an early seceder and Uzbekistan as a unionist,[32] given that their respective declarations of independence came only three weeks apart, and that out of a period of more than one hundred weeks?

Again, to put the issue of historically rooted identities on the table, the last two republics to declare sovereignty (Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) were not the poorest, but they were by consensus the two for which ethnofederalism was most instrumental in building ethnic identity almost from whole cloth. Kazakhstan was income poor but oil rich, as was Azerbaijan, a situation holding out for both the promise of prosperity following independence. The latter, however, had a much stronger sense of pre-Soviet identity than did the former. The point here is that we neglect what may have caused ethnofederalism at significant analytic peril because it was constitutive of ethnic identity only in some parts of the Soviet system. In others, especially in the Baltics and the Caucasus, the consensus is stronger that Moscow's granting of titular republic status was a central response to the mobilization of ethnic identity.[33] This observation carries a powerful critique for institutional theories inasmuch as the causal story begins with the episodes of nationalization mobilization that led central leaders to settle on ethnofederalism. Institutions in such trajectories are intervening variables rather than independent causes.

Philip Roeder, of the three authors discussed here, is the most explicitly global in ambition. He is not looking to explain variation across the Soviet bloc but, rather, seeks to explain why the members of the state system today are members and why others never got there. His answer is institutions: ethnic groups with segment-state institutions are more likely than those that lack them to become nation-states.[34] The global ambition, Roeder suggests, is well warranted: "86% of all

[32] Hale 2008, 72.

[33] Suny 1993, 88; Pipes 1954.

[34] The term "segment-state institution" is largely derived from Soviet ethnofederal institutions but recast in less specific language in order to test its general applicability.

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new nation-states in the twentieth century had prehistories that looked much like the creation of independent successor states of the USSR. Indeed, for the past century it would have been safe to bet a considerable sum with the rule of thumb, 'no segment-state, no nation-state.'"[35] To scholars and policymakers who advance the idea that federalism can "contain nationalism,"[36] this argument must be troubling. Yet, Roeder suggests, more often than not it is only when nation-state claims meet segment-state institutions that nation-states result.

Segment-state institutions accomplish two tasks that would-be state makers need. First, as Zürcher, Hale, Bunce, and many other scholars have noted, they help greatly to solve collective action problems at the group level. They provide a set of transmission mechanisms through which elites in command can convey national symbols to the masses. They are a vessel for resource capture and allocation and can help to cement the power of those at the apex of patronage networks. Second, they imbue local elites with substantial authority when they deal with central rulers by virtue of these resources and the mass following they bring with them. That is, all else equal, such institutions make it much harder for central authorities to resist or to deny the demands made by those who hold them.[37] Here Roeder's framework challenges another IR-centered theory of separatist war, Barbara Walter's reputation-focused one.[38] A brief question from her book is appropriate here: if segment-state institutions make local demands harder to resist (that is, make subsequent statehood more likely), why are states outside the former Soviet bloc so much more likely to respond violently and for longer to nation-state aspirations? Walter argues, in essence, that separatist activism tends to provoke violent and determined state response. To the extent that we understand segment-states as responses to mobilization, Roeder's argument stands in contrast.

Roeder's concept of the "segment-state" hews closely to both national federalism and ethnofederalism as the explanatory key. It also effectively focuses its analytic gaze on groups that make an explicit claim to independence aspirations. This is understandable in the context of international relations theory, classically focused on states as the relevant actors, but it runs the risk of truncating the possible sample by excluding groups that have not, or have not primarily, sought *independence* through nationalist mobilization. Many ethnic groups either

[35] Roeder 2007, 10.
[36] Hechter 2000.
[37] Roeder 2007, 165.
[38] Walter 2008.

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do not demand independence or do so only briefly as a bargaining strategy before accepting lesser concessions. As such, any that make lesser demands simply would not pop up on this radar screen, yet they can catalyze nation-state crises as meaningfully as can outright nation-state aspirants.

Roeder assigns relatively minor status to ethnic identities that predate segment-state institutions. This is curious, since so many Soviet republics had earlier resisted incorporation and to a large degree had catalyzed ethnofederalism. Like Zürcher and Hale, he suggests that the prospect of "nations before nationalism"[39] as a prior resource for republican elites is a lesser causal force, since it is largely established autonomy from common-state leaders. That, in turn, allows them to consolidate control over ethnic politics and identity. Ethnic identity here is largely elite driven. Indeed, "The public at large is likely to be indifferent to the choice between the elite's projects and the status quo."[40] The reason that publics follow despite this likely indifference is identity hegemony—that is, republican identity appears to be the only game in town given the structure of the system. Looking further afield to the postcolonial world, however, one might reasonably ask why publics ally with elites absent ethnofederal institutions.[41]

One other factor that is integral to his thesis and is grouped with Roeder's segment-state variables is a legacy of independent statehood —with or without postincorporation autonomy.[42] Given a region's continued coherence under ethnofederalism, this makes sense, but it makes less sense for states that were independent but were then stripped of their titular status. To my mind such states—and my data analyses in the next section bear out this intuition—draw more on a legacy of nationalist mobilization than on recent institutional resources. Preincorporation statehood followed by incorporation with no titular status, in other words, is not an institutional category: it is a proxy for a historical legacy of nationalist mobilization. I turn to this in more detail below. It is conceptually important because it suggests a historical legacy effect rather than an institutional one, and it is theoretically important

[39] This phrase is borrowed from Armstrong 1982.

[40] Roeder 2007, 81.

[41] The recent cases of Timor Leste, Eritrea, and South Sudan are ones in which mass nationalism emerged absent segment-states for those minorities and led to statehood. Aceh, Indonesia, and the Tamil regions of Sri Lanka are examples of mass nationalism absent segment-states that did not lead to independence.

[42] Postincorporation autonomy refers to a territory that was incorporated into a larger state or empire and subsequently granted a form of political autonomy on a communal as well as territorial basis. Quebec, the non-Russian Soviet republics, and Scotland are all variants of it.

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because it suggests that segment-state institutions may often be endogenous to legacies of ethnic mobilization.

These three exceptional books exemplify two scholarly trends. First, they are powerful theoretical statements about the causes of separatism, both violent and nonviolent. Despite substantial differences of method and focus, they all pinpoint the causal role of ethnofederal institutions as either prime catalysts or central structural antecedents to separatist rebellion. And scholars of this region have become the main movers and shakers in the study of separatist conflict. Second, they deemphasize the role of history. This is at odds with a consistently strong finding that a legacy of past violent conflict strongly increases the odds of future ones. Given the strong vein of prior scholarship on the role of durable national identities in catalyzing nationalist mobilization in the Soviet Union, it is somewhat surprising to find the current trajectory of studies of separatism moving away from a focus on those legacies.

II. History Matters? Rebellion Legacies in the Postcommunist World and Elsewhere

In this section I explore the relationship between contentious legacies and ethnofederal institutions, on the one hand, and between legacies and future conflicts, on the other. I make use of two different data sets in doing so, including one that draws directly on the data set used by Roeder.[43] The two data sets allow testing, first, of the hypothesis that past rebellions strongly influence the viability of contemporary mobilization by organizations representing ethnic groups and, second, of the hypothesis that ethnofederal institutions are intermediate outcomes of past episodes of nationalist mobilization. They also allow one to assess the soundness of both ethnofederalism and history hypotheses with different measures of "separatist activism," ranging from political mobilization to the onset of violent conflict. Given the robustness of the "history" effect across multiple samples, scholars, measurement choices, and methods, it is appropriate to take its soundness as an empirical starting point. I seek to test one main hypothesis: holding state policy and level of development constant,

> H1. a legacy of past rebellions makes current rebellions by ethnic minority groups more likely.

In the following paragraphs I discuss the data and methods used to assess this hypothesis.

[43] See Roeder 2007, chaps. 9, 10.

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Data, Methods, and Models

In the first set of analyses I employ data from the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) project,[44] using samples from the postcolonial world and from the former Soviet bloc. The data set covers politically relevant ethnic groups between 1946 and 2005 in countries with a population of at least one million and an area of at least half a million square kilometers.[45] For a number of reasons, I use EPR data rather than data from the Minorities at Risk project. First, the time period is more expansive, allowing for considerably more coverage of postcommunist ethnic politics. Second, by including both dominant and excluded groups (especially important in cases where an ethnic group might be dominant in one country but discriminated against in another, such as Russians in Russia versus those in Estonia), discrimination becomes a true variable rather than a selection criterion for inclusion in the data set. Finally, the question of both the effects of ethnofederalism and of postindependence state assaults on ethnic minority regions are ones of state policy, so it is possible to tease out the independent effects of those policies. I also want to understand, holding state policy constant, the effect of rebellious legacies. The EPR data project includes multiple measures that capture with considerable finesse different kinds of state ethnicity policies. As I discuss below, these measures compliment the institutional variables in Roeder's data set.

As I discuss below, I estimate the basic models using two different subsets of the data: the former Soviet Union and Soviet bloc and the postcolonial world (Latin America, Asia minus the former Soviet republics, North Africa and the Middle East, and sub-Saharan Africa). One other point is important: for the postcolonial cases (groups), the history effect variable covers violent conflicts dating back only to 1946, the starting year of the data set. In order to capture possible pre-Soviet dynamics of historical legacies, I extend the time period of relevant conflict legacies back to 1818, an additional 128 years. Given the carefully detailed arguments by Altstadt[46] and others that republics like Azerbaijan engaged in a "continual pattern of struggle against Russian colonial rule from the original conquest to the late twentieth century," I wanted to grant maximum leeway to possible historical legacy effects in the former communist bloc, since the start point of the EPR data excludes completely the pre-Soviet era.

[44] The data are available publicly at http://dvn-iq.harvard.edu/dvn.dv/epr.

[45] Because most of the historically relevant episodes of nationalist rebellion in the former Soviet Union took place prior to 1946, I develop a set of historical proxy variables to account for earlier rebellions. I discuss these below.

[46] Altstadt 1992.

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Dependent Variable: Separatist Rebellion

The dependent variable (*secethonset*) whose determinants I estimate here is the onset of a separatist rebellion that resulted in at least twenty-five battle deaths per year. As such, this sort of conflict takes place between an organization claiming to represent an ethnic group and a central government over ethnic separatist claims. It is drawn from the Armed Conflict Dataset at the Peace Research Institute in Oslo.[47] The use of this measure complements the one I employ in the next set of analyses (based on Roeder's original data) by allowing one to estimate the determinants of various types of ethnic mobilization against a similar array of institutional and historical causal factors. In effect, pairing two very different dependent variables in this way allows us to get some purchase on the question of whether a range of actions can be explained by a common set of independent variables.

Independent Variables: Historical Legacies of Past Rebellion

This set of analyses seeks to establish (1) whether there is generally a historical legacy effect shaping the likelihood of contemporary separatist rebellions in the world and (2) whether the legacy effect differs inside and outside the former communist world. The independent variable I employ here captures the number of times in the past that an ethnic group has mobilized violently against its central government. The measure for the largest sample (*Warhist*), and for the postcolonial world, simply adds up the past onset years from the main dependent variable. As mentioned above, however, the pre-Soviet era is not included in the time period of the EPR data (which begins in 1946). Noting that the analyses of Suny, Altstadt,[48] and others point to resistance and rebellion well before that—in some cases dating back into the nineteenth century as markers of national identity and resistance—I employ an additional set of legacy variables in an attempt to capture theoretically meaningful periods in time. First, I include a variable (*pre1848_reb*) for anti-imperial wars in the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian territories before 1848 to capture those that took

[47] Gleditsch et al. 2002. The original PRIO ACD data are available at http://www.prio.no/CSCW/Datasets/Armed-Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/. Here I am using the data as coded in Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010. At present I am incorporating data from the Minorities at Risk project's rebellion measures to include an ordered variable for different kinds of ethnic mobilization (from autonomy or rights claims up to violent rebellion). Despite the MaR data set's limitations by selection (that is, only including minorities discriminated against), this more nuanced measure of mobilization makes it possible to assess the dynamics of a range of activism.

[48] Suny 1993; Altstadt 1992.

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place before the nationalist revolutions in that year. Second, I include a variable (*natlism_to_indep_reb*) that captures rebellions between 1848 and the brief independence periods of a number of Soviet republics following the 1917 revolution. Third, I include a variable (*indep_to_ww2_reb*) for rebellions between 1918 and 1939. In each of these, rebellions are coded at the group level (that is, by ethnic groups) as 1 if a rebellion took place during the period in question and 0 otherwise.[49]

Control Variables

In addition to standard controls for level of economic development (*lgdpcapl*), group size (*lrsize*), and country population (*lpopl*) (taking the natural logarithm of all three measures), the models I estimate here contain a number of key variables from EPR to account for state policy toward ethnic groups. Everywhere, but especially in the context of the former communist world, where state policy was so central to the development and evolution of ethnic identity and politics, it is especially important to capture variation in the ways that central governments treated their ethnic minorities. First, an ethnic group's *powerless* status indicates that "[e]lite representatives hold no political power at either the national or the regional level without being explicitly discriminated against."[50] Second, a group's *discriminated* status indicates that "[g]roup members are subjected to active, intentional, and targeted discrimination, with the intent of excluding them from both regional and national power. Such active discrimination can be either formal or informal."[51] Third, I start by including variables for political autonomy: *autonomy* when a group's status is granted by the center and *separatist* when the group itself declares its independence from the center. As I discuss below, the separatist autonomy variable appears to be causally entangled with its past history of rebellion; for that reason, and because it indicates a group-level move rather than a state-level move, it is included only in the initial models. Finally, I include a variable for ethnic "downgrading" (*downgrade*), indicating that a group's status declined at the center in the prior year.

Because the dependent variable here—separatist conflict onset—is dichotomous, I employ logistic regression. I exclude ongoing war years; thus the models estimate the likelihood of a separatist war beginning during peacetime. Finally, the results reported here estimate robust

[49] I derive these variables from data used in Wimmer and Min 2009. The data are available at http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/wimmer/WarList.xls, accessed September 10, 2009.

[50] Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010, 100.

[51] Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010, 101.

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standard errors clustered by country to account for within-country dependence.

The Postcolonial World

The results are presented in Table 1. Models 1 and 2 in Table 1 present results for the postcolonial world. The results here strongly confirm prior works that point to the importance of past conflicts in shaping the prospects of new ones. The rebellion legacy strongly increases the likelihood of violent mobilization across the postcolonial world, as Cederman, Wimmer, and Min found to be the case in a global sample.[52] Again, a number of state ethnic policy variables are robustly significant—exclusion, downgrading, and discrimination—in predicting separatist rebellion. Unsurprisingly, junior partner status and, more surprisingly, autonomy are both insignificant. As I discuss below in reference to employing Roeder's measures, the significance of "autonomy" may in part be dependent on measurement and disaggregation.

Another political variable—separatist autonomy—is highly significant and its effect is substantial. As I will discuss, this is so across both the postcommunist and postcolonial worlds. One plausible reason for this is that it represents not a central state policy but a regional one—an ethnic minority region declaring itself to be independent of the center. In other words, the logic of the hypothesis for this measure ought to be, "All else equal, ethnic minority groups strong enough vis-à-vis the center to demand autonomy are likely to be strong enough to rebel violently." That may well explain the substantive magnitude of this variable in the models. If we conceptualize "separatist activism" as a continuum at one end of which is violent rebellion and somewhere along which is a declaration of independence or separatist autonomy, the two may be strongly correlated and in fact may both be functions of grievance and opportunity rather than cause and effect. In short, it may also capture part of the effect of rebellion: that is, a group with subnational autonomy may have that status as a result of wresting concessions from the center following a past rebellion.[53]

A country's level of development is also significant and negative in shaping the likelihood of separatist conflict, as is the size of the ethnic minority group as a share of the total population. However, population

[52] In fact, the legacy effect is stronger in the postcolonial world than it is globally. For comparison, see Cederman, Wimmer, and Min 2010, 105.

[53] Another possible explanation is that this measure represents a spiraling dynamic in which regional demands are met with central state repression, followed by more extreme regional responses. Thanks to a reviewer for suggesting this.

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TABLE 1
HISTORY AND SEPARATIST CONFLICT: ETHNIC POWER RELATIONS–BASED DATA

	Postcolonial World		*Postcommunist World*		
Variable	*Model 1*	*Model 2*	*Model 3*	*Model 4*	*Model 5*
Exclusion	1.217		—[a]	—	—
	(.284)***				
Downgraded	1.709	1.760	—[a]	—	—[a]
	(.397)***	(.396)***			
Powerless	—	1.224	—	—[a]	—
		(.497)			
Downgrade*exclusion	—	—	—	—[a]	—
Junior Partner	—	.252	.617	—	—
		(.429)	(1.112)		
Autonomy	—	.769	.281	—	—
		(.606)	(.871)		
Discrimination	—	1.702	−.148	.543	.835
		(.4778)***	(1.063)	(.615)	(.435)
Separatist Autonomy	—	2.528	6.224	6.297	7.011
		(.643)***	(1.101)***	(1.396)***	(2.0214)***
Group Size (Share of Population)	.257	.244	.275	.840	.880
	(.089)**	(.092)**	(.227)	(.294)**	(.372)*
Rebellion Legacy	.823	.761	−3.997	−3.146	−3.146
	(.189)***	(.187)***	(1.387)**	(1.578)*	(1.599)*
Pre-1848 Rebellion	—	—	—	—	—[a]
1848–1918 Rebellion	—	—	—	—	—[a]
1918–39 Rebellion	—	—	—	—	2.659
					(1.083)*
GDP per Capita$_{(ln)}$	−.294	−.289	−.081	.579	.512
	(.130)*	(.119)*	(.233)	(.672)	(.816)
Nat'l Population$_{(ln)}$	.021	.024	−.393	.405	.307
	(.106)	(.103)	(.356)	(.317)	(.415)
Peace Years	−.126	−.112	−.048	−.174	−.197
	(.083)	(.085)	(.238)	(.234)	(.224)
Constant	−4.072	−4.364	−1.260	−14.917	−14.298
	(1.595)*	(1.475)**	(4.706)	(6.993)*	(8.710)
Observations	16895	16895	4063	3378	4526
Prob. > chi^2	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
Pseudo R^2	.081	.092	.360	.455	.484

*** p < .001, ** p < .01, *p < .05; analysis is by logistic regression; robust (Huber-White) standard errors in parentheses, clustered on country; cubic splines included in analyses but not reported

[a]Variable predicted failure perfectly in postcommunist sample and was dropped.

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size and the number of years since the last conflict are not. In general, these results for the postcolonial world alone confirm both the important role of an ethnic group's history of contentious politics and the role of central state policy in catalyzing separatist conflicts. What, however, of the postcommunist world?

The Postcommunist World

Models 3–5 present results for much the same model estimations but this time focused on the postcommunist world. An initial trend is that state policy variation—and it is worth reiterating that in this sample it is only within the former communist bloc—is much less consistently significant here. In fact, in one or more of these models nearly all of the state policy variables correspond with a complete absence of separatist conflict onset, leading those variables and a large number of observations to be dropped from the sample. The one political variable, as with the postcolonial sample, that is consistently significant is the separatist autonomy measure. Again, since this is driven by ethnic region action rather than by central state policy, it may be a part of a repertoire of separatist activism along with rebellion. What it does suggest, given the large number of group-year observations within the Soviet Union and then Russia, is that macrolevel (central government) factors remain important. As I discuss below in analyzing Roeder's data, those macrovariables continue to be significant even when accounting for more fine-grained policies toward individual ethnic groups.

Does a history of nationalist mobilization—even a brief elite-led one between 1918 and 1920—shape an ethnic group's propensity to mobilize nearly eighty years later? One common answer—that ethnofederalism catalyzed and magnified ethnic identities at the republican level, creating tools for mobilization that did not exist before—is a plausible one: "The nation-state projects that were so powerful seventy years later played a minor role in shaping patterns of political action prior to the establishment of segment-states. Without segment-states to coordinate and focus identity and provide resources for mobilization, few of the nation-state projects that reached the bargaining table after 1987 were able to muscle their way to the head of the queue in 1917."[54] The logic here is that groups with segment-state status (or titular status under ethnofederalism) need not have had it before, and even if they did, it paled in causal importance in comparison with the institutional reality of Soviet nationalities policy.

[54] Roeder 2007, 277.

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Focusing in on the post-1946 rebellion legacy, one observes immediately that, although its effect is strong and positive in the postcolonial world, it is equally strong but *negative* for the postcommunist world. Whether those legacies matter appears to be a function of which period in time one refers to. In the postcommunist world, past rebellions (post-1940) are strongly but negatively tied to future rebellion across all model specifications and with multiple state policy measures as controls.[55] This could suggest that the Soviet central government responded to later rebellions either with immense force or with sufficient incentives to induce later unionism. Alternatively, it could suggest that it was not this period in the former Soviet republic cases that was politically important. In fact, it is plausible to expect that the early Soviet period and/or the period between imperial and Soviet control would have been the most consequential historical referent for many ethnic minorities.

To explore the hypothesis that postcommunist legacies might extend further back in time than the initial post-1946 measure can account for, I include in the postcommunist models dummy variables to capture center-periphery wars during the pre-1848, 1848–1917, and 1918–39 periods. When I expand the "legacy" period back from 1946 to 1818—an additional 128 years—the role of historical rebellion legacies emerges again. The resistance that many territories raised to Russian and then Soviet conquest during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries generally fails to predict the onset of violent conflict in the late twentieth century. The single, very important exception is in model 5, in which rebellion during the interwar period following the 1917 Russian Revolution but preceding World War II is a significant predictor of later separatist conflict. This is likely a function of the brief moments of independence of a number of later Soviet republics. These few years of statehood are underplayed in many studies of postcommunist separatism, but, however brief, they became central components of the nationalist narratives seven decades later and, statistically speaking, correlate strongly with the timing of the republics' separatist activism.

While post–World War II rebellion legacies do not appear to influence nationalist mobilization in the postcommunist world, what we might call the imperial interregnum between Russian and Soviet rule

[55] There are numerous plausible explanations for this. One is coercion: arguably the Soviet state had greater coercive capacity in the post–World War II period than during any time before, and it contained uprisings before they could get out of hand. Another is legitimacy: many scholars of Soviet history note the impact of Stalin's defeat of Hitler as a huge catalyst for regime legitimacy, even in the non-Russian far reaches of the Soviet Union. See, for example, Beissinger 2002, 52.

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seems to loom large in shaping late activism during the late Soviet era and beyond. It seems appropriate, given these findings, to think of the interwar period as analogous in the Soviet bloc to the immediate postcolonial periods in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. In the next section, I turn more specifically to differentiating rebellion legacies from the effects of institutions by focusing on ethnofederal and more broadly ethnic segment-states and their influence on separatist crises.

III. History and Ethnofederalism with and without Communism

In the previous section, it became clear that the effect of a legacy of past rebellions strongly influenced the onset of separatist conflicts in the postcolonial world. Just as importantly, when one accounts appropriately for the analogous period in the former communist world, the effect is similarly and intriguingly strong. The most common explanation per Bunce, Hale, and Roeder is that ethnofederalism led to the disintegration of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia. Hale and Roeder both argue more broadly that ethnofederalism exerts such an effect outside of the former communist world.[56] Below I replicate Roeder's analysis to assess the baseline effects of broad categories of segment-states and then explore whether there are particularities inside former communist countries. Following that, I explore whether ethnofederalism might be systematically linked to contentious legacies—in other words, whether it is a cause or a result of those legacies.

Data, Methods, and Models

This set of analyses employs the ethnic group/nation-state crisis data originally used in Roeder.[57] It is a global sample that includes data at the ethnic group level in five-year increments from 1955 to 1995. The original data comprise 8074 group-level observations, and the first model reported is a straight baseline replication using the full sample. To maintain complementarity across the two data sets used here, I also estimate models 2–4 below using a subset of the data from the postcolonial and postcommunist worlds, for a maximum of 6993 group-year observations.[58] I begin by estimating the same models as those presented

[56] Although note that Hale 2008, 250, observes that the portability of this effect to the postcolonial world is somewhat shaky in the context of his data set and analyses.

[57] The data are available at http://weber.ucsd.edu/~proeder/EthnicforPosting.xls.

[58] I estimated the models using Roeder's entire sample and found no substantive differences. Those results are available from the author.

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in Roeder.[59] As I discuss below, in subsequent models I also include dummy variables for communist ethnofederations, for noncommunist ethnofederations, and for ethnofederations in general.

Dependent Variable

The main dependent variable here is the nation-state crisis (*crisis*). It is defined as "a turning point at which further escalation [of confrontation during center-periphery bargaining] may bring about the failure of the existing state and the creation of new nation-states" (Roeder, 41). It is coded 1 in crisis years and 0 otherwise. It is useful to note here that, contrasted with the dependent variable employed in the prior analyses—which was specifically the onset of violent separatist conflict—this measure is more explicitly political.

Independent Variables

As with the results reported above, my main interest here is in the effects of historical rebellion legacies, their relation to ethnofederal institutions, and the impact of both in spurring subsequent rebellions. Among the institutional variables included in Roeder's data is a measure for groups that, prior to incorporation into a larger nation-state, were states themselves but after incorporation had no autonomy (*priornoa*). In effect, including this variable asks what the effect is of having had formal statehood prior to being incorporated into another state or empire. This is a close analogue to the rebellion legacy variable in the EPR data but captures a different aspect of a group's preincorporation national cohesiveness—formal independence. As with the separatist autonomy measure in EPR, it is a group-level variable rather than a central state one. Moreover, for republics that had declared independence prior to involuntary incorporation into the Soviet Union between 1920 and 1940, any effect is more political-historical than institutional. The reasons are two. First, independence periods of no more than twenty years are unlikely to have catalyzed substantial state- and institution-building. Second, the subsequent decades of Soviet rule are likely to have nearly obliterated most prior institutions. In short, this variable captures historical legacies, not proximate institutions.[60] I treat it conceptually as such in the discussion below. This measure is included

[59] Roeder 2007, chap. 9.

[60] To some extent I am arguing here that it is not institutional effects captured by this variable but the salience of past periods of mobilization. It is these that Beissinger shows strongly shape the prospects for the kind of "thickened history" that overcame unfavorable structural conditions in some Soviet republics.

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alongside the original institutional variables for subnational status: first-order segment state/prior state (*autprior*), first-order segment-state/no prior state (*autnop*), second-order segment-state (*secondary*), and no segment-state status (*none*).[61]

Control Variables

Included in these data are controls for an ethnic group's size relative to the total population and for the country's level of development (taken as the natural logarithm). The data set also includes regime type variables to capture whether the country in question was democratic or autocratic at the start of the time period; these variables are derived from Polity IV data. Whether a group considers itself to be a cultural minority—a perceptual and somewhat subjective but politically important factor—is also included, as well as whether or not it has a nonadjacent ethnic homeland. In short, Roeder's Nation-State Crisis data cover much of the same important ground as EPR, albeit with different measurement choices, but also some new ground. Substantively similar results across the two data sets, subsequently, ought to give us confidence in the causal effects.

Results

Table 2 presents the results estimating the determinants of nation-state crises. Model 1 is a baseline replication of Roeder's analysis. As such, I discuss it only briefly. Among the significant global predictors of nation-state crises are first-order segment-state status (both with and without a nation-state prior to incorporation), the absence of segment-state status (whose effect curiously runs in the same direction as both segment-state variables), and prior nation-state status. The effect of this last variable, as I noted above, is better thought of as a historical effect instead of an institutional one. The reason is that, absent a direct measure of the length of time an ethnic group had its own nation-state, we have no way of knowing whether it was long enough to have actually engaged in state-building. Moreover, with the interwar experiences of several subsequent Soviet republics as a cue, these periods might be more accurately thought of as independence by default—opportunistic declarations during imperial interregna—rather than hard-fought struggles for self-determination. Nonetheless, this past history of independence matters strongly and its level of significance remains robust

[61] Here Roeder refers to the highest subnational level of segment-states as "first order" (examples being Soviet republics) and the next lower level as "second order" (examples being Soviet and post-Soviet okrugs and oblasts).

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across all model specifications and sample. Again, the implication here is that a historical legacy of mobilization via independence, however brief, has causal importance that is separate from any institutional effect.

Cultural minority status is also a consistently significant positive predictor of nation-state crises, as is group population share. Groups that have nonadjacent homelands are significantly *less* likely to escalate their bargaining with central governments to nation-state crises. As was the case analyzing the EPR data, a country's level of development fails to achieve conventional levels of statistical significance when institutional factors are accounted for.

Models 2–4 present additional analyses of these data with a smaller sample. I have dropped observations from Western Europe, the United States, and Canada, so that what remains is the postcolonial world (Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East) and the former Soviet bloc. This smaller sample contains 6993 group-year observations.

Model 2 estimates the original Roeder model with the postcolonial/Soviet bloc sample. There is only one substantive difference, and it is that second-order segment-state status is significant at $p < .01$. Moreover, the effect is negative, rather than positive: all else equal, groups like the Chechens in Russia are *less likely* to escalate to nation-state crises when they have second-order autonomy. At first this seems surprising. However, it seems less so when viewed through the lens of Beissinger's observations on different levels of Soviet ethnofederalism. Titular minorities that had official status, but at a subrepublican level, tended to couch their demands in terms of greater self-determination within the union.[62] For minorities with republican status, independence seemed a much more viable option.

Column 3 presents the results with Roeder's segment-state variables replaced by two additional variables to estimate the national-level effects of ethnofederalism. I include a dummy variable for communist ethnofederalism, coded per Bunce, with the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia included. I also include a dummy variable for noncommunist ethnofederations that includes Ethiopia and India per Hale.[63] The results here are also interesting: macrolevel ethnofederalism both under communism and without it are consistently positive and significant determinants of nation-state crises. This provides further support, within the parameters of Roeder's data structure, both for his global scope ambitions and for Hale's and Bunce's insights. However, the historical legacy variable still remains significant here,

[62] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for making this point.
[63] Bunce 1999; Hale 2008.

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TABLE 2
HISTORY, ETHNOFEDERALISM, AND NATION-STATE CRISIS:
ROEDER'S NATION-STATE CRISIS DATA

		Models 2–4 Postcommunist & Postcolonial Countries		
Variable	*Model 1 Full Model & Data (Replication)*	*Full Model w/ Roeder Institutional Dummies*	*Ethnofederation Variables + Historical Legacy Dummy*	*Historical Legacy w/out Institutional or Ethnofederation Dummies*
First-Order Segment & Prior State	2.411 (.555)***	2.419 (.568)***	—	
First-Order Segment but Not Prior State	1.640 (.342)***	1.688 (.399)***	—	
Prior State, No First-Order Segment State	1.521 (.532)**	1.611 (.551)**	1.144 (.497)*	1.491 (.511)**
Second-Order Segment State	–.590 (.604)	–1.095 (.422)**	—	—
No Segment-State Status	1.265 (.553)**	1.439 (.536)**	—	—
Cultural Minority	1.119 (.237)***	1.099 (.260)***	1.084 (.277)***	1.118 (.210)***
Democracy at Start of Period	.025 (.286)	.0563 (.296)	—	—
Autocracy at Start of Period	–.512 (.285)	–.521 (.282)	—	—
Turmoil at Start of Period	.370 (.307)	.414 (.305)	—	—
Group Population as Share of of Total	4.443 (1.335)**	4.624 (1.298)***	4.724 (1.258)***	3.394 (.756)
Remote Homeland	–3.122 (.769)***	–2.653 (.787)**	–2.617 (.787)**	–2.757 (.707)***
Part of Noncommunist Ethnofederation	—	—	2.129 (.230)***	—
Part of Communist Ethnofederation	—	—	.941 (.350)**	—
GDP per Capita	1.171 (.791)	1.513 (1.005)	2.097 (1.176)	1.858 (1.370)
Observations	8074	6993	6993	6993
Wald χ^2	358.81	475.69	346.00	169.14
Pseudo R^2	0.168	0.159	.137	.074

*** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05; analysis is by logistic regression; robust (Huber-White) standard errors in parentheses, clustered on country; coefficients for panel variables estimated in models but not reported

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and as I note above it is plausible that in part ethnofederalism, as it has been outside the former communist world, was a central-level reaction to local nationalist mobilization. With that in mind, in the final model (5) I excluded the ethnofederation dummies and those for Roeder's segment-state types. The results are supportive of the notion that segment-states are at least partially endogenous to historical legacies of nationalist mobilization: the coefficient for the legacy effect grows significantly with those institutional proxies excluded and the z-score grows more still, from 2.3 to 2.92. While not definitive, this provides strong preliminary support for ethnofederal institutions' role as intervening variables between past episodes of center-region conflict and subsequent propensity for future conflicts.[64]

One thing that seems clear from analyzing two different data sets with different measures for state policy and institutions, as well as for separatist mobilization—the policies not only of the Soviet state but also of the state in general matter substantially for shaping the likelihood of violent separatist conflicts. It also appears at least in part to be a result of prior mobilization by ethnic minorities. In short, ethnofederalism has often been a response to, and therefore endogenous to, legacies of contentious ethnic politics. This squares closely with what Beissinger, Pipes, and Suny found with regard to the Soviet Union, in particular. What is more, the impacts of those legacies and of central efforts to manage multiethnic societies by institutional means consistently crowds out the effect of economic development. Until we have incorporated other structural determinants—mountainous terrain and the presence and location of natural resource reserves, to take just two—these findings are tentative rather than determinate. However, whether "state policy" is conceptually derived from deep comparative-historical knowledge of noncommunist societies[65] or communist ones,[66] we have good reasons to move forward in elaborating these measures and thinking about them comparatively.

This is one reason to think that the lessons from communist bloc cases have broader portability and to think reciprocally that scholars of the Soviet collapse and the post-Soviet wars ought to bring history back in to their theoretical frameworks to explain why wars occurred postcollapse in some places but not in others. Ethnofederations appear to "act" in more or less the same ways inside and outside the former

[64] This is not to say that such institutions cannot also play a direct causal role, independent of historical legacies; it is simply that whether they do is an empirical question. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pushing me to clarify this.

[65] Wimmer 2002.

[66] Beissinger 2002; Bunce 1999; Hale 2008; Roeder 2007.

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communist bloc, but it is less apparent that history acts so differently in shaping long-term trends in nationalist and separatist mobilization against central governments. Given the common weight of historical legacies across the postcommunist and postcolonial worlds, engaging cross-regional and cross-temporal research may help to synthesize the dynamics of separatist rebellion in a broader way.[67]

IV. Conclusions: How Far Should "Separatologists" Travel in to (or out of) Eurasia?

It seems appropriate to note here an exchange about fifteen years ago in the *Slavic Review* between Terry Karl and Philippe Schmitter, on one side, and Valerie Bunce, on the other side.[68] Karl and Schmitter made a powerful case for broad, cross-regional comparison as a starting point, arguing that we ought to set aside "area studies" limitations in the pursuit of maximally generalizable arguments. Bunce made a contrasting argument for more modesty, suggesting that by falsely dichotomizing area studies and social science Karl and Schmitter were obscuring important differences between the communist bloc and other regions and dismissing the work of regional scholars who, while focused on one or more postcommunist countries, were nonetheless broadly comparative in theoretical terms. Based on the results here, the study of separatism today is something like transitology fifteen years ago, but flipped on its head. Today it is not the case that scholars of the postcommunist world are poised to write rejoinders to those arguing for the broadest comparative perspective on outcomes of interest. On the contrary, the study of separatism has become a field of globally ambitious inquiry dominated by the study of that region.

As a first step toward reconciling the study of separatist conflict and the study of the postcommunist world, this article has demonstrated two things. First, it is systematically the case that a legacy of past rebellion matters as much inside the postcommunist world as outside it. This finding suggests that looking back to the careful attention paid, for example, by Beissinger, Pipes, Suny, and others to legacies of nationalist mobilization in catalyzing late-Soviet era mobilization would benefit not just scholars of the Soviet collapse but also scholars interested in separatist activism more broadly. This has important implications for the way we interpret the findings of studies such as Roeder,

[67] See, for example, Smith 2010; Smith 2012.
[68] Karl and Schmitter 1994; Bunce 1994.

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for whom ethnofederalism is a starting point. Taken as an intervening variable that perhaps amplifies the already strong identity effects of ethnic rebellion, somewhat contradictory findings such as those presented in Hale—that ethnofederalism significantly predicts separatism only in former communist countries—make more sense. Second, the results in the second section of this article suggest that the seeming particularity of ethnofederalism in the Soviet system has broader import for shaping long-term patterns of nationalist mobilization. The significant role for such institutions in the postcolonial world hints at substantial cross-regional accord and suggests that cross-regional comparative work has much potential.[69]

A broader research program on political institutions has often highlighted the differences between those who take them as a starting point and those who seek to explain their origins and persistence. The same is true here in the study of how ethnic subnational institutions and legacies of ethnic mobilization take shape inside and outside the postcommunist world. Among other things, the exploration of common themes in several recent books on ethnic federalism in the former Soviet Union provides an opportunity to elucidate areas in which cross-regional studies could be extremely productive. Here it appears that scholars of ethnic politics in both the postcommunist and postcolonial worlds would gain much from what have thus far been limited efforts to synthesize the two regions of study.[70]

Finally, focusing long-range lenses again on the study of political institutions and ethnic politics holds out a great deal of promise. Darden[71] demonstrates a powerful effect of the initial content of the curricula for mass schooling in shaping durable national identity. Beissinger highlights cases in which legacies of resistance appear to trump unfavorable structural conditions. The results here suggest a broad role for past rebellion in keeping nationalist mobilization on the table as a viable political strategy. But none of these conclusions would disconfirm the central arguments of the three books under consideration here. What they do instead is reinvigorate a productive scholarly debate focused on institutions themselves—where they come from, how they are reproduced over time, and what their subsequent effects are.

[69] See, for example, Smith 2012.
[70] One notable exception is Beissinger and Young 2002.
[71] Darden forthcoming.

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