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Explaining Ethnic Protests: How Territorial Autonomy and Executive Representation
Shape Ethnic Minority Protests

by

Nahrain S. Rasho
DISSERTATION

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Abstract

What explains ethnic protests? This dissertation studies protests over representation, marginalization, and demands for self-determination by ethnic minority groups. The first two chapters focus on the relationship between territorial autonomy arrangements and protests by ethnic minorities within autonomous regions. The final chapter examines the outcomes of cabinet representation on ethnic minority protests in newly democratizing states.

Do autonomy arrangements increase local ethnic conflict? In chapters 1 and 2 I explore how, contrary to intent or expectations, territorial autonomy may increase protests over self-determination by local ethnic minority groups. By design, autonomy arrangements create new local majorities responsible for local ethnic minorities within them. In ethnically-defined autonomous regions, local ethnic minorities may be too small to shape regional-level policies on their own or challenge the regional government's authority. Inability to shape local-level policy may create grievances against the regional government that otherwise might not exist. In such instances, local ethnic minorities may be motivated to pursue their own autonomy rights. Together, these chapters raise challenges to the regional autonomy project by demonstrating how systems that aim to increase access to power for regional groups may simultaneously create conditions that exclude other, smaller regional groups.

Chapter 1 presents an illustrative case study analysis on ethnic protests by the Assyrian minority in Northern Iraq. The chapter shows how territorial autonomy in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq may have increased grievances by Assyrians against their regional government. My evidence is rooted in fieldwork interviews with Assyrian and Kurdish elites and civilians in Northern Iraq, online sources including newspapers, magazines, policy reports,

and archival material, and scholarly research. Using desk method research, I also collect data on instances of protests by Assyrians in Iraq between 2005-2018. The protest data reveal, in addition to protesting the central government of Iraq, Assyrians also protest the Kurdish Regional government. Specifically, in disputed territories such as Nineveh, Assyrians directed protests against the Kurdish Regional Government slightly more than the central Iraqi state. The evidence in this case study provides support for the theory on how territorial autonomy arrangements shape grievances and conflict outcomes for minorities within autonomous regions.

In Chapter 2, I test whether regional ethnic minorities are more or less likely to protests under systems with autonomy arrangements. I use data on ethnic protests across 186 ethnic groups in 83 countries between 1985-2006 from two sources: the *Ethnic Powers Relations (EPR)* dataset and the *All Minorities at Risk (AMAR) Project*. My research produces several findings. First, countries with territorial autonomy arrangements had a higher count of ethnic protests than countries without autonomy arrangements. Second, political and economic grievances by regional ethnic minorities increased under systems with territorial autonomy. Third, protests by regional ethnic minorities were not conditional on opportunities for ethnic protests - in other words, ethnic group size and state repression were unable to predict the probability of ethnic protest in systems with or without territorial autonomy arrangements. Finally, my results held even when controlling for known factors of ethnic conflict including ethnic group diversity, ethnic group war history, and country-level ethnic conflict episodes.

Does representation in the executive cabinet increase or decrease protests by minority groups? To date, current literature on ethnic minorities in democratizing countries accounts for the relationship between representation in the legislature and ethnic protests while sometimes overlooking the importance of executive representation in shaping ethnic group stability. I address this gap in chapter 3 by examining the link between ethnic minority cabinet representation and the number ethnic minority protests following an election year. I argue that as the proportion of cabinet seats obtained by an ethnic minority group increases, we

should expect to see a decrease in the number of protests by the ethnic minority group, given inclusion in the executive increases an ethnic minority groups decision-making capabilities for their ethnic communities. To test this argument, I build a cross-national dataset on the representation of ethnic minority parties in democratizing systems in Eastern European countries for each election between 1990-2006 using election data from the *PPEG* database on political parties, elections, and governments. I identify the ethnic minority group represented in each ethnic party and collect data on ethnic minority groups and ethnic minority protests from the *Ethnic Powers Relations (EPR) Core* dataset and the *Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project*, respectively. Contrary to my expectations, I find under certain conditions as the ethnic minority group's cabinet seat share increases, the number of ethnic protests by the ethnic minority increases following the election year. Confirming previous findings in the literature on the relationship between assembly representation and ethnic minority protests, I find ethnic protest following an election year decrease as the assembly seat share of an ethnic minority group increases. However, this finding proved significant only under specific circumstances. Future research should examine how electoral systems in democratizing countries shape the likelihood of ethnic protests given they may impact the ability of ethnic minority parties to obtain a seat in the assembly, which shapes representation of ethnic minority groups in the governing cabinet.

Chapter 1

Territorial Autonomy and Ethnic Protests in Northern Iraq

Abstract

How do autonomy arrangements shape conflict outcomes for regional ethnic minority groups? My case study analysis on ethnic protests by Assyrians in Northern Iraq shows Kurdish regional autonomy may have increased grievances by Assyrians against the Kurdish Regional Government. My evidence is rooted in fieldwork interviews with Assyrian and Kurdish elites and civilians in Northern Iraq, online sources including newspapers, magazines, policy reports, and archival material, and scholarly research. Using desk method research, I also collect data on instances of protests by Assyrians in Iraq between 2005-2018. The protest data reveal, in addition to protesting the central government of Iraq, Assyrians also protest the Kurdish Regional government. Specifically, in disputed territories such as Nineveh, Assyrians directed protests against the Kurdish Regional Government slightly more than the central Iraqi state. The case study analysis provides support for theory on how territorial autonomy arrangements, while they may advance access to power for regional majority groups, may simultaneously increase grievances and conflict outcomes for ethnic minorities within them.

1.1 Introduction

What are the consequences of regional autonomy on the ethnic minorities within regions? Countries struggling with ethnic conflict sometimes grant territorial autonomy to regionally concentrated minority groups: by allowing ethnic minorities to govern over their own territory ethnic minorities may be less likely to initiate a war against the state. However, almost every region with some degree of territorial autonomy has regional ethnic minority groups not formally recognized or empowered. How does the introduction of autonomy arrangements shape conflict outcomes between ethnic minorities with autonomy status and ethnic minorities excluded from autonomy arrangements?

Current literature rarely understands conflict outcomes from the perspective of local ethnic minority groups. On one hand, most of the research on the implications of autonomy arrangements focus on the impact of territorial autonomy on dynamics between regions within a given country or between the regional and central governments. In this stream of work, the discussion of local ethnic minorities within regions remains almost absent as scholars are mostly interested in whether territorial autonomy protects the integrity of the national state. On the other hand, research on the factors that influence conflict outcomes *within* regions has yet to parse out local ethnic groups as agents of conflict. While we may know some conditions that may increase the likelihood of ethnic conflict within local societies, we still do not know enough about which types of ethnic groups engage in these conflict outcomes.

I address this gap by discussing how territorial autonomy arrangements may increase ethnic conflict by local ethnic minority groups. This theory presumes that ethnic minorities at the subnational level (i.e. states, provinces, regions, etc.) may be excluded from national governing institutions in systems with and without autonomy arrangements as they remain distinct from the national government through distance and ideology (Tranchant 57). However, the introduction of autonomy arrangements at the subnational level may increase the marginalization of local ethnic minorities within them in at least two ways. First, regional

ethnic minorities may be too small to challenge or constrain regional government authority. Second, the regional government may stand as a barrier for regional minorities seeking national-level policy changes since the preferences of local ethnic minorities within regions may be masked by the policy goals of the region's majority group. The marginalization of regional minorities within national *and* regional governments may increase grievances among regional ethnic minorities since they cannot rely on either government to respond to their concerns. These outcomes reduce the security of regional minority groups and may push demands for greater self-determination by ethnic group members.

To illustrate this theory, I develop a case-study analysis that traces how the development of autonomy arrangements in the 2005 constitutional design shaped ethnic protests by Assyrians in Iraq. Preceding the US intervention in Iraq in 2003, the central government of Iraq constituted the sole target of dissent by ethnic minority groups including the Assyrians. Since 2005, in addition to protesting the national government, Assyrians have mobilized in protests against their own the Kurdish Regional Government. Using evidence from semi-structured interviews with political elites and civilians from Assyrian and Kurdish communities in northern Iraq conducted over the course of two-week period in 2018, empirical reports from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (UNCIRF), the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), the Human Rights Watch (HRW), and the Assyrian Policy Institute (API), multiple scholarly work, and online media publications, I highlight the implications of the post-2005 institutional design on local ethnic grievances and ethnic protests by Assyrians in Iraq between 2005-2018.

The descriptive analysis generally shows that grievances within the Assyrian community have increased in Iraq since changes to Iraq's autonomy arrangements in 2005. The protests data reveal multiple important findings. First, protests by Assyrians against the central and regional governments underscore neither national or local governments have been successful in granting policy concessions for local ethnic minority groups in Iraq. Second, most protests by Assyrians against the regional and national governments center on issues of security and

political institutions including laws regarding the representation of ethnic minority groups and the management and outcomes of elections. Finally, more than half of all protests during this time period occurred within Nineveh, a governorate that remains disputed between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the central Government of Iraq. In addition, most protests in Nineveh, target the Kurdish Regional Government. This final point highlights possible consequences to territorial disputes between regional and central governments. Namely, the responsiveness to local minority communities when the local authority remains contested.

Overall, this analysis brings attention to the important nuances to the regional autonomy project. To date, most research on solutions to ethnic conflict typically focuses on the relations between regional majority groups and the central government. By focusing mainly on this dynamic, scholars leave out the ways in which institutions designed to appease ethnic conflict at the national level may shape internal conflict outcomes among local ethnic minorities. Ethnic conflict within autonomous territories in Northern Iraq reveals solutions to ethnic conflict at the national level, may have created conflict outcomes between groups in local Iraqi societies. By exploring the consequences of these institutions on regional ethnic minority groups, this paper adds to knowledge on potential issues that must be addressed when choosing institutions as means to resolve ethnic conflict. However, given the limitation to generalizability in case study research design, subsequent research must test whether autonomy arrangements increase protest outcomes across a greater number of local ethnic minority groups. I address this problem in chapter 2.

1.2 Territorial autonomy as a conflict management system

Research shows the most common type of civil conflict consists of ethnic groups fighting over “ethnonational self-determination” (Denny and Walter 17; Cederman et al. 11; Okamoto and Wilkes 45; Laitin et al. 41; Saideman et al. 51; Sambanis 52). These disputes include conflict

over “ethnic balance of power in government, ethnoregional autonomy, and ethnic and racial discrimination” (Denny and Walter 17, pg. 201). Scholars find that political grievances rooted in ethnic group exclusion and marginalization increase motives for ethnic conflict over self-determination (Cederman et al. 11; Saideman et al. 51). To address ethnic conflict, policymakers push for institutions that appease ethnic minority groups from seeking conflict over self-determination (Lijphart 43, 42; Horowitz 34, 33, 32).

Institutional reform aimed at managing ethnic conflict include territorial autonomy arrangements. Territorial arrangements enshrine notions of self-rule and shared-rule between an ethnically-distinct subnational territory (e.g. province, region, governorate, etc.) and the national government (Anderson 3; Hale 27; Elazar 19; Riker 47). The structure of territorial autonomy systems varies around the world. I focus on two types of institutional autonomy systems. These designs range from territorial autonomy granted to at least one ethnically-defined region to systems where the entire country is divided by ethnically-defined subunits. To highlight these differences, compare the territorial autonomy in Iraq and the Philippines with autonomy arrangements in Nigeria and India. In the former group of countries special regions are granted territorial autonomy while the rest of the country functions under the central state; whereas in the last two cases ethnically-defined territorial autonomy applies to the whole country. However, in both cases, autonomy arrangements are institutionally enshrined in each country’s constitution.

Research on territorial autonomy arrangements in divided societies debates whether territorial autonomy promotes long-term stability in countries with strong ethnic-sectarian cleavages (Marks et al. 44; Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino 2; Saideman et al. 51; Horowitz 32; Lijphart 42). On one hand, researchers argue territorial autonomy arrangements deepen ethnic cleavages within multi-ethnic societies and may pave the way for eventual ethnic group secession from the national state (Erk and Anderson 21). Ethnic groups with regional autonomy develop the administrative, social, and political capabilities to govern themselves, which may encourage ethnically-defined regions to seek independence (Anderson 3; Cornell 15).

On the other hand, research argues territorial autonomy arrangements may appease ethnically divided societies as long as autonomy institutions are complimented with institutions that produce cross-cutting cleavages among ethnic groups (Horowitz 32). Institutions that produce inter-group collaboration may encourage cooperation within the national state and decrease secessionist demands (Roeder and Rothchild 48). Thus, while there is some evidence to suggest that autonomy institutions may interfere with the integrity of the national state, proper institutions may curb these effects.

However, to what extent does territorial autonomy increase (or decrease) episodes of ethnic conflict that occur within autonomous regions? Scholars note the existing debate on territorial arrangements as a solution to ethnic conflict overlooks the notion that ethnically-defined regions have ethnic minorities of their own, and the creation of autonomy arrangements may create new problems for regional ethnic minority groups (Zanker et al. 61; Ferrer 22; Roeder and Rothchild 48; Horowitz 32). Data on ethnic autonomous regions suggest regional ethnic conflict by local ethnic minorities is not an uncommon phenomenon. The *Ethnic Regional Autonomies Database* (ERAD) developed by Borisova et al. [9] identifies 632 instances of regional ethnic conflict within autonomous regions across 34 countries between 2001-2015. In this sample, 117 incidents of regional ethnic conflicts (nearly 20%) involve conflict by the region's ethnic minority group. From this sample, 61% of regional ethnic minority conflict (71 incidents) center on disputes over autonomy and secession by regional ethnic minorities. In other words, when regional ethnic conflict occurs, at least 10% of the time it is about self-determination demands for the ethnic minority within the autonomous region. Still, what explains demands for autonomy by ethnic minorities at the sub-state level?

A potential explanation centers on the 'domino effect' hypothesis, where autonomy for one ethnic group encourages autonomy demands by other ethnic groups (Saideman 50). Looking at demands for self-determination by ethnic minority groups included in the *Minorities at Risk Project* (2009), Walter [60] finds ethnic groups increase their calls for autonomy if

they face a government that previously granted autonomy to another ethnic group. This result supports the idea that central governments that grant autonomy to one ethnic group may be more willing to increase territorial autonomy for non-autonomous ethnic groups. However, using data on ethnic groups from the *Ethnic Powers Relations* dataset, Forsberg [23] examines the relationship between granting territorial autonomy to one ethnic group and the onset of ethnic conflict by other ethnic groups and finds no evidence that the domino effect works within or between country borders. Still, the domino effect hypothesis overlooks subnational dynamics within regions that shape the likelihood of local ethnic conflict. In other words, it does not account for local conditions created by local authorities that trigger demands for self-determination by local ethnic minorities.

The limitations in existing literature stem from multiple reasons. First, scholars tend to view the efficacy of territorial autonomy from the position of regional majority groups or the central government. This framework allows researchers to presume homogeneity within autonomous regions in order to understand the policy implications of autonomy on national security. Second, the research that does consider subnational ethnic conflict does not distinguish between subnational ethnic groups. In other words, research on the conditions that increase or decrease the likelihood of local ethnic conflict occurring does not tell us which conditions increase (or decrease) local ethnic conflict by regional majorities or regional minorities. Presumably, conditions that motivate ethnic conflict by regional majority groups may be distinct from the factors that cause regional ethnic minorities to rebel. The following analysis builds on existing literature by highlighting the ethnic diversity that existing within autonomous regions and focusing on the consequences of autonomy systems from the perspective of local ethnic minorities that reside within them.

The answer to how institutions of territorial autonomy impact self-determination demands by local ethnic minorities highlights significant subtleties to the regional autonomy project. First, it raises questions about the extent in which autonomy arrangements act as conflict management tools. Concerns about the utility of territorial autonomy as a policy

solution to ethnic conflict increase if territorial autonomy that aims to bridge ethnic gaps between groups at the national level goes on to create ethnic tensions in local societies. Second, the marginalization of local ethnic minorities within autonomous regions may also lead to regional instability that may or may not go on to threaten conditions between regional and national governments. Ongoing regional conflict throughout Asia, Africa, and the Middle East provide examples of how local ethnic conflict between groups at the subnational level interferes with the relationship between the the national government and sub-state units. Finally, the marginalization of subnational ethnic minorities may exacerbate existing challenges for minorities-within-minority groups. Current research shows minorities-within-minority communities may consist of indigenous communities that face challenges to assimilation policies and oppression by local majority leaders. By empowering local majorities with autonomy authority, territorial autonomy systems may create an even more vulnerable situation for local ethnic minority groups.

Thus, this project's primary goal rest on improving information on how institutional design shapes outcomes for local ethnic minorities groups. By focusing on an indigenous group in Northern Iraq, I add to the literature that examines the relationship between regional autonomy and conflict by local indigenous groups already examined in countries such as Canada (Barter 7), India (Lacina 40; Singha 55, 54), and Indonesia (Barter 5, 6). My contribution fills a gap that exists in the application of this relationship to Middle Eastern countries and indigenous societies. A secondary benefit from this study depends on the extent in which this research produces solutions to the regional autonomy project for indigenous minority groups. To date, policy solutions to local ethnic conflict has yet to distinguish between indigenous and non-indigenous minority groups. I aim to highlight the distinction between these categories and the separate challenges they encounter in order to test to for solutions that may improve representation and access to government for indigenous ethnic minorities.

1.3 How might territorial autonomy increase local ethnic conflict?

Territorial self-government involves policies that grant some degree of autonomy to territorially concentrated minority groups within sub-state units (Anderson 2015; Elazar 1987; Riker 1964). Examples of territorial self-government generally fall into three categories. The first, federations, include a constitutionally protected system where the “entire territory of a state is divided into separate political units, all of which enjoy exclusive executive, legislative, and judicial powers independent of the central government” (Walsh 59, pg. 3). Examples of constitutionally-enshrined federations include the United States and India. The second category of territorial self-government, autonomy, includes systems that constitutionally enshrine territorial autonomy to specific sub-units. However, unlike federations, systems with autonomy arrangements do not guarantee territorial autonomy to all sub-state units. Examples of these systems include the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in southern Philippines and the Kurdistan Region in northern Iraq. Finally, decentralization involves the delegation of executive authority to local government offices that remain under the jurisdiction of the national state. In these cases, self-government is not constitutionally entrenched; instead, local autonomy is granted by the central government and can be rescinded at any time. The following theory focuses mainly on outcomes in which regional units possess some degree of constitutionally protected authority. Although in cases where there is a great deal of decentralization between national and local government offices, some of the issues raised in this theory may still apply. When referring to systems with autonomy arrangement, I mean political structures that grant territorial autonomy to at least one distinct ethnic region.

Incentives for ethnic conflict over self-determination by regional ethnic minorities may exist in systems without territorial autonomy arrangements. In systems without territorial autonomy arrangements regional ethnic minorities seek policy changes from the national government. However, as minorities within regions, regional ethnic minorities remain sep-

arated from the central government by large geographic or social distance and may be too small to become major members of political coalitions in power at the center (Tranchant 2016). It follows that national policies rarely reflect the interests of regional ethnic minority groups. Evidence shows when policies do not reflect the preferences of ethnic minorities and if ethnic minorities cannot use existing institutions to grant policy concessions from the state grievances against the central government may arise (Cederman et al. 2010; Horowitz 1985).

However, regional ethnic minorities within autonomous regions may become *additionally* marginalized under territorial autonomy arrangements. This marginalization stems from at least two reasons. First, by defining territorial autonomy by ethnic group boundaries, regional autonomy tends to empower regional ethnic majorities while leaving ethnic minorities within regions along the periphery of regional government interests. In other words, territorial autonomy arrangements tilt the balance of power at the local level towards regional majority elites. Inside autonomous regions, regional ethnic minorities may remain too small to influence regional-level policies on their own and regional majorities do not depend on local ethnic minorities to remain in power. These outcomes may suggest concerns of the regional ethnic minorities may not be reflected in regional policies *in addition to* their marginalization from national-level policies. Second, territorial autonomy creates an additional barrier for policymaking for regional ethnic minorities. As distinct ethnic groups, local ethnic minorities seek policy changes for their ethnic group from the national and regional governments. In some outcomes, local ethnic minority preferences may not be visible to the national government as they are masked underneath the policy preferences of the region's majority ethnic group. In other cases, local ethnic minorities may simultaneously challenge the national and regional governments for distinct policies compromises. Further, since local ethnic minorities reside within the regional government's authority, policy concessions for local ethnic minorities from the national government may involve of the regional government. In these situations, local ethnic minorities may not be able to seek national level policy independent from the regional government's interests.

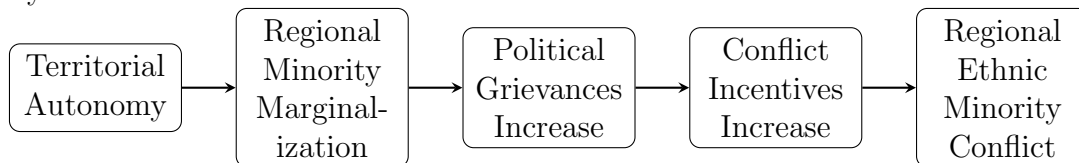
Although regional ethnic minorities in autonomous units may get more representation at the regional level than in national level politics, this representation may not translate to policy concession for local ethnic minority groups. For instance, an ethnic group may comprise 1% of the national population, and at the regional level the population of a concentrated minority groups may increase to 5% of the regional population. This increase in representation at the regional level corresponds with the logic behind the regional autonomy project: territorial autonomy brings the center of policymaking closer to regional groups. However, current research shows that descriptive representation for ethnic minority groups may not translate into policy responsiveness and may not deter conflict incentives for ethnic minority groups (Hänni 31). Even though regional autonomy may increase the representation of local ethnic minority groups, I still expect regional ethnic minorities to remain powerless within autonomous governments given they remain a minority within a regional majority ethnic group. Thus, I expect regional ethnic minorities to develop grievances that increase their motivations to initiate ethnic conflict despite the increase in their representation in local-level societies.

The marginalization of local ethnic minorities within autonomous units may increase grievances between regional groups resulting from discrepancies in public goods and services at the regional level. For instance, within autonomous regions, regional majorities control public resources and the ways in which goods and services distribute throughout the region. Since ethnic groups tend to target co-ethnics as recipients of local resources, ethnic minorities within autonomous regions may not be primary recipients of public services including education, garbage collection, and electricity and may be excluded from public sector employment. Regional ethnic minorities within autonomous regions may develop grievances against the regional government for exclusion of public resources. Thus, the creation of a regional government controlled by a distinct ethnic group may produce criticism among regional ethnic minorities that would otherwise not exist. In countries without autonomy arrangements, grievances over local issues are taken up with the central government; in coun-

tries with territorial autonomy systems, local ethnic minorities direct grievances toward the regional government.

Political science research finds ethnic groups excluded from government are more likely to initiate conflict over ethnic discrimination, balance of power, and self-government (Cederman et al. 2010). When ethnic groups recognize a discrepancy between what they are meant to receive and what they actually receive they may seek new institutions that address the needs of their own ethnic group (Gurr 26). Presumably, local ethnic minorities may develop incentives for conflict after their expected outcome - that autonomy arrangements may improve government responsiveness by bringing the level of government closer to their populations - clashes with the actual outcome of continued marginalization and exclusion. The motive for conflict stems from the inability to use existing institutions to achieve policy concessions (Cohen 14). As the local authority increases for the regional majority group, the desire for excluded groups to seek their own forms of self-determination may also increase, creating conditions for ethnic conflict. Figure 1.1 presents a chart that outlines the key pillars of this theory.

Figure 1.1: Theoretical Flow Chart: How Territorial Autonomy Increases Regional Ethnic Minority Conflict



Ethnic conflict manifests in multiple ways. Violent forms of ethnic conflict include civil wars where armed ethnic groups challenge their government usually over territory or existing political institutions. Other forms of violent conflict include inter-group rebellion between at least two distinct ethnic groups. These conflicts include sons-of-the-soil wars over demographic shifts in minority-based populations and communal warfare between militarized groups and civilians as in pogroms (Laitin 2007). Most forms of violent ethnic conflict typically result in a significant number of battle deaths and fatalities and may include severe

devastation or destruction in the areas in which the violence took place. A great deal of research exists on the conditions under which self-determination movements erupt in violent ethnic conflict, yet some scholars find that non-violent strategies may be a successful means for social change (Chenoweth et al. 13).

This research focuses on ethnic conflict as non-violent strategies for change. Examples of non-violent ethnic conflict include mass protests and demonstrations, hunger strikes, sit-ins, traffic and labor disrupts, etc. Some researchers argue these methods remain effective in undermining the legitimacy of the state and producing social benefits to dissenters (Chenoweth and Cunningham 12). Additionally, smaller ethnic groups tend to choose non-violent means of ethnic conflict over more violent outcomes like civil war (Cunningham 16). Presumably, the geographic size and concentration of local ethnic minorities may make non-violent means more attractive than violent approaches. Thus, I explore how autonomy arrangements increase motives for non-violent ethnic conflict among local ethnic minority groups. Future research should parse out the conditions under which local ethnic minority groups choose violent over non-violent paths to social change.

1.4 Empirical approach: research design, data collection, and positionality

1.4.1 *Research Design*

I developed the theory inductively based on observations with Assyrians in northern Iraq in July 2017. I then use descriptive information and ethnographic work to evaluate the theory against evidence in another case. This second case includes local ethnic dissent by Assyrians prior to the 2005 autonomy arrangements in Northern Iraq. In case study analyses, scholars often interlace theory development and theory testing goals, like the aims of this current project. By evaluating the expected outcomes (local ethnic protests) across two time periods in which the value of the independent variable (autonomy arrangements) is zero (non-existent) and one (existent), I am able to gain scientific leverage over whether the

outcomes result based on the theorized conditions (Schwartz 53, pg. 117).

The methodology and case selection offer multiple advantages. First, case study analysis produces descriptive analytical knowledge about how processes work on a minute level, which can inform additional research on generalized trends across a larger population. The focus on subnational ethnic minorities residing within autonomous and non-autonomous systems may highlight important nuances to the autonomy project from communities that remain excluded from power at the regional and national levels. This information can motivate research on whether other subnational ethnic minorities face similar challenges and potential solutions to power-sharing within local governments. Second, qualitative evidence from semi-structured interviews provides data on subjective interpretations not easily conveyed or operationalized in larger studies. The use of ethnographic information on one's ideas, preferences, and values reveals how individuals assign meaning to institutions that shape power (Schwartz 53, pg. 118). This information may provide clues to potential variables that may otherwise be overlooked.

Studying local ethnic dissent after the implementation of autonomy arrangements in northern Iraq is a particularly useful case for studying the consequences of autonomy systems within local communities. Northern Iraq remains one of the most ethnically diverse regions in all of Iraq. The region includes the governorates of Nineveh, Kirkuk, Duhok, Arbil, Sulaymaniah, and Diayala, ethnic groups such as the Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen, Assyrians, Armenians, and Yezidis, and Muslims and Christians from various sectarian groups. Although the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) officially consists of three governorates in northern Iraq, Arbil, Duhok and Sulaymania, the predominance of Kurdish people throughout the northern region often leads to the conflation of "northern Iraq" with the "Kurdistan Region of Iraq". Nonetheless, the regional diversity underscores the problem of treating autonomous regions as homogenous units. Despite the Kurdish majority throughout the region, the regional government remains responsible to multiple local ethnic minorities. This context allows us to study the implications of autonomy arrangements on local ethnic conflict processes among

non-autonomous ethnic minority groups.

The study of local ethnic dissent under autonomy arrangements in northern Iraq also presents challenges for my theory. For instance, the post-2005 constitutional design aligned with the development of democratic institutions in Iraq that tolerated dissent and protests more than the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein. The ability to mobilize under notions of democracy may partially explain the presences of ethnic protests in the post-2005 political context in Iraq. Second, although the 2005 constitution was the first constitution of Iraq to grant authority to the Kurdistan Regional Government, notions of autonomy previously existed throughout the region in various forms. The constitutional amendments in 1970 granted language rights to the Kurdish people and after 1990 until the 2003 US invasion, between one US intervention and another, the Kurdish people governed mostly autonomously from the central government of Iraq. Although the previous version of territorial authority was not protected by the constitution at that time it does highlight the challenge in that evaluating the presence of autonomy arrangements may not be as clear as one expects. Third, the territorial dispute in northern Iraq between the Kurdish Regional Government and the national government may explain grievances among local ethnic minorities in those areas. The expressed dissent in this study may be a method to raise attention to specific governments about local ethnic issues, contest a government over the handling of local ethnic issues, or both. This context may produce some degree of skepticism about which factors shape local ethnic grievances and protests within disputed territories.

Still, the study of ethnic protests in northern Iraq provides a unique opportunity to evaluate how the experience of territorial autonomy affects local ethnic minorities within them. This knowledge expressed here builds on existing research that explores additional challenges to local ethnic minorities including resistance to regional-level assimilation policies (Barter 2018), local demographic population shifts (Singha 2018), and exclusion from local power-sharing agreements (Elfversson and Sjögren 20) and local fiscal policy decision-making (Tranchant 57). The theoretical contribution allows researchers to inform policymakers

about potential consequences of autonomy as an institutional design that brings forth peace.

1.4.2 *Data collection*

My first round of ethnographic work in northern Iraq took place in July 2017. During this time, I witnessed ethnic protests by the Assyrians who reside in the pocket community of the Nineveh Plain. These protests occurred over the replacement of an elected Assyrian mayor from a predominantly Assyrian village in Nineveh with a representative of a Kurdish political party. This outcome illustrated the problem of regional autonomy arrangements from the perspective of smaller minority groups. Generally, regions with some degree of territorial autonomy have regional ethnic minorities of their own not formally represented or empowered. Do these institutions improve or complicate access to power for local ethnic minorities? Can they explain motions for self-determination by excluded minority groups? I returned to northern Iraq for my second round of ethnographic work in March 2018 to gather data to help answer these questions.

My second round of ethnographic work in northern Iraq occurred over the course of two weeks in March 2018. I collected nearly 10 hours of evidence from semi-structured interviews with elites and civilians from Kurdish and Assyrian communities from two districts: Erbil and Duhok. Both districts reside within the official borders of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and remain the two districts within the KRI to include a significant proportion of the Assyrian population. Current population estimates find approximately 85% of Assyrians reside in the northern Iraq region and nearly half of them live in the two districts where this research took place.¹

I used the snowball sampling methods to gather subjects for my interviews. My background as a second-generation Iraqi-Assyrian-American grants me access to the Assyrian community in Iraq and those residing in the diaspora. At first, I reached out to academics, researchers, and multiple non-for-profit organizations with contacts in Iraq to get a list of

¹<https://www.shlama.org/population>

potential interview subjects. I also used my contacts from my first round of ethnographic work to gather a list of individuals I could meet during the 10 days of fieldwork research between March 19-29, 2018. The final sample of interview subjects includes Assyrian activists, political representatives, civilians, and academics as well as Kurdish civilians and political elites. See Table 1.1 for more information on the interview location, data, and interview subjects.

Table 1.1: Description of Interview Subjects in Iraq, March 2018

	Date	Location	Position	Ethnicity	Age Range
1	3-20-2018	Arbil, Iraq	Member of Parliament in KRG	Assyrian	50-55
2	3-20-2018	Arbil, Iraq	Political Activist and Journalist	Assyrian	25-30
3	3-20-2018	Arbil, Iraq	Civilian	Assyrian	25-30
4	3-21-2018	Arbil, Iraq	Professor of Law, PhD	Assyrian	50-55
5	3-25-2018	Arbil, Iraq	Member of Parliament in Iraq	Assyrian	45-50
6	3-26-2018	Arbil, Iraq	Civilian	Kurdish	25-30
7	3-27-2018	Arbil, Iraq	Director of KDP office in Ankawa	Assyrian	30-35
8	3-28-2018	Arbil, Iraq	Political Representative for KDP, PhD	Kurdish	40-45

I also used desk research methods to gather additional qualitative, descriptive evidence. These sources include scholarly work, online magazine and newspaper articles, online archival material, as well as published reports and data available from various policy agencies including the United Nations Commission on International Religious Freedom (UNCIRF), Assyrian Policy Institute (API), and Human Rights Watch (HRW). I rely on 19 sources for data on ethnic protests. I present the total list of sources in Table 1.2. The collection of primary and secondary sources allows me to illustrate how post-2005 institutional design in Iraq, specifically territorial autonomy arrangements put in place following the 2003 US intervention, shaped ethnic grievances that have motivated ethnic protests by Assyrians in Northern Iraq.

1.4.3 *Positionality and Bias*

My positionality as a second-generation Iraqi-Assyrian-American from northern Iraq may create some biases in the data. Interview subjects may have been more comfortable to share their experiences with me as someone who understands their culture, speaks their language,

Table 1.2: List of Data Sources Used to Collect Protest Data

Source Name
1001 Iraqi Thoughts
Abouna
Al Jazeera
Al Maghrib Today
Al Monitor
Assyrian International News Agency
Assyrian Policy Institute
Christian Today
Embassy of Japan in Iraq
Foreign Policy Journal
Human Rights Watch
National Catholic Reporter
Radio Free Europe
Reuters
Rudaw
The American Academic Research Institute in Iraq
The New York Times
United States Commission on International Religious Freedom
Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

and has ancestral ties to the area. In addition, some subjects may have viewed the purpose of my research as part of humanitarian program rather than academic work. To address these issues I gathered the consent to participate in the semi-structured interview from each of my subjects and emphasized the purpose of the interview as a contribution to scholarly research. I also took a number of precautions to prevent any biased perceptions of me including hiring my own driver, never discussing my own views on domestic politics in Iraq especially issues impacting the Assyrian community, and never wearing clothing with affiliations of NGOs or other companies. Although not perfect, these methods aimed to send a signal of discretion, neutrality, and professionalism.

1.5 How did territorial autonomy post-2005 in Iraq change ethnic group dissent within local communities?

The remaining sections of this paper illustrate how Kurdish regional autonomy in northern Iraq increased ethnic conflict among the Assyrian minority group. As stated above, political scientists define ethnic conflict as disputes over “ethnic balance of power in government, ethnoregional autonomy, and ethnic and racial discrimination” (Denny and Walter 17, pg. 201). I apply this definition of ethnic conflict to explain conflict by Assyrians in northern Iraq. Specifically, ethnic conflict among Assyrian constitutes cases in which Assyrians advanced disputes over ethnic power imbalances, self-governing rights, and ethnic discrimination. I focus on non-violent methods of ethnic conflict including ethnic protests.

First, I provide the historical background of Assyrians in Iraq to situate their place in the current context of this study. Next, I describe ethnic minority dissent in the pre-2005 period. During this time period, non-Arab minorities in Iraq posed a threat to the Arabization policies set by Saddam Hussein’s Ba’ath regime. Some evidence shows that minority groups worked alongside each other to challenge the dictator’s policies and enhance their ethnic and cultural rights as distinct ethnic groups in Iraq. In other words, prior to the constitutional change in 2005, the Iraqi government served as the main center of ethnic group disputes in Iraq. I then explain how the 2005 constitutional design codified the regional authority of the Kurdish majority in northern Iraq, without granting specific laws that protect the self-governing rights of any other ethnic minority group, include the Assyrians. I demonstrate how Kurdish regional autonomy after 2005 shifted the balance of power between the Kurdish majority and the region’s local Assyrian minority. I explain how following the 2005 intervention, Assyrians became politically powerless and developed political grievances against the central *and* regional governments. I examine 28 instances and causes of ethnic protests by Assyrians between 2005-2018 and corroborate the analysis using quotes from interviews with representatives from Iraq’s Assyrian and Kurdish communities.

1.5.1 *Local Ethnic Minorities: Who are the Assyrians of Iraq?*

Assyrians are the descendants of the ancient civilization of Assyria. They are indigenous to the region of upper Mesopotamia, which consists of modern-day northern Iraq, southeast Turkey, northeast Syria, and northwest Iran (Donabed 18). By the 3rd Century AD, Assyrians had converted to Eastern Christianity and developed the Church of the East in Mesopotamia (Parpola 46). They are sometimes referred to by their sectarian nomenclature including “Chaldean” or “Syriac” although they belong to the same ethnic lineage. The end of World War I and the emergence of the Iraqi state ran parallel with episodes of genocide and violence against the Assyrians as a predominately Christian community in the majority Islamic Middle East region (Khosroeva 38; Travis 58).² Today, Assyrians constitute the second-largest non-Arab ethnic group in Iraq, after the Kurdish minority.³ They maintain their own shared experiences, culture, language, and religion (Khan 37). While a significant proportion of Assyrians continues to exist in Nineveh, many Assyrians can be found in cities and villages within Arbil, Duhok, and Baghdad.

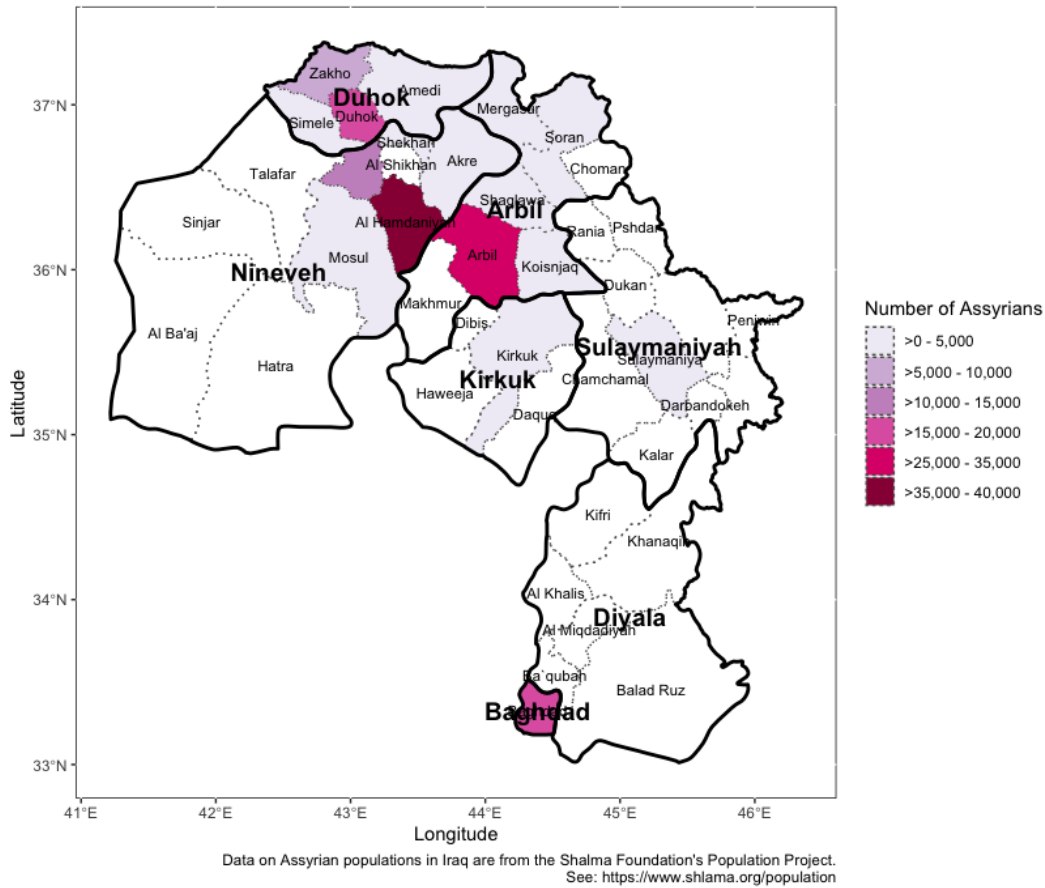
The past two decades wreaked havoc on the population of Assyrians in Iraq. Population estimate before the 2003 US-led war in Iraq shows Assyrians comprised of 1.5 million people in Iraq (roughly 5% of Iraq’s national population at that time). However, current estimates find the 2003 war in Iraq and subsequent invasion of the Islamic State in Nineveh in 2014 reduced the population of Assyrians to nearly 10% of what it was before 2003 (Smith and Shadarevian 56; Abdel-Razek and Puttick 1). The best estimates of Assyrian populations come from the *Shlama Foundation’s Population Project*, which conducts on-the-ground census research

²The Assyrians considered themselves allies to the British. Many Assyrians that lived in Assyrian-dominated areas in southeast Turkey became refugees in British-mandated Iraq during the Ottoman Empire’s genocide against Christian communities include Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks. The British Empire aimed to protect the displaced Assyrians by offering them housing and employment within the British military (Isakhan et al. 35). The British mandate in Iraq ended in 1932 leaving Assyrians vulnerable to attacks by those who considered Assyrians as a threat to Iraq’s independence given were protected by the British Empire throughout the British mandate.

³Iraq’s acknowledgement of Assyrians as a national minority in Iraq dates back to 1971 when the Revolutionary Command granted Assyrians the rights to teach their own language and experience their cultural values in areas where they were concentrated Donabed 18.

for the remaining Assyrian populations. Today, *Shlama* estimates there are approximately 140,000 Assyrians left in Iraq, making them less than 1% of the Iraq's total population. Figure 1.2 displays the distribution of the Assyrian population in Iraq based on current estimates.⁴ The geographic illustration focuses on areas in Northern Iraq and Baghdad, where Assyrian communities still reside. The loss of Assyrians from their native lands in Iraq emphasizes the need to study the role institutions in Iraq played in increasing the insecurity of Assyrians.

Figure 1.2: Distribution of Assyrian Population Based on 2021 Population Estimates
 Distribution of Assyrian Populations in Northern Iraq (2021)



⁴Note. The population of Assyrians drastically shifted following the 2003 US intervention in Iraq. Although current estimates may differ from the size of the Assyrian population during this study's time period, the distribution of Assyrians in Iraq remains relatively the same. Meaning, there are fewer Assyrians in each location, but the proportion of Assyrians across existing in areas such as Baghdad, Nineveh, Arbil, and Duhok remain the similar.

1.5.2 *Pre-2005 autonomy arrangements and local ethnic minority dissent in Northern Iraq*

What was dissent like for Assyrian's in Iraq before the 2005 constitutional design change? The relations between regional-level groups in Iraq post 2005 cannot be explained without first considering what conditions were like for ethnic groups before the US intervention in Iraq in 2003. The challenge becomes choosing the appropriate time period. Iraq experienced several changes to its political structure throughout its history and each change produced its own set of consequences for Iraq's communities. Typically, scholars view the modern state of Iraq beginning after the end of the First World War (Isakhan et al. 35). This period marked the end of the Ottoman Empire's control over the territories that formed the Iraqi state. Throughout the following decades and leading up to the 2003 Iraq war, the Iraqi state governed as a monarchy (1925-1958), a republic (1958-1968), and a single-party government (1968-2003).

Given this paper focuses on territorial autonomy arrangements in northern Iraq after 2005, it would seem appropriate to compare this time period with a time period where territorial autonomy in northern Iraq did not exist. However, the autonomy status of Iraq's ethnic minority groups varied throughout Iraq's ancient and modern history. Prior to the formation of the Iraqi state, local tribal leaders from ethnic minority communities including the Kurds, Assyrians, and Yezidis enjoyed some degree of autonomy under the Ottoman Empire's decentralized governance. Iraq's 1925 constitution created a centralized government under the Kingdom of Iraq and overlooked rights for autonomy by minority groups to create a national Iraqi identity. This constitution was replaced after the July 14th Revolution in 1958, which abolished the monarchy and created the Republic of Iraq. The following decade witnessed a series of government overthrows and several provisional constitutions until 1970. The New Interim Constitution of 1970 emerged out of a peace agreement between the Iraqi government and the Kurdish minority following the cessation of the first Iraqi-Kurdish civil war. This constitution was the first constitution in Iraq's modern history to acknowledge the

Kurdish nationality and language. Some scholars suggest this legislation essentially paved the way for *de facto* Kurdish regional autonomy following Saddam Hussein's withdrawal from the Kurdistan region in 1991 (Romano 49). Afterwards, the Kurds possessed some degree of territorial autonomy even though the constitution did not grant this authority. In 1992, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq held its first election for a Kurdish leader and 105 regional parliamentary seats. These elections took place despite Baghdad's attempts to disrupt voting through increased military presence along the Kurdish border (Gunes 25). Thus, throughout the second half of the 20th century autonomy arrangements varied in type and implementation making the decision of what does and does not constitute territorial autonomy difficult.

Nonetheless, I select the time period in which the Ba'ath party ruled Iraq (1968-2003) to compare with the post-2005 constitutional design. I choose this time period for three reasons. First, while Iraq experienced multiple episodes of regime change, the period after the rise of the Ba'ath political party provided some regime stability and durability in Iraq. The security of the Ba'ath regime suggests that outcomes of dissent during this time period may not be attributed to the regime volatility. Second, like the 2005-2018, this period experienced several incidences of civil war and state-sponsored violence making it as a tumultuous period as that following the 2005 regime change. Examples of violence in Iraq history at this time include the mass expulsion of Shiite Arabas between 1969-1971, the armed autonomous movements involving Kurdish and Assyrian minorities in 1974-1975, Iraq's border clearings of Kurdish and Assyrian communities in 1977-1978, the Anfal genocide against Kurds, Assyrians and Yezidis between 1987-1988, and the Shiite massacres of 1991 (Donabed 18, pg. 223). Third, this period also marks a time when the constitution of Iraq lacked constitutionally enshrined autonomy laws. While the Kurds obtained some advantages to social and cultural rights through established institutions, and enjoyed some semblance of self-rule after the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from the Kurdistan region, prescribed autonomy arrangements that protected their autonomy rights were absent from Iraq's constitution.

Scholars that define the constitutional component for regional autonomy may likely support this position (Elazar 19). Overall, these conditions during the pre-2003 context relate to the post-2005 period in terms of regime stability and domestic violence but differ on the notions of territorial autonomy arrangements in Iraq. Although not perfect, this design allows for some comparison between two different time periods based on the presence or absence of constitutionally-enshrined regional autonomy.

During this time period I focus on two events. The first, is the repression of non-Arab ethnic groups under the Ba'ath regime. These policies threatened the existence of ethnic minority groups, including the Kurds and Assyrians. The Ba'ath party under Saddam Hussein aimed to create a pan-Arab region across the Middle East and forced assimilation policies upon ethnic minorities. In other words, in the period preceding the 2003 intervention ethnic minority groups in Iraq were generally targeted for their cultural and ethnic expressions by the central government. This event provides a period in which the Kurds and Assyrians were considered threats to the state and, together, became targets of state oppression policies. The second event focuses on the armed autonomy movements by the Kurds and Assyrians against the central government in Iraq. Together, Assyrians and Kurds believed in autonomy rights for their ethnic communities. Some evidence shows that during this time period, the two ethnic groups worked along side each other to secure greater self-determination rights. This event shows how, during a time period where both ethnic groups were targets of state-based violence and oppression, the two groups collaborated on the notion of autonomy policies. While the Kurds eventually obtained *de facto* autonomy in 1991 and constitutionally enshrined autonomy in 2005, the Assyrians remained excluded from autonomy arrangement policies. Thus, these two events offer some insight into a period when the central government of Iraq stood as the main target of dissent by Assyrians and Kurds and, during this time, the two ethnic minorities jointly pushed for greater autonomy from the central state.

Ethnic cleansing policies against the Kurds and Assyrians become a common practice by the Iraqi regime. In the border clearings of 1977-1978, the Iraqi government purged the

northern region along the borders of Turkey and Iran of Kurdish and Assyrian communities (Black 8). Nearly eighty villages, twenty of them Assyrian villages, were decimated (Donabed 18, pg. 178). The border clearings resulted from Iraq's fear that Iran would continue to provide support to the Kurdish uprising in Iraq. The regime's decision to indiscriminately obliterate the northern region caused massive displacement of Kurdish and Assyrian people and resentment by these groups towards the Iraqi government. The attempt to eradicate Iraq of Kurdish and Assyrian communities continued during the Anfal genocidal campaign between 1987-1988. While this genocide is largely considered a genocide against the Kurdish communities, historians document that victims of this genocide included ethnic minorities such as Assyrians and Yezidis (Donabed 18; Hanish 28; Travis 58). One historian writes,

“There were a reported 150 Assyrian Christian and Yezidi disappearances in seven villages during the Final Anfal...In a January 2003 report, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the International Alliance for Justice (AIJ) included in their statistics a record of 115 Assyrians who disappeared in August 1988...Many Assyrian and Kurdish villages were destroyed beginning in 1987, using various tactics including air raids and napalm attacks, and even more met with forced evacuation during the period. The Ba'th schema of the Anfal operation destroyed more than eighty Assyrian villages during this period and displaced thousands of families from their ancestral lands” (Donabed 18, pg. 200-202).

The notion that Assyrians and Kurds were both victims of Iraq's genocidal campaign echoed during one of my interviews with a representative from the Kurdistan Democratic Party, who stated,

“If we, as Kurds lose, the Assyrians will lose, the Christians will lose. Just remember 1988. The Anfal. Was it just against the Kurds or was it against Assyrians, Christians, everyone? They wanted to let us go as a whole and to bring a system of Arabization.”⁵

The evidence above demonstrates how, during the pre-2003 period, Assyrians and Kurds were targets of ethnic-based oppression by the central government of Iraq. The Ba'ath regime aimed to minimize the expression of non-Arab communities, which resulted in the decimation and destruction of Assyrian and Kurdish communities throughout the northern Iraqi region. Some evidence shows how Assyrians and Kurds considered themselves as victims that suffered

⁵Interview 8, Arbil, March 28, 2018.

similar outcomes. Thus, this period represents a time when the Iraqi government remained the sole perpetrator of ethnic group repression and the target of ethnic group dissent.

At the same time, historical reports suggest Assyrians supported the Kurdish autonomy project in hopes that the advancement of Kurdish rights would progress the rights of Assyrians. Two incidents in particular highlight this claim. First, when the Iraqi government granted some semblance of Kurdish self-governing rights in the 1970 constitutional amendment, Assyrians petitioned for their own autonomy within the governorate of Duhok. The movement provided some progress for cultural rights for Assyrians through the passage of decree 251 in 1971, which granted Syriac-speaking people the cultural autonomy to teach, speak, and write in their own language (Kassem and Jackson 36). Assyrians also indirectly benefited from the changes to self-governing status of the Kurds in 1970 when, attentive of Assyrian-Kurdish relations, the Iraqi government invited the exiled Patriarch of the Church of the East to Iraq to address existing grievances (Donabed 18, pg. 169). These attempts by the Iraqi government may be considered as an attempt to appease the growing tensions by Assyrians against the Iraq government and breakup the Assyrian-Kurdish relations at that time.

In addition to building on the momentum of Kurdish self-governing progress, evidence shows that Assyrians were ready to support the armed autonomous movement for Iraqi Kurdistan. For instance, the ability to raise financial support from foreign donors by the Kurdistan Democratic Party in northern Iraq incentivized Assyrians to form a closer relationship with Kurdish political leaders. Also, the Assyrian-Kurdish relations at that time aided in the formation of a sub-committee within the Kurdish paramilitary organization led by an Assyrian community member. This appointment helped channel aid and financial support to Assyrians in need throughout northern Iraq. Finally, one of my interview subjects, an Assyrian member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, reiterated the sentiment that Assyrians and Kurds pushed for Kurdish autonomy in northern Iraq by claiming the major Assyrian political party at that time, the Assyrian Democratic Movement, worked to secure

the autonomy rights for the Kurdistan region:

“the Assyrian Democratic Movement supported autonomy for the Kurds. The leaders of the Assyrian political party agreed to the name the ‘Kurdistan Region of Iraq’ and supported the creation of Kurdish regional government. They participated in the first election in the KRG in 1991.”⁶

Although not complete, this section provides some insight into how Assyrians legitimized the movement for autonomy by the Kurdish community and, at times, attempted to gain their own self-governing rights through the advancement of Kurdish autonomy progress. The Assyrian-Kurdish relations during this time demonstrate a sense of collaboration between the two groups in order to combat the policies of ethnic repression by the Ba’ath regime. Thus, preceding the 2003 US intervention in Iraq, Assyrians largely targeted dissent toward the central government of Iraq and, in some cases, work along side the Kurdish minority to advance self-determination rights for their own communities. In the following sections, I demonstrate how the creation of constitutionally enshrined territorial autonomy in northern Iraq increased barriers to representation and created a more powerless Assyrian minority group. I also demonstrate how, in addition to the central government of Iraq, the Assyrians now also protest the Kurdish regional government despite instances of Assyrian-Kurdish alliances throughout the pre-2003 historical period.

1.5.3 Territorial autonomy arrangements in Iraq post-2005

Kurdish regional autonomy post-2005 is distinct from other forms of autonomy or self-determination held by the Kurdish community in previous years in Iraq. Following the removal of Saddam Hussein in 2003, institutions of pluralism became the solution to building national peace in Iraq (Hanish 29; Arato 4; Bremer 10). One of the primary concerns for policymakers was the threat of Kurdish secession. To appease the Kurdish minority in Iraq policymakers developed a federal system that devolved central authority to governorates and regions. Article 117 specifically recognizes the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) as a federal

⁶Interview 7, Arbil, March 27th, 2018.

region comprising of the governorates of Duhok, Arbil, Sulaymaniyah, Kirkuk, Diyala and Nineveh; although, Iraq has yet to formally recognize the latter three governments as territories under the Kurdish authority. The codification of regional autonomy within Iraq's federal framework and the explicit reference to Kurdish regional autonomy in the constitution preclude the national government from rescinding the Kurdish region's federal power.

This constitutional outcome changed the territorial organization and authority of subnational territories in Iraq post 2005. Further, it increased the power of the Kurdish minority in Iraq by explicitly referencing the Kurdish people, the territories in which they reside, and the powers of the regional government. The Iraqi constitution acknowledges Iraq's smaller minorities groups and their rights for self-determination within Iraq, but the procedures to implement these rights remain unanswered. Article 125 is the only article that explicitly refers to rights of Iraq's smaller minorities. This article guarantees "administrative, political, cultural, and educational rights for the various nationalities, such as Turkmen, Chaldeans, Assyrians, and all other components",⁷ but the constitution does not outline the process to design and enforce these rights. For ethnic minorities without territorial autonomy, the Kurdish regional government became instrumental in the design and implementation of Article 125.

1.5.4 *Powerless local ethnic minorities in Northern Iraq*

The KRG has taken several measures to protect its ethnic and religious minorities (Smith and Shadarevian 2017). For instance, the KRI constitution includes articles that protect rights of the region's smaller minorities.⁸ First, it recognizes other nationalities within the KRI including Turkomans, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Armenians, and Arabs, and considers these groups citizen of the Kurdistan Region (Article 6). Second, it guarantees the rights of the region's citizens to teach their children in their native language including Turkoman Syriac, and Armenian, and, third, it allows schools to teach these languages if these communities

⁷The Constitute Project: <https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iraq2005?lang=en>

⁸Penn State Law Review. Vol. 114, p. 707. (2009)

represent majorities within administrative units (Article 14). The KRG also mandates a quota seats for ethnic minorities within the KRI. Out of the 111 seats within the Iraqi Kurdistan Parliament, 11 seats are reserved for ethnoreligious minorities: 5 for the Assyrians, 5 for the Turkmen, and 1 for the Armenians (?). Finally, the KRG attempts to include ethnoreligious minorities in the decision-making process by providing ministerial positions within the KRG to representatives from ethnoreligious minority communities (Smith and Shadarevian 2017).

Nonetheless, concerns exist over the laws that aim to protect ethnic minorities within the KRI. For instance, the KRI constitution acknowledges the freedom of belief and religious practices of Christians, yet it guarantees the principles of Islamic Shari'a as the source of legislation within the region (Article 7). One interviewee claimed religious concerns remain a prominent issue for Assyrians in the KRI:

“When the Kurds have a law that is based on their Quran - Muslim man can marry a Christian woman; Muslim women cannot marry non-Muslim men; children of Muslim men are Muslim regardless if their other parent is non-Muslim - this is a problem.”

In addition, despite the constitutional draft discussing multiculturalism within the KRI, the same interviewee discussed their attitude toward Kurdish assimilation policies by the regional government:

“Why does the area have to be called Kurdish if the constitution draft shows the multiculturalism within the KRG?...When it comes to politics, the biggest problem is this...You feel like you don't have an identity as an Assyrian. You are Kurdistan. They won't tell you you are a Kurd because they know you are not, but they created a name for this region called Kurdistan which implies we are all Kurdish even if some are not...This is very smart strategy.”⁹

Further, the Kurdish regional majority all but monopolizes regional-level power. For instance, in the 2005 elections for Iraq's provincial councils, all 123 seats across three governorates in the KRI went to representative of Kurdish parties [39]. Members of the provincial councils maintain the power to determine provincial budget spending, approve local provincial projects, and oversee and propose enhancements to public goods and services. Provincial

⁹Interview 2, Arbil, March 20, 2018.

council leaders can also appoint and/or dismiss local municipality leaders including mayors and deputy mayors. The lack of representative from Assyrian or other ethnic minority communities implies that exclusion of these minorities with respect to decision-making policies at the governorate-level. In 2008, the Iraqi parliament voted to remove the section of the provincial electoral law (Article 50), which guaranteed representation for Iraq's ethno-religious minorities in Nineveh. The removal of this institution gained at most, 50 signatures of members of parliament in Iraq, suggesting that this law that provided guaranteed representation did not rally enough support from major parties to be reversed.

Further, the proportion of seats for ethno-religious minorities within the Iraqi Kurdistan Parliament (IKP) stands as a measure of the political power of Assyrians and other minorities within the KRI. The IKP seat quota for Assyrians reserves 5 out of 111 seats. Mathematically speaking, Assyrian political parties depend on Kurdish parties to influence policy at the regional level. With only 5 legislative seats, Assyrians cannot shape regional-level legislation without the support of the Kurdish majority. Further, the reserved parliamentary seats do not provide Assyrians with enough political clout to challenge legislation by Kurdish parties. Thus, the distribution of power between the Assyrians and Kurds within the KRI relegates Assyrians to a politically inferior ethnic group.

One interviewee emphasized the sentiment of inferiority among Assyrians by stating,

“As a nation we are not happy with the give and take with us...We feel there is a feeling of superiority...Those who are living with us, they feel as if though they are superior...They don't believe we are the indigenous people of this region...We should have our own rights and so we are just looking to reach that point...We work on removing the oppression placed on our nation.”¹⁰

At the national level, the preferences of Assyrians within the KRI are masked by the interests of the region's majority. For instance, in September 2017, the KRI conducted a region-wide referendum on the issues of independence from Iraq. Many Assyrians within the KRI boycotted this referendum. Statements from representatives of the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM), one of the oldest political parties that represents Assyrians in Iraq,

¹⁰Interview 1, Arbil, March 20, 2018.

suggested most Assyrian political parties opposed the regional referendum.¹¹ In recent years, Assyrians migrated to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq due to the invasion and occupation of ISIS in their home town. Holding a referendum while Assyrians remain displaced would be a misrepresentation of political interests at that time.¹² Although the Kurdish referendum on independent failed due to Baghdad's refusal to accept the voting outcome in support of Kurdish independence, the vote demonstrated how the interests of the Kurdish majority overshadowed the concerns of the Assyrians within the KRI.

Further evidence suggests the KRG influences policy decisions between the Assyrians and the national government. In June 2017, various organizations that represent Assyrians in Iraq met with representatives from the Kurdish political parties, Iraqi diplomats and European leaders met to discuss the issue of autonomy for Iraqi Assyrians. However, the ADM and other key Assyrian political parties, boycotted this meeting. According to objecting parties, this meeting interfered with ongoing legislation that approved a plan to establish three new provinces in Iraq, one of them the Nineveh Plain, which hosts the largest population of Assyrian in Iraq. Further, representatives from the ADM argued the June 2017 meeting designed territorial autonomy for Assyrians under the administration of KRG. ADM representatives claim goals for self-determination for Assyrians include independence from the KRG. Thus, the objection raised by the ADM against the international conference demonstrates how regional governments influence policy decisions between regional minorities and the central state.¹³

Overall, the evidence above demonstrates how Kurdish regional autonomy did not simultaneously increase access to power for the Assyrian minorities in northern Iraq. Instead, the establishment of autonomy arrangements throughout the region further added to notions of powerless and marginalization by the Assyrian community. This outcome results from the inability of Assyrians within the KRI to challenge or influence regional-level policy

¹¹Interview 5, Arbil, March 25, 2018.

¹²Interview 5, Arbil, March 25, 2018.

¹³Interview 5, Arbil, March 25, 2018.

on their own. Further their position as minorities within the Kurdish autonomous region limits the extent in which they reach policy concessions from the national government that speak to the interest of their own ethnic community. As minorities within minorities, the preferences of the regional majority group mask concerns of Assyrians. Without the support of major Kurdish parties, Assyrians cannot influence policy-making at national *or* regional levels of government. The power disparity between Assyrians and Kurds post-2005 may have increased political grievances by Assyrians against their own regional government.

1.5.5 *Ethnic Protests*

To capture the mobilization by Assyrians in Northern Iraq, I collect data on protests by Assyrians throughout Iraq using desk research methods. I consider a protest by Assyrian occurred if there was at least one person involved in expressing a dispute against the regional or national government. For example, the resignation of the Assyrian member of parliament in the Kurdistan Regional Government over the lack of security for Assyrian in the Nineveh Plain that resulted in the capturing the Assyrian villages by ISIS is considered an ethnic protest. I consider resignations, boycotts, petitions, sit-ins, traffic disruptions, and small to large demonstrations acts of protest. I only select acts of protest that center on ethnic disputes. These protest include Assyrian disputants and target the regional or national government on issues central to Assyrians. I gathered data on all protests I could identify between 2005-2018. Overall, I researched 28 protests by Assyrians that took place in the governorates of Arbil, Baghdad, Duhok, and Nineveh. Table 1.3 displays the complete data on ethnic protests by Assyrians in Iraq between 2005-2018. For each protest, I present the protest location (governorate-district), date, target, and issue category. A detailed explanation of each protest can be found in the Appendix. I provide summary tables on ethnic protests on protest location and category by protest target in Tables 1.4 and 1.5, respectively.

The summary data on Assyrian protests in Table 1.4 suggest Assyrian protests between 2005-2018 targeted the KRG just as much than they protest the Iraqi national government,

Table 1.3: List of Protest by Assyrians in Iraq, 2005-2018

	Governorate	District	Year	Month	Day	Protest Target	Protest Category
1	Arbil	Arbil	2014	7	24	Iraq, International Agencies	Security
2	Arbil	Arbil	2014	8	2	Iraq, International Agencies	Security
3	Arbil	Arbil	2014	8	14	Kurdish Regional Government	Security
4	Arbil	Arbil	2015	8	11	Kurdish Regional Government	Religious Discrimination
5	Arbil	Arbil	2015	10	9	Kurdish Regional Government	Economic Discrimination
6	Arbil	Arbil	2015	11	5	Iraq	Religious Discrimination
7	Arbil	Arbil	2016	4	13	Kurdish Regional Government	Demographic Change
8	Arbil	Arbil	2018	7	30	Kurdish Regional Government	Political Representation
9	Baghdad	Baghdad	2005	2	6	Kurdish Regional Government	Elections
10	Baghdad	Baghdad	2008	10	7	Iraq	Political Representation
11	Baghdad	Baghdad	2010	3	1	Iraq	Security
12	Baghdad	Baghdad	2015	10	27	Iraq	Religious Discrimination
13	Duhok	Duhok	2008	10	2	Iraq	Political Representation
14	Nineveh	Al Hamdaniyah	2005	2	1	Kurdish Regional Government	Elections
15	Nineveh	Al Hamdaniyah	2005	2	1	Kurdish Regional Government	Elections
16	Nineveh	Al Hamdaniyah	2005	2	1	Kurdish Regional Government	Elections
17	Nineveh	Al Hamdaniyah	2005	8	24	Iraq	Political Representation
18	Nineveh	Al Hamdaniyah	2008	11	21	Kurdish Regional Government	Demographic Change
19	Nineveh	Al Hamdaniyah	2010	2	28	Iraq	Security
20	Nineveh	Mosul	2010	2	28	Iraq	Security
21	Nineveh	Mosul	2010	11	3	Iraq	Security
22	Nineveh	Mosul	2018	8	2	Iraq	Demographic Change
23	Nineveh	Tel Afar	2005	2	1	Kurdish Regional Government	Elections
24	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2005	8	24	Iraq	Political Representation
25	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2008	9	29	Iraq	Political Representation
26	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2014	6	15	Kurdish Regional Government	Political Representation
27	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2017	7	20	Kurdish Regional Government	Political Representation
28	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2017	8	2	Kurdish Regional Government	Political Representation

Table 1.4: Summary of Ethnic Protest by Assyrians in Iraq by Protest Location and Protest Target, 2005-2018

Governorate	Protest Target			Total
	KRG	Iraq	Other	
Arbil	17.9%	3.6%	7.1%	28.6%
Baghdad	3.6%	10.7%	0.0%	14.3%
Duhok	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	3.6%
Nineveh	28.6%	25.0%	0.0%	53.6%
Total	50.0%	42.9%	7.1%	100.0%

and, in some areas, the KRG seems to be the main target of ethnic dissent. Out of the 28 protests I identified, 50% of protests exclusively target the KRG, approximately 43% target only the Iraqi government, and about 7% of protests target the international community *and* Iraqi government (i.e., protests outside the United Nations headquarters in Arbil, Iraq). These data reveal that in addition to protesting the national government, Assyrians face an additional challenger: the Kurdish Regional Government.

Table 1.5: Summary of Ethnic Protest by Assyrians in Iraq by Protest Category and Protest Target, 2005-2018

Protest Issue	Protest Target			Total
	KRG	Iraq	Other	
Demographic Change	7.1%	3.6%	0%	10.7%
Economic Discrimination	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%
Elections	17.9%	0.0%	0.0%	17.9%
Political Representation	14.3%	17.9%	0.0%	32.1%
Religious Discrimination	3.6%	7.1%	0.0%	10.7%
Security	3.6%	14.3%	7.1%	25.0%
Total	50.0%	42.9%	7.1%	100.0%

In the two districts with the highest concentration of Assyrians (Arbil and Al-Hamdaniyah) protests mostly target the KRG. For instance, in Arbil, 5 out of 8 protests (63%) were against the regional government. In Al-Hamdaniyah, 4 out of 6 protests (67%) targeted the KRG. In the Nineveh governorate, a disputed territory between Iraq and the Kurdish government, grievances seem to be the highest. Nearly 54% of the total protests in this sample occur in Nineveh alone and more than half (53%) of these protests target the KRG (8 out of the 15 protests in Nineveh are against the KRG).

Table 1.5 identifies six protest categories: demographic change, economic discrimination, elections, political representation, religious discrimination, and security. I collect information about each protest and place each protest in one of these five categories. The data in Table 1.5 reveals the most frequent protest issue centers on matters of political representation: 9 out of 28 protests (32%) center on matters of institutional policies about representation for Assyrians against the Kurdish or national governments in Iraq. Specifically, these protests occurred over disputes about the legislation interferes with their political representation in regional and national parliaments. An example includes the protests over the removal of Article 50 in Iraq's Election law, which guaranteed representation of Assyrians in Nineveh's provincial council. Another dispute over political representation centered on the removal of Assyrians mayors from Assyrian villages by the Kurdish Democratic Party, the party that governs over the KRG. A third example of protests over political representation

includes protest over restricting voting for minority quota seats to members of the minority groups. These protests occurred after representative from non-Assyrian parties were elected to serve as part of the minority quota in the regional and national governments, minimizing the voices of independent Assyrian communities.

Demonstrations over election fraud and irregularities remain a common point of contention among Assyrians in Iraq. Roughly 18% of all protests center on challenges to the conduct of elections and all of these disputes target the Kurdish Regional Government. A wave of protests occurred in 2005 over the mismanagement of electoral ballots in areas with a high concentration of Assyrian population in Northern Iraq. Evidence shows electoral ballots were not delivered to Assyrian villages surrounding Mosul, which deprived up to 200,000 Assyrians from casting their vote. This election was the first election for the National Assembly and Regional Parliament in Iraq after the constitutional design change in Iraq. The Kurdish Regional Government was administrative responsibility for delivering ballots to voters in Northern Iraq, including the area of the Nineveh Plain where Assyrians, Yazidis, and other ethno-religious minorities reside. The failure to deliver these ballots to these communities resulted repressed their voices in these elections, which triggered multiple protests in Baghdad and Nineveh.

In addition, demonstration over security consist of 25% of all protests in Table 1.5. More than half of these demonstrations were against the Iraqi government. This outcome may be explained by the ongoing violence against Assyrians in areas controlled by the Iraqi government including Baghdad and Nineveh, which experienced multiple waves of violence by Al-Qaeda in Iraq after 2005 and the Islamic State in 2014. Further, the infrequency of protests over security against the Kurdish Regional Government may suggest that Assyrians are safer within the KRG. This finding supports some of the comments I received during my interview with a representative of the Kurdish Democratic Party who claimed,

“Christians who were in Baghdad are now in Arbil...The Christians now want to leave [the Kurdistan Region of Iraq] because they are afraid of conflict between Iraq and Kurdistan and between Kurdistan’s political parties – they are afraid of civil war...The minorities want

a stable nation and there must not be conflict...If you think there could be some type of conflict it makes Christians feel like they should leave...The international community must support Kurdistan, the stability of Kurdistan, because it is the safe haven for Christians until now.”¹⁴

Overall, evidence on the instances of protests by Assyrians in Iraq reveal a few key findings. First, Assyrians mostly protest in Northern Iraq (86% of Assyrian protests take place outside of Baghdad). This outcome may be the result of at least two reasons. On one hand, there is a greater population of Assyrian in Northern Iraq, which provides a stronger opportunity to mobilize against the regional and national government. On another hand, the increase of state-based violence and terrorism in Baghdad may have led to a scarcity of protests by Assyrians, since they may be fearful of their lives if they were to stage large demonstrations. In addition to protesting mostly in Northern Iraq, these data reveal at least half of all protests target the KRG. Third, half of the Assyrian protests center on political issues including demonstrations over political representation and the elections. Further, when Assyrians protest over political concerns, most of these protest (64%) target the Kurdish Regional Government. Finally, when Assyrians protest over security, they tend to blame the Iraqi government for its failure to protect their communities.

The results presented in this section illustrate the presence of ethnic-based protests by Assyrian in northern Iraq against the central *and* regional government. It also highlights the scope of ethnic protests by identifying important issue categories that mobilized Assyrians between 2005-2018. In the following section, I provide additional qualitative evidence on grievances centering on concerns over political institutions, challenges to security, and objections to demographic shifts to corroborate the protest evidence presented above.

1.5.6 *Grievances against the regional government*

Until now, this paper demonstrates how the powerlessness of Assyrians within the KRI limits the extent in which they obtain policy concessions from national and regional governments.

¹⁴Interview 8, Arbil, March 27, 2018.

As a result, grievances by Assyrians against the governments that rule over them persist throughout most of the post-2005 time period. The protest data in the previous section highlight six important issue categories. In this section, I focus specifically on three: political institutions (including matters of representation and elections), security, and demographic changes to local populations in northern Iraq.

Institutional Concerns: Representation and Elections

Political grievances against issues of representation for Assyrian within the KRI persist throughout the northern region of Iraq. While Kurdish regional autonomy grants administrative independence between the regional government and the central state, within the KRI power is held in the hands of the regional government, rather than devolved into semi-autonomous, sub-regional units. For instance, the KRG maintains significant authority over the appointment of local council leaders within the region. As a result, matters of representation for Assyrians within the KRI include the KRGs ability to replace Assyrian-elected officials with Assyrian representatives loyal to the KRG's ruling party. For instance, in 2017 the KDP government-backed forces deposed an Assyrian elected official from Assyrian village of Alqosh in the Nineveh Plain. For years, local Assyrian contested the replacement of Faiez Abed Jahwareh (ADM) by Lara Yousif (Assyrian member of the KDP); however, the KRG largely ignored these claims. The decision to keep Yousif as the representative of Alqosh continued, as she served as the representative for Christians in northern Iraq on KRG's diplomatic missions to the United States.¹⁵

Interviewee subjects expressed the notion of Kurdish interference in the independent representation of Assyrians in the the regional and national government. One of my interview subjects, a Professor of Law and candidate for regional parliament, stated,

“There are two types of Assyrian political parties. One that listens and tries to work and the other that is fixed by another political party either the KDP or PUK so they do not

¹⁵Assyrian Policy Institute News Report: <https://www.assyrianpolicy.org/post/api-attends-hudson-institute-working-group-with-lara-yousif-zara>

work together, and there won't be a day where they will...Maybe on smaller issues they can, but on serious and important issues they will not agree because some of them are just under the arm of the other parties so I don't have hope for them. They are divided and I have little hope in them...It's like a game for the political parties in charge...If they want their way, they just pay them off and a lot of Assyrians are ready to say yes to Kurds for financial support. So, they are able to flip their seats to be controlled by Kurdish interests.”¹⁶

Another interview, a Member of the Iraqi National Parliament, restated this impression by expressing that,

“People support them [Kurdish parties] not because of their own free will but out of fear – ‘if you don't vote for us we will cut your salaries we will not offer you help’...They aren't people that work because they believe in the cause. They work because they want the money...Everything that's been done is being done because of money and fear.”¹⁷

As a result, Assyrians contest current electoral laws within the KRI regarding the voting procedures for minority quota seats within the IKP. In 2018, Assyrians proposed two changes to the current electoral law: (1) voting for minority quota seats be exclusive to voters of a minority background and (2) minority elections to be held separately from general elections.¹⁸ This amendment came after Assyrians accused powerful non-Assyrian parties of exploiting the quota system in the 2018 elections. Election results shows that the KDP captured two of the five quota seats reserved for Christians, and the Badr Organization, an Iranian-backed Arab group operating militarily and politically across Iraq, also secured two of the five seats. Amendments to the electoral law for minority seats improves representation for Assyrian minorities by guaranteeing members that serve are representatives of independent Assyrian parties. In sum, issues of political representation of Assyrians within the KRI remain contentious. Evidence suggests Assyrians lack the political power to challenge and enforce the appointment of representatives in Assyrian villages, even when the officials are chosen by elections. Regarding the process of representative appointments, one interviewee stated,

¹⁶Interview 4, Arbil, March 21, 2018.

¹⁷Interview 5, Arbil, March 25, 2018.

¹⁸The exact proposal for a separate election from the general election remains unclear. There is some reports provided by the *Assyrian Policy Institute (API)* that a separate election could mean distinct election ballots for constituents of ethno-religious communities to submit on the date of the general election, elections for ethno-religious seats occurring on a different day from the general election, or possibly both options.

“The way of administrating our villages is a wrong way and is a non-democratic way because it is appointment. Sometimes people of a village will say we don’t want this man but the KDP will say no, this one will be the mayor...They don’t do it officially. They choose that person undercover and they force you to have that person. Like what happened in Alqoosh...As long as he is loyal to KDP. The two non-Kurdish mayors in the village were recently replaced with KDP party members.”¹⁹

The evidence that the regional government removed an elected official from a majority Assyrian district without approval from Assyrians living in the district shows the limitations of their political powers in Northern Iraq. Further, attempts to amend the electoral laws that directly impact minority seats in the IKP demonstrate the challenges to improving representation for Assyrians within KRI. These examples provide reason to suggest that political grievances by Assyrians against the KRG increase over issues of representation. They also support the instances of ethnic protests centering on political representation and challenges to elections presented in the previous section.

Security Concerns:

As stated earlier, the past two decades wreaked havoc on the population of Assyrians in Iraq. Internal violence in Iraq following the 2003 US-led invasion drastically altered the population of Assyrians Christians. Between 2003-2005, nearly 300,00 Christians fled their homes; many Assyrians sought refuge in nearby countries include Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and Iran; about 80,000 Assyrians emigrated out of Iraq completely; while the rest were internally displaced (Hanish 2009; Travis 2006). The 2014 invasion of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) further exacerbated conditions for Assyrians. In June 2014, ISIS eradicated Christians from the city of Mosul (Griswold 24). By August, ISIS captured an Assyrian majority region within the Nineveh Plains, forcing approximately 200,000 of them to flee (Donabed 2015, 2). The targeting of Assyrians continued through the destruction of ancient churches and artifacts and many remnants of Assyrian history in Iraq.²⁰ These

¹⁹Interview 1, Arbil, March 20, 2018.

²⁰Eve Contant, 2014. QA: Why Sunni Extremists Are Destroying Ancient Religious Sites in Mosul. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/140802-iraq-mosul-christian-muslim-islamic-state-syria-history>.

episodes of violence explain why Iraqi Christians, although they constitute less than 5% of the total population in Iraq, comprise of at least 20% of the population of Iraqi refugees nearly a decade after the US-led invasion. Overall, in nearly two decades, the population of Assyrians decreased to about 10% of what it was before the war began. Pre-2003 estimates indicate Assyrians comprised of 1.5 million people in Iraq; today's estimates 140,000 Assyrians in Iraq. Most Assyrians live in the governorates of Duhok, Arbil, and Nineveh.

I focus on the population of Assyrians native to the Nineveh Plain. The Nineveh Plain constitutes the northeast region of the Nineveh governorate. This region consists of the districts of Shekhan, Tel Keppe, and Al-Hamdaniyah. Up until the 2017 Kurdish referendum for independence, the Nineveh Plains were secured by the Kurdish army, *peshmerga*. When ISIS invaded this territory 2014, the *peshmerga* withdrew from their posts without notifying Assyrians about their disarmament. As a result, ISIS managed to conquer the Nineveh Plain region (Donabed 2015) causing the death or displacement of Assyrian families. Since the defeat of ISIS in Nineveh, some of the Assyrian families have returned to their native communities within the Nineveh Plain. However, Assyrians remain wary about whether the regional and national governments can protect their communities. This concern may stem from the ongoing territorial dispute between the KRG and the GoI over the Nineveh governorate. As a disputed territory the division of responsibilities remain divided between the Kurdish and Iraqi governments, yet there are no clear rules to outline and enforce these responsibilities. When asked to discuss the responses by either the regional and national governments, one interviewee responded,

“They are not interested in our rights and ethnicity. Both of them. I can tell you the neglect we are facing from Baghdad and Arbil is more dangerous for the time being than ISIS...It might result in the complete eradication of ethnicity from this region...The neglect is more dangerous than ISIS against us.”²¹

The lack of security for Assyrians increased their demand for their own security forces in the Nineveh Plain. According to one interviewee, Assyrians first aimed to create a local

²¹Interview 1, Arbil, March 20, 2018.

police force made up of Assyrians in the Nineveh Plain in 2010.

“In 2010, the Assyrian Democratic Party worked with the central government to fund a local police force in the Nineveh Plain by the people of Nineveh Plain that was supported by the central government. However, the Kurdish government opposed this decision. They brought their own guards from the Nineveh Plain to protect the churches. They didn’t want an official Assyrian force there. If we had done that, ISIS might not have invaded the Nineveh Plain but they [the Kurdish government] ruined our plan. They had a stronger voice in Baghdad and the governor of Nineveh was under their arm. We had a list of 3,000 Assyrians from the Nineveh Plain to work in the local police force in Nineveh. The governor relocated these men to distant locations where Al’Qaeda was. Assyrians were not in need of this so they withdrew from the list. Then, the Kurds created a local guard force of 3,000 people who sit at home yet continue to get paid at least 2,000 dinars. They are currently in Arbil after ISIS and are here to vote for the KDP-backed parties. The KRG supports them financially. That’s how you get votes without working for them.”²²

In 2014, the Nineveh Plain Protection Units (NPU) formed to ensure Assyrians a long-term presence in their historic homelands. The NPU is a military group formed after the liberation of ISIS from the villages in the Nineveh Plain. It consists of solely Assyrians. Assistance for the NPU comes from the Population Mobilization Forces (PMF), an Iraqi state-sponsored umbrella organization composed of various militias. Recent evidence shows the return rates in villages within the Nineveh Plain that were occupied by ISIS are higher in areas with NPU presence, indicating positive effects in minority communities with local police forces from their own communities. Nonetheless, the security threat against Assyrians in the KRI demonstrate how grievances over the securitization of Assyrians in the KRI led to Assyrians seeking their independent sources of security. The establishment of their own security forces in the Nineveh Plain demonstrates the grievance among Assyrians against regional security apparatuses and their ability to protect Assyrians communities. As stated in one interview,

“Everyone is busy taking care of themselves and their needs. Neither Iraq nor the KRG protected us and that is why we need a local force in Nineveh Plain.”²³

However, the representative from the Kurdistan Democratic Part seem to be unaware of the security grievances by Assyrians against the regional government. In one conversation,

²²Interview 5, March 25, 2018.

²³Interview 5, March 25, 2018.

the Kurdish representative stated,

“About the Christian political parties, each of them have objectives and some of them say that there is some kind of genocide against minorities especially the Christians in Nineveh in Mosul and in other places, but now all the Christians, I think 90% of Christians are inside Kurdistan. Outside in Mosul and Baghdad there is nobody now. Now the majority of Christians are in Kurdistan...The international community is supporting Kurdistan because the right of Christians especially is better than another part of Iraq...I think the lobby against Kurdistan will be against the benefit of Christians – they will lose everything.”²⁴

Yet, when asked about the reputation of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq as a safe haven for Assyrians fleeing conflict prone areas in Iraq, the interviewee stated,

“The KRG always shows that it is preserving Christians. And it isn’t. They always try to tell the international community that Christians are leaving other parts of Iraq [Baghdad] to live here [KRG]. But they are leaving the fighting in Baghdad and going to villages that are filled with other Assyrians. They are not living in areas mostly Kurdish - they come to live with their own people.”²⁵

The interview data along with the qualitative evidence, demonstrate how the security of Assyrians in Iraq remains a challenge for both the regional and national government. This evidence also corroborates the notion that grievances persist among the Assyrian minority against the securitization of their communities and these grievances are directed at the regional government in addition to the central government of Iraq. Finally, the information presented here shows a discrepancy between the perspective on safety by the Assyrian community and the regional government that rules over them. Although the KRI may provide a safer environment for Assyrians than in other areas of Iraq, interview data illustrates that Assyrians still feel threatened and insecure with the KRI.

Social, Demographic Concerns:

One of the most persistent issues regarding demographic shifts centers on how Assyrians often accuse the Kurds of land appropriations within the KRI. Specifically, Assyrians charge local Kurds for the un-authorized building of structures on Assyrian-owned property. These

²⁴Interview 8, March 28, 2018.

²⁵Interview 2, March 20, 2018.

reports are especially true in rural neighborhoods in Dohuk around the village of Zahko and in the Nahla Valley in the Akre district of Northern Iraq (Smith & Shadarevian 2017). Although Assyrians have property deeds to their lands, court orders and officials failed to enforce the removing of structures that Kurdish neighbors built on Christian property. In 2017, Mikhael Benjamin, head of the non-governmental Nineveh Center for Research and Development in the Nahle Valley located in the Akre district, stated that 53 out of 96 locations in Duhok locations, involving at least 76 distinct cases, have been targeted with land encroachments by Kurds. This complaint comprise of a total of 47,000 dunams of land. However, according to reports, from 1991 to 2016, not a single decree that upheld Assyrians as original and rightful inhabitants of their lands has been honored and enforced by KRG authorities (Hanna and Barber 30). Thus, this evidence highlights how Assyrians cannot use existing political and legal options to protect their villages from further encroachment by members of major ethnic groups within the KRI.

Appropriation of Christian-owned land coupled with ongoing violence against Christians in Iraq shifted demographics within local communities throughout pockets of the KRI. Some towns and villages that were once inhabited entirely by Assyrians now bear no trace of them. For example, in Ankawa, a pre-dominantly Christian district in Arbil, Assyrians postulate Christian-owned land in Ankawa has been confiscated by the KRG over the last decade and awarded to Kurdish contractors for housing projects. According to reports, these homes were later sold to non-Assyrians, and the original owners of the lands were never compensated. These housing projects have led to a sharp increase in non-Assyrian populations in Ankawa. For instance, the population of non-Assyrians in Ankawa was nearly 5% in 2006 and by 2017 this population increased to about 20% Hanna and Barber 30. The shift in demographics in predominantly Christian communities raises concerns among Christians of becoming minorities in communities where they hold a clear majority. Similar complaints among Assyrians persist throughout northern Iraq regarding the demographics in the Nineveh Plain. According to Assyrian representatives, a demographic shift within

the region where Christians have been a historic majority is likely should the displaced Assyrians not return to their villages. In sum, the evidence above demonstrates that as minorities within a larger ethnic minority group, Assyrians have little power to use against the appropriation of their lands and the shifts to demographics in their communities. This demographic change in Assyrian villages creates grievances against the KRG for not addressing these concerns by the Assyrians in the KRI.

The importance of land ownership rights echoed throughout discussions with multiple interviewees. One subject stated,

“Rights of property need to be addressed. Land property rights is undercover in the KRG government even in Baghdad too. For us to have a nation here we need our lands returned to our communities...If land property wouldn’t be abused and we are free to use our land we would not leave..Land properties is the most important factor for our dignity.”²⁶

In another interview, the subject stated,

“The most important thing to Assyrians right now is land. If you don’t have land, you can’t talk about anything.”²⁷

On two other occasions, interviewees claimed,

“Kurds must help return our land ownership rights. This has been going on since 1961 – after the civil war with Baghdad. Assyrians fled multiple areas during this conflict...For there to be justice...for us to live together like two partners, Kurds must return our lands that they’ve occupied since 1961,”²⁸

and

“The number one issue right now is land...Now is the time to settle land disputes...Without land, people don’t have a motive to stay.”²⁹

Overall, the issue of land grabs and demographic changes in northern Iraq remains a contentious issue among Assyrians in the KRI. The tensions over the occupation of Assyrian villages by the Kurdish majority manifested in local communal violence as recently as May 2021. Physical violence between local Assyrian villagers and the Kurdish individuals erupted

²⁶Interview 1, March 20, 2018.

²⁷Interview 2, March 20, 2018.

²⁸Interview 5, March 2018.

²⁹Interview 4, March 21, 2018.

over the Kurdish members viewing potential spaces to build within an exclusive Assyrian community. The Assyrian-Kurdish relations over demographic shifts in local communities contrast with the historical time period where the Assyrians and Kurds were forced to assimilate in predominately Arab communities under the Ba'ath party's regime in Iraq. I present evidence here that demonstrates how since 2005, the increase in access to power for the Kurdish regional majority, and the ongoing marginalization of the local Assyrian minority, has increased grievances and tensions between Assyrian-Kurdish groups, which otherwise might not have existed.

1.6 Research conclusions, implications, and limitations

How does territorial autonomy shape local ethnic grievances and protest outcomes? This paper develops expectations about how regional autonomy shapes ethnic conflict between groups at the regional level. It uses the case of Kurdish regional autonomy in Iraq to demonstrate how institutional design increased the insecurities of Assyrians that may have triggered ethnic conflict between Assyrians and the KRG in Northern Iraq. By securing regional autonomy to the region's ethnic majority, without guaranteeing institutional protections for regional ethnic minorities, the post-2005 constitutional design in Iraq may have increased grievances against the regional government by ethnic minorities in addition to the ongoing grievances held against the central state.

Overall, evidence on the instances of protests by Assyrians in Iraq reveal a few key findings. First, Assyrians mostly protest in Northern Iraq (86% of Assyrian protests take place outside of Baghdad). This outcome may be the result of at least two reasons. On one hand, there is a greater population of Assyrian in Northern Iraq, which provides a stronger opportunity to mobilize against the regional and national government. On another hand, the increase of state-based violence and terrorism in Baghdad may have led to a scarcity of protests by Assyrians, since they may be fearful of their lives if they were to stage large

demonstrations. In addition to protesting mostly in Northern Iraq, these data reveal at least half of all protests target the KRG, highlighting the point that in addition to dissenting against the central government Assyrians now *also* protest their own regional government. Third, half of the Assyrian protests center on political issues including demonstrations over political representation and the elections, suggesting current institutions do not offer policy concessions that respond to the concerns of the ethnic Assyrian communities. Further, when Assyrians protest over political concerns, most of these protest target the Kurdish Regional Government, especially in disputed territories such as Nineveh.

Multiple limitations exist here. First, comparing the outcomes of dissent before and after the 2005 autonomy arrangements proves to be a challenging tasks given the variation in semi-autonomous institutions that existed throughout Iraq ancient and modern history. I do my best to select a time period to compare with the post-2005 political climate, although this method is not without its own drawbacks. Second, I treat ethnic groups as homogeneous units in this paper despite that fact that Assyrians and Kurds are divided within their own respective communities over sectarian and political ideologies. Future research should examine the Assyrian-Kurdish relations through the number and type of ethnic parties that represent these communities to better understand the relations by ethnic segmental cleavages or alliances. Third, this project solely focuses on the outcome of autonomy arrangement in northern Iraq, despite the push or autonomy by the Kurdish minority in neighboring states including Syria and Turkey. In future work, this project should examine the outcome of Assyrian dissent in predominantly Kurdish communities outside of Iraq to test the effectiveness of the theory illustrated in this study.

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1.8 Appendix

Table 1.6: Full Description of Ethnic Protests by Assyrians in Iraq, 2005-2018

Num.	Gov.	Dist.	Yr	Target	Description
1	Arbil	Arbil	2014	Iraq, International Agencies	Assyrians from ISIS occupied areas (IDPs in KRG) protest outside of UN building to demand international and Iraqi protection of Christians from the Islamic State.
2	Arbil	Arbil	2014	Iraq, International Agencies	Protesters in Erbil joined international protest over the persecution of Christians in Iraq at the hands of ISIS. This protest occurred alongside international protests held in the USA, Canada, England, France, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Holland, Sweden, and Australia.
3	Arbil	Arbil	2014	Kurdish Regional Government	Cabinet member in KRG (Minister of Transportation) resigns position after failure of KRG to protect Assyrians in Ninewa from the invasion of ISIS. Cabinet member claims KRG fled their posts without warning residents of Assyrian villages of imminent attack by the Islamic State.
4	Arbil	Arbil	2015	Kurdish Regional Government	Only Assyrian member on constitutional draft committee for KRG constitution resigns in protest over after the committee continued to dismiss her input and objectives regarding the rights of Assyrians, specifically with respect to proposed law on Christian children of Muslim parents. Her high-profile protest inspired both the Yazidi and Turkmen representatives to also withdraw from the committee.
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Table 1.6 – continued from previous page

Num.	Gov.	Dist.	Yr	Target	Description
5	Arbil	Arbil	2015	Kurdish Regional Government	Protest staged in Ankawa (subdistrict of Erbil) by local Assyrians over the preferential tax rate for Assyrian businesses in Ankawa. Assyrians believe the proposed taxes on Assyrian-owned business is part of the KRG discriminatory laws and practices against Assyrians. Statement delivered to KRG Ministry of Interior, Governor of Erbil, and US Consulate in Erbil.
6	Arbil	Arbil	2015	Iraq	The Iraqi Parliament passed a law on October 27 that will force Christian children to become Muslims (Article 25 of the National Identity Law). Parliamentary members protested the vote by abstaining from voting. Assyrians alongside additional religious minorities (Yezidis) staged protest outside of UN office in Erbil. Patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church, Louis Sako expressed regret of the law passage.
7	Arbil	Arbil	2016	Kurdish Regional Government	Protesters gathered outside of the Iraqi Kurdistan Parliament. Many more protesters were expected to attend; however the KRG police, the Asayish, blocked roads connecting the Assyrian villages to Erbil, preventing their attendances at the protest. Past letters sent to the KRG President, Masoud Barzani, from the residents of Assyrian villages in the KRI requesting the release of Assyrian-owned lands have been unanswered.
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Num.	Gov.	Dist.	Yr	Target	Description
8	Arbil	Arbil	2018	Kurdish Regional Government	Assyrians staged protest outside of the KRG parliamentary building in Erbil, called for an amendment to the election law within the KRG specifying that voting for minority quota seats be exclusive to voters of a minority background and minority elections to be held separately from general elections. The protesters demanded an end election interference by the Kurdish Democratic Part (KDP).
9	Baghdad	Baghdad	2005	Kurdish Regional Government	Assyrians, Yazidis, and Turkmen protested outside of Baghdad's Green Zone to dispute election irregularities in Northern Iraq. Ballots were not delivered to Assyrian villages around Mosul, depriving up to 200,000 Assyrians from voting in the Iraqi election. Protesters claim deliberate of voter lockout.
10	Baghdad	Baghdad	2008	Iraq	About 75 Christians gathered outside of Mar Yousef Church in Baghdad to reinstate a section of the provincial elections law (Article 50) that ensured political representation for Iraq's minorities in Nineveh. Several tribal leaders and other Muslim representative joined the protest in support. Younadam Kanna, the only Christian MP, created a petition with 50 MP signatures to present to the parliament speaker.
11	Baghdad	Baghdad	2010	Iraq	Protesters gathered in Baghdad to raise attention to the ongoing violence against Assyrians in Mosul including the killing of seven Assyrians.
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Num.	Gov.	Dist.	Yr	Target	Description
12	Baghdad	Baghdad	2015	Iraq	The Iraqi Parliament passed a law on October 27 that will force Christian children to become Muslims (Article 25 of the National Identity Law). Parliamentary members protested the vote by abstaining from voting. Assyrians alongside additional religious minorities (Yezidis) staged protest outside of UN office in Erbil. Patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church, Louis Sako expressed regret of the law passage.
13	Duhok	Duhok	2008	Iraq	Protesters gathered in Northern Duhok province in response to the removal of Article 50, which specified a quota for minorities in provincial councils, from the electoral laws.
14	Nineveh	Al Hamdaniyah	2005	Kurdish Regional Government	Multiple demonstrations took place in Al-Hamdaniyah including Bakhdida, Bartella, and Qaramlesh to protest election irregularities in Northern Iraq. Ballots were not delivered to Assyrian villages around Mosul, depriving up to 200,000 Assyrians from voting in the Iraqi election. Protesters claim voter lockout.
15	Nineveh	Al Hamdaniyah	2005	Kurdish Regional Government	Multiple demonstrations took place in Al-Hamdaniyah including Bakhdida, Bartella, and Qaramlesh to protest election irregularities in Northern Iraq. Ballots were not delivered to Assyrian villages around Mosul, depriving up to 200,000 Assyrians from voting in the Iraqi election. Protesters claim voter lockout.

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Num.	Gov.	Dist.	Yr	Target	Description
16	Nineveh	Al Ham-daniyah	2005	Kurdish Regional Government	Multiple demonstrations took place in Al-Hamdaniyah including Bakhdida, Bartella, and Qaramlesh to protest election irregularities in Northern Iraq. Ballots were not delivered to Assyrian villages around Mosul, depriving up to 200,000 Assyrians from voting in the Iraqi election. Protesters claim voter lockout.
17	Nineveh	Al Ham-daniyah	2005	Iraq	Protesters gathered in Bakhdida to protest the Iraqi constitution draft for the creation of separate ethnic terms between Assyrian and Chaldean, when these terms identify sectarian, not ethnic, distinctions (Article 135).
18	Nineveh	Al Ham-daniyah	2008	Kurdish Regional Government	Nearly 300 Assyrian policemen protested in Bakhdida outside the office of the local governor (mayor) in response to the order from local authorities to relocate to the city of Mosul, removing them from patrolling their local villages.
19	Nineveh	Al Ham-daniyah	2010	Iraq	Protesters gathered in Bakhdida to protest the recent killing of Assyrians in Mosul. These protest took place a few days before protests occurred in Baghdad over the same issue.
20	Nineveh	Mosul	2010	Iraq	At least 1,000 Assyrians protested in Mosul to urge the Iraqi government to respond to the recent series of killings of Assyrians in Mosul.
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Num.	Gov.	Dist.	Yr	Target	Description
21	Nineveh	Mosul	2010	Iraq	Thousands of protesters gathered in Mosul to protest against the attack on Assyrians at Our Lady of Salvation in Baghdad by Al-Qaeda in Iraq, which resulted in the killing of 52 churchgoers.
22	Nineveh	Mosul	2018	Iraq	Nineveh’s religious minorities including Shabaks, Yezidis, and Assyrians have written to the head of the provincial council in Nineveh and the Iraqi interior ministry to protest the planned settlement of 450 Arab families from other parts of Iraq. Protesters viewed the settlement as a demographic shift that would alter the representation of religious minorities in areas where they constitute a majority population.
23	Nineveh	Tel Afar	2005	Kurdish Regional Government	Demonstrations took place in Al-Ayadia subdistrict aside multiple demonstrations throughout Al-Hamdaniyah including in Bakhdida, Bartella, and Qaramlesh to protest election irregularities in Northern Iraq. Ballots were not delivered to Assyrian villages around Mosul, depriving up to 200,000 Assyrians from voting in the Iraqi election. Protesters make claims of voter lockout.
24	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2005	Iraq	Protests took place along side the demonstration in Al-Hamdaniyah over the constitutional language that distinguishes Assyrians from Chaldean as two ethnic groups when these terms identify sectarian, not ethnic, differences (Article 135).
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Num.	Gov.	Dist.	Yr	Target	Description
25	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2008	Iraq	Protesters marched in solidarity with concurrent protests taking place in Duhok and Baghdad over the removal of Article 50 from the Iraqi Election Law, which would reduce the representation of religious minorities in Nineveh's provincial council.
26	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2014	Kurdish Regional Govern- ment	Hundreds of Assyrians in the town of Alqosh held a demonstration over the removal of the county council leader, Mr. Faiz Abed Jahwareh, by a Kurdish representative from the Kurdish Democratic Party. Alqosh is an exclusive Assyrian village. Two days after the demonstration, Jahwareh was reinstated.
27	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2017	Kurdish Regional Govern- ment	The residents of Alqosh staged three protests after Jahwareh's removal and Yousif's subsequent installment. The first took place on July 20, 2017. The second was held on August 2, 2017 following Yousif's appointment, and the third was held on August 18, 2017. In all three protests, residents carried Iraqi flags in response to the KRG's stated objective to conduct its upcoming independence referendum in the Nineveh Plain. A petition was also signed by thousands of Alqosh residents and delivered to the District Council and other relevant authorities.

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Num.	Gov.	Dist.	Yr	Target	Description
28	Nineveh	Tel Keppe	2017	Kurdish Regional Govern- ment	The residents of Alqosh staged three protests after Jahwareh’s removal and Yousif’s subsequent installment. The first took place on July 20, 2017. The second was held on August 2, 2017 following Yousif’s appointment, and the third was held on August 18, 2017. In all three protests, residents carried Iraqi flags in response to the KRG’s stated objective to conduct its upcoming independence referendum in the Nineveh Plain. A petition was also signed by thousands of Alqosh residents and delivered to the District Council and other relevant authorities.

Chapter 2

The Consequences of autonomy on regional ethnic minority protests

Abstract

Do local ethnic minorities protest under systems with autonomy arrangements? Countries struggling with ethnic conflict sometimes grant territorial autonomy to ethnic minority groups: the logic is that by allowing ethnic minorities to govern over their own territory ethnic minorities may be less likely to initiate a war against the state. However, almost every region with some degree of territorial autonomy has regional ethnic minority groups not formally represented or empowered. Local minorities may be excluded from governance simply because they do not belong to the local ethnic majority group. Local minorities may develop grievances against the regional government that otherwise might not exist. They may also pursue their own autonomy rights. To test whether autonomy arrangements increase ethnic protests by local ethnic minorities I use data on 186 ethnic groups in 83 countries between 1985-2006 from two sources: the *Ethnic Powers Relations* (EPR) dataset and the *All Minorities at Risk* (AMAR) project. My research finds countries with territorial autonomy arrangements had a higher count of ethnic protests than countries without autonomy arrangements, political and economic grievances by regional ethnic minorities increased under systems with territorial autonomy, and protests by regional ethnic minorities were not conditional on opportunities for ethnic protests (i.e. ethnic group size and state repression were unable to predict the probability of ethnic protest in systems with or without territorial autonomy arrangements). These results held even when controlling for known factors of ethnic conflict including ethnic group diversity, ethnic group war history, and country-level ethnic conflict episodes. The findings highlight important nuances to the regional autonomy project. Namely, although autonomy arrangements increase access to power for regional ethnic minorities these institutions may simultaneously create conditions for ethnic conflict by local minorities within autonomous regions.

2.1 Introduction

Does territorial autonomy increase local ethnic conflict? Internal feuds between indigenous communities and subnational governments raise the question of whether autonomy arrangements may increase challenges for minority groups within autonomous units. The resistance to assimilation policies by the provincial government in Aceh, Indonesia among the Gayo and Javanese communities, the movement for the independence by the Tripuris in Northeast India, and self-determination demands by Assyrian Christians in Northern Iraq provide examples of local ethnic minorities challenging local-level authority. In each example, disputes by local minorities stemmed after autonomy arrangements granted authority to local ethnic majority groups.

I argue that territorial autonomy may increase ethnic conflict by regional ethnic minority groups. Although territorial autonomy increases access to power for regional majority groups, ethnic minorities within autonomous regions may remain excluded from local power sharing arrangements or possess limited access to power at the subnational level. Further, the regional government may stand as a barrier to policy making for regional ethnic minorities given the interests of regional minorities may be masked by the preferences of the regional majority group. Therefore, territorial autonomy may increase the marginalization of regional ethnic minorities. As regional ethnic minorities become marginalized, grievances against regional majority groups increase, triggering ethnic conflict outcomes.

I test this theory using data on ethnic protests across 186 ethnic groups in 83 countries between 1985-2006 from two sources: the *Ethnic Powers Relations* (EPR) dataset and the *All Minorities at Risk* (AMAR) dataset. I also test the consequences on ethnic protests using two measures of territorial autonomy. The first measure captures whether a country grants territorial autonomy to minority groups through constitutional design; the second identifies the degree of decentralization to subnational governments.

My research produces four key findings. First, I find that between 1985-2006, protests by regional ethnic minorities specifically, and ethnic protests in general occurred at a higher

count in countries with territorial autonomy than in countries without autonomy arrangements. This trend began in the late 1990's and continued until 2006. Second, political and economic grievances by regional ethnic minorities increased under systems with territorial autonomy and greater decentralization than in systems without these institutions. Third, protests by regional ethnic minority were not conditional on opportunities for ethnic protests. Specifically, ethnic group size and repression policies were unable to predict the probability of ethnic protest in systems with or without territorial autonomy arrangements. In fact, the probability of ethnic protests was highest for smaller regional ethnic minority groups in extremely repressive, decentralized systems. Finally, the likelihood of ethnic protests by regional ethnic minorities increased under territorial autonomy arrangements and higher levels of decentralization even when controlling for known factors of ethnic conflict including ethnic group diversity, ethnic group war history, and country-level ethnic conflict count.

The presence of protests by regional ethnic minority groups under institutions of autonomy challenges the regional autonomy project. To date, most research on solutions to ethnic conflict typically focuses on the relations between regional majority groups and the central government. By focusing mainly on this dynamic, scholars leave out the ways in which institutions designed to appease ethnic conflict at the national level influence internal minorities within them. Cases of ethnic conflict within autonomous territories in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East reveal solutions to ethnic conflict at the national level, may breed conflict outcomes between groups in local societies. Thus, by exploring the consequences of these institutions on regional ethnic minority groups, this paper adds to knowledge on potential issues that must be addressed when choosing institutions as means to resolve ethnic conflict. Given territorial autonomy remains a solution to national-level ethnic conflict, future research aims to explore potential solutions for regional minority groups within autonomous units.

2.2 What is regional ethnic conflict, and why does it exist?

The definition of regional ethnic conflict requires explanations for three distinct terms: regional, ethnic, and conflict. By *regional*, I mean a country's first-level administrative unit such as provinces, regions, states, etc (Marks et al. 2008). In the real world, examples of regions include Indian states such as Assam or Tripura, Indonesian provinces including Aceh or West Papua, or Ethiopian regions namely Tigray or Oromia. The regional distinction suggest the outcome of interest typically takes place within sub-state units and usually does not include outcomes that extend beyond the boundaries of the regional territory, although in some cases they may. When regional disputes center on *ethnic* issues, I mean issues concerning distinct ethnic groups within the regional territory. According to conventional literature, ethnic groups conventionally form around descent-based attributes including religion, sect, and language (Chandra 2006). These attributes remain distinct from non-descent-based identities including ideology, gender, or class.¹ Finally, regional *ethnic conflict* centers on disputes over ethnic self-determination rights. These disputes include conflict over "ethnic balance of power in government, ethno-regional autonomy, and ethnic discrimination" (Denny and Walter 2014, pg. 201). Together, this study defines *regional ethnic conflict* as disputes between distinct ethnic groups within first-level administrative units that typically center on issues of ethnic balance of power, autonomy concerns, or ethnic discrimination. I add to the current literature's understanding of regional-level conflict by focusing on disputes within regions between different ethnic groups rather than regional-level conflict defined as conflict between different regions within a state or between regions and the national government.

¹According to Chandra (2006), an ethnic identity is a "subset of identity categories in which eligibility for membership is determined by attributes associated with, or believed to be associated with, descent" (Chandra 2006, 398). This conceptualization builds on the notions of ethnicity as a comprehensive concept that "easily embraces groups differentiated by color, language, and religion; it covers 'tribes,' 'races,' 'nationalities,' and 'castes'" (Horowitz, 1985) and ethnicity as a common ancestry, culture, or homeland (Gurr, 2015), (Gellner, 1983).

Data on ethnic autonomous regions suggest regional ethnic conflict is not an uncommon phenomenon. The *Ethnic Regional Autonomies Database* (ERAD) by Panov and Semenov (2018) identifies 632 instances of regional ethnic conflict within autonomous regions across 34 countries between 2001-2015. In this sample, 117 incidents of regional ethnic conflicts (nearly 20%) involve conflict by the region's ethnic minority group. From this sample, 61% of regional ethnic minority conflict (71 incidents) center on disputes over autonomy and secession by regional ethnic minorities. In other words, when regional ethnic conflict occurs, it is mostly about self-determination demands for the ethnic minority within the local region. The conditions that impact regional ethnic conflict within autonomous regions will be the focus of this paper.

Some scholars find that local ethnic group composition may impact the likelihood of regional ethnic conflict arising. For instance, local ethnic strife may erupt within subnational units with a dominant ethnic group (Cunningham and Weidmann 2010). examine the relationship between local ethnic heterogeneity and state-directed violence within local administrative units and find regional-level violence increases when an ethnic group dominates a diverse ethnic region. These results hold even when the region's dominant ethnic group is excluded from national power. However, the conflict outcome examined in this study centers on the relationship between regional groups and the national government; it does not does not speak to ethnic conflict within regions between regional-level groups. Abbs (2020) focuses on local ethnic rights in Africa and finds ethnic discrimination by dominant ethnic groups increased local ethnic violence across 47 African countries. Although in the context of subnational *wards* throughout Northern Ireland, Balcells et al. (2016) find ethnic group parity (not dominance) increased ethnic conflict within local societies. Thus, while both articles increase knowledge about how ethnic group composition shapes the likelihood of local ethnic conflict, it seems the relationship between local ethnic group makeup and local ethnic conflict may vary by context. This article presents a generalized argument and test of the conditions that increase conflict among local ethnic groups across multiple world

regions.

Other research examines how subnational ethnic conflict may stem from conflict involving neighboring ethnic groups. One theoretical expectation centers on the ‘domino effect’ hypothesis, where autonomy for one ethnic group encourages autonomy demands by other ethnic groups (Saideman 1995). However, empirical support for this proposition remains ambiguous. Looking at challenges over self-determination by ethnic minority groups included in the *Minorities at Risk Project* (2009), Walter (2015) finds ethnic groups increase their demands for autonomy if they face a government that previously granted autonomy to another ethnic group. However, using data on ethnic groups from the *Ethnic Powers Relations* dataset, Forsberg (2013) examines the relationship between granting territorial autonomy to one ethnic group and the onset of ethnic conflict by other ethnic groups and finds no evidence that the domino effect works within or between country borders. While this information adds knowledge on the contagion of subnational ethnic conflict, the domino effect hypothesis overlooks subnational dynamics within regions that shape the likelihood of local ethnic conflict. Evidence from Kenya and Nigeria shows excluding local minorities from local power-sharing agreements may increase the onset of ethnic conflict in local societies (Elfversson and Sjögren 2020; Bunte and Vinson 2016). The following analysis builds on these findings to demonstrate how autonomy arrangements for regional majority groups may increase the marginalization of ethnic minorities within autonomous regions and raise their demands for self-determination from the central and regional governments.

Overall, some of the known factors that may shape the outcome of regional ethnic conflict include subnational ethnic composition, national-level concession to ethnic minority groups, and local power-sharing agreements. Nonetheless, the above research does not identify whether the types of groups that engage in regional ethnic conflict constitute regional ethnic majorities or regional ethnic minorities. This gap assumes the conditions that increase (or decrease) a groups ability and willingness to engage in conflict remain similar across regional majority-minority groups regardless if these groups have varying motivations, abilities,

and opportunities. Further, the lack of research on this subject suggests practitioners apply policies that aim to address ethnic conflict based on the ways in which institutions serve ethnic groups in general, rather than ethnic groups based on their size, concentration, and access to local-level power. By focusing on local ethnic minority groups in this paper, the research presented here aims to increase knowledge on how institutions shape conflict outcomes for local ethnic minorities. Specifically, I highlight how institutional arrangements that tend to increase access to power for regional majority groups may simultaneously marginalize regional ethnic minorities. In other words, this discussion explores how regional autonomy arrangements may increase the motivations for self-determination movements among ethnic groups that tend to remain on the periphery of regional and national governments.

2.3 How does territorial self-government increases regional ethnic conflict?

Territorial self-government involves policies that grant some degree of autonomy to territorially concentrated minority groups within sub-state units (Anderson 2015; Elazar 1987; Riker 1964). Examples of territorial self-government generally fall into three categories. The first, federations, include a constitutionally protected system where the “entire territory of a state is divided into separate political units, all of which enjoy exclusive executive, legislative, and judicial powers independent of the central government” (Walter 2015, p. 3). Examples of constitutionally-enshrined federations include the United States, and India. The second category of territorial self-government, autonomy, includes systems that constitutionally enshrine territorial autonomy to specific sub-units. However, unlike federations, systems with autonomy arrangements do not guarantee territorial autonomy to all sub-state units. Examples of these systems include the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in southern Philippines, and the Kurdistan Region in northern Iraq. Finally, decentralization involves the delegation of executive authority to local government offices that remain under the jurisdiction of the national state. In these cases, self-government is not

constitutionally entrenched; instead, local autonomy is granted by the central government and can be rescinded at any time. The following theory focuses mainly on outcomes in which regional units possess some degree of constitutionally protected authority. Although in cases where there is a great deal of decentralization between national and local government offices, some of the issues raised in this theory may still apply. Nonetheless, when referring to systems with autonomy arrangement, I mean federations or political structures that grant territorial autonomy to a specific region.

Incentives for ethnic conflict over self-determination by regional ethnic minorities may exist in systems without territorial autonomy arrangements. In systems without territorial autonomy arrangements regional ethnic minorities seek policy changes from the national government. However, as minorities within regions, regional ethnic minorities remain separated from the central government by large geographic or social distance and may be too small to become major members of political coalitions in power at the center (Tranchant 2016). It follows that national policies rarely reflect the interests of regional ethnic minority groups. Evidence shows when policies do not reflect the preferences of ethnic minorities and if ethnic minorities cannot use existing institutions to grant policy concessions from the state grievances against the central government may arise (Cederman et al. 2010; Horowitz 1985).

However, regional ethnic minorities within autonomous regions may become *additionally* marginalized under territorial autonomy arrangements. This marginalization stems from at least two reasons. First, by defining territorial autonomy by ethnic group boundaries, regional autonomy tends to empower regional ethnic majorities while leaving ethnic minorities within regions along the periphery of regional government interests. In other words, territorial autonomy arrangements tilt the balance of power at the local level towards regional majority elites. Inside autonomous regions, regional ethnic minorities may remain too small to influence regional-level policies on their own and regional majorities do not depend on local ethnic minorities to remain in power. These outcomes may suggest concerns of the regional ethnic minorities may not be reflected in regional policies. Second, territorial

autonomy creates an additional barrier for policymaking for regional ethnic minorities. As distinct ethnic groups, local ethnic minorities seek policy changes for their ethnic group from the national government. However, as minorities within autonomous regions, local ethnic minorities also contest the regional government for local policies that reflect the interests of their own ethnic group. In other words, in cases without territorial autonomy arrangements, regional ethnic minorities contest the national government for policy concessions; under institutions of regional autonomy, regional ethnic minorities challenge both the national and regional governments.

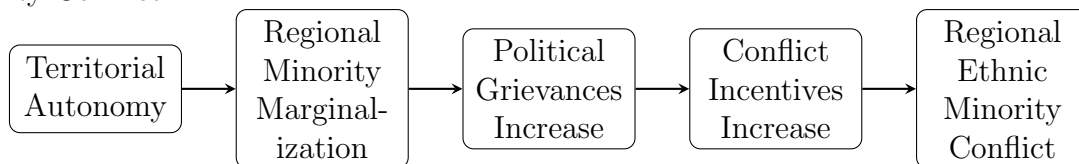
The marginalization of local ethnic minorities within autonomous units may increase grievances between regional groups resulting from discrepancies in public goods and services at the regional level. For instance, within autonomous regions, regional majorities control public resources and the ways in which goods and services distribute throughout the region. Ethnic minorities within autonomous regions may not be primary recipients of public services including education, garbage collection, and electricity. Regional ethnic minorities within autonomous regions may develop grievances against the regional government for exclusion of public resources. Without regional autonomy arrangements, the distribution of public resources depends on the central governments' capabilities. Territorial autonomy places the distribution of resources at the local level within the hands of regional elites. The creation of a regional government may produce criticism among regional groups that would otherwise not exist under centralized forms of governance. These conditions may create divisions between regional ethnic groups that warrant autonomy rights for local ethnic minorities.

Political science research finds powerless and excluded ethnic groups may be more likely to make calls for self-determination (Cederman et al. 2010). In other words, ethnic group exclusion may increase the onset of ethnic conflict. Ethnic groups excluded from government bodies may be unable to use existing institutions to create policy, increasing their motives to create their own institutions that speak to the needs of their ethnic group (Cohen 1997). I expect regional ethnic grievances to motivate ethnic conflict among regional minorities. As a

result, political mobilization against the regional government over self-determination rights for regional minority groups may also increase within autonomous units. Figure 1 presents a chart that traces the above theory.

Although regional ethnic minorities in autonomous units may get more representation at the regional level than in national level politics, this representation may not translate to policy concession for local ethnic minority groups. Since territorial autonomy brings the center of policymaking closer to regional groups, representation of regional groups should increase with regional autonomy arrangements. For instance, an ethnic group may comprise of 1% of the national population, but at the regional level the population of a concentrated minority groups may increase to 5% of the regional population. However, current research shows that descriptive representation for ethnic minority groups may not translate into policy responsiveness and may not deter conflict incentives for ethnic minority groups (Hänni, 2018). Even though regional autonomy may increase the representation of local ethnic minority groups, I still expect regional ethnic minorities to remain powerless within autonomous governments given they remain a minority within a regional majority ethnic group. Thus, I expect regional ethnic minorities to develop grievances that increase their motivations to initiate ethnic conflict despite the increase in their representation in local-level societies. Figure 2.1 presents the overview of this theory.

Figure 2.1: Theoretical Flow Chart: How Territorial Autonomy Increases Regional Ethnic Minority Conflict



Multiple real-life examples demonstrate how marginalization of regional ethnic minorities under territorial autonomy has led to local ethnic autonomy demands. In Indonesia, the provincial ethnic minorities in Aceh have resisted nationalization efforts by the majority Acehnese and protested for demands for provincial separatism from Aceh. In the north east

region of India, exclusionary policies in Assam, Manipur, and Tripura triggered mobilization for autonomy and secession by local ethnic minorities from India's national and state-level governments. In Iraq, protests by the Assyrians against the Kurdistan Regional Government demonstrate the presence of grievances towards the regional government over policies that misrepresent Assyrians. Although not all of these examples have led to internal ethnic wars, each example demonstrates how marginalization of local ethnic minorities under territorial autonomy arrangements have motivated demands for autonomy by regional ethnic minority groups.

At the same time, not all ethnic minorities within territorial autonomy arrangements engage in ethnic conflict over self-determination rights. For instance, the English speaking minorities in Quebec have resisted assimilation policies from the majority French-speaking communities yet maintain relatively peaceful relations with the provincial government (Barter 2018, 2015). In Scotland, multicultural practices, such as translating political documents into different languages, allow local ethnic minorities to feel included in Scottish policy-making, and researchers highlight the tolerance towards immigrant communities in Scotland compared to the rest of Britain (McCollum et al. 2014). Further, although ethnic minorities within the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) remain under-represented in regional-level institutions, local ethnic communities rarely protests or use violence against the regional government (Ferrer 2012). These examples suggest local ethnic conflict within autonomous regions remains conditional rather than an inevitable.

Scholars note that grievances (motivations) and opportunities (the conditions that allow groups to rebel) may both impact the onset of ethnic protests, violence, and civil war (Okamoto and Wilkes 2008; Collier and Hoeffler 2004). As a result, I develop expectations about the consequences of opportunities on ethnic conflict outcomes. Specifically, I focus on how repression and ethnic groups size shape the likelihood of ethnic conflict onset among regional ethnic minorities.

Repressive regimes may limit the opportunities for regional ethnic groups to mobilize

(Hänni 2018). This outcome may result from at least two reasons. First, repression towards regional ethnic minorities may diminish their expectations about receiving policy concession, which may minimize their willingness to seek ethnic demands. If repressive governments signal to regional ethnic minorities their unwillingness to support political dissent, regional ethnic minorities may be less likely to challenge the government for policy changes. Second, repression may produce fear among regional ethnic minorities whose populations might already be vulnerable. Regional ethnic minority communities may be unwilling to mobilize against a repressive regime in order to avoid threats, intimidation, and violence towards their communities. However, opportunities for ethnic group mobilization may increase as repression decreases, given ethnic groups may feel more hopeful about receiving policy concessions and less threatened to express dissent against their governments.

Ethnic group population size may also influence opportunities for ethnic group mobilization. Generally speaking, smaller regional ethnic minorities should be less likely to initiate regional ethnic conflict. First, smaller regional ethnic minorities may be limited in resources, which reduces their opportunities to finance ethnic protests or civil wars (Cederman et al., 2015). Second, demands by smaller ethnic minorities may be perceived as less legitimate and less threatening than demands by larger ethnic groups (Cederman et al., 2010). These two conditions may deter members of smaller ethnic groups from participating in ethnic mobilization outcomes even when grievances arise. Conversely, regional ethnic majority groups with larger populations may have greater opportunities to mobilize given they have a greater likelihood of generating finances and their threats may be taken more seriously by their governments. As a result, I expect ethnic conflict onset by regional ethnic minority groups to decrease as their population size decreases.

In sum, this section leads me to develop at least three hypotheses. In general, I expect that *as territorial autonomy increases, regional ethnic conflict increases* (H1). However, regional ethnic conflict motives may be influenced by alternative conditions including whether groups organize within a repressive regime or whether there are enough group members to

support ethnic group mobilization. Thus, I also hypothesize that although regional ethnic minorities may develop grievances that warrant ethnic conflict onset, *regional ethnic minorities may be less likely to mobilize as repression by their government increases* (H2) and *as their population size decreases* (H3). In the following section I explain the data and methods used to test these hypotheses.

2.4 Data on Ethnic Groups, Ethnic Protests and Territorial Autonomy

2.4.1 *Creating the Universe of Cases: Regional Ethnic Minority Groups*

This study examines protests by regional ethnic minority groups. To obtain the universe of cases, I rely on two dataset families that produce group-level data. First, I use the *Ethnic Powers Relations* (EPR) Core Dataset from the EPR Dataset Family (Vogt et al., 2015), which includes data on all politically relevant ethnic groups between 1946-2017. The EPR defines ethnicity as “any subjectively experienced sense of commonality based on the belief in common ancestry and shared culture.” Politically relevant ethnic groups include ethnic groups where “at least one political organization claims to represent it in national politics or if its members are subjected to state-led political discrimination” (Vogt et al., 2015). I also collect data ethnic groups come from the *All Minorities at Risk* (AMAR) dataset (Birnie et al. 2016).² The AMAR data addresses issues of selection bias in the previous versions of the *Minorities at Risk* (MAR) Project (2009). Previously, researchers selected ethnic groups for the *MAR* dataset on the condition of groups being “at-risk.” Since discriminated ethnic groups tend to be more involved in violence than non-discriminated minority groups, the *MAR* dataset has been criticized for its selection bias (Birnie et al., 2018). The *AMAR* data corrects this issue by constructing data on relevant ethnic groups

²These data come for the AMAR Phase I data. See: Birnie, Jóhanna K; David D Laitin; Jonathan Wilkenfeld; Agatha Hultquist; David Waguespack; Ted Gurr. 2016. ”Socially Relevant Identity: Addressing Selection Bias Issues and Introducing the AMAR (All Minorities at Risk) Data.” CIDCM Working Paper.

defined as groups that are noticeable by ‘their actions on ethnic distinctions in everyday life’ (Birbir 2015). Specifically, the AMAR criteria for inclusion of socially relevant groups include: 1) membership in the group is determined primarily by descent, 2) membership in the group is recognized and viewed as important by members and/or non-members,³ 3) members share some distinguishing cultural features including language, religion, and customs, 4) cultural features are practiced by a majority of the group, and 5) the group has at least 100,00 members or comprise of at least 1% of the country’s population (Birbir et al., 2018). The AMAR dataset includes data on 317 ethnic groups across 121 countries between 1985-2006.⁴ Since I am interested in ethnic group variables across *AMAR* and *EPR*, I select ethnic groups that inner merge between the two datasets, which results in data on 306 ethnic groups across 115 countries between 1985-2006.⁵

I use two variables from the *EPR* dataset to select *regional minorities* from the complete list of ethnic groups. To identify *regional* ethnic minorities, I select ethnic groups based on their geo-spatial concentration coded by the *Geo-referencing Ethnic Power Relations* (GeoEPR) data.⁶ This variable defines spatial coding for each ethnic group as regionally based, urban, regional and urban, migrant, dispersed, statewide, or aggregate. I exclude statewide ethnic groups from this study, given statewide ethnic groups maintain a “presence in virtually every part of the country” and represent the titular group (e.g. “Italians in Italy, the Bulgarians in Bulgaria, or the Hungarians in Hungary”) and do not reflect the ethnic groups I am interested in studying here (Schvitz and Muller-Crepon, 2019). I also exclude groups coded as “aggregate” ethnic groups, which the dataset defines as “a particular group which during a period is aggregated from several smaller ones” given these groups

³The importance may be psychological, normative, and/or strategic.

⁴The raw sample of socially relevant groups in the AMAR data include 1,202 ethnic groups. However, data are incomplete for at least 900 groups in the AMAR dataset since the data collection process remains in its initial phase. By extending the criteria for inclusion of socially relevant groups, the final data includes information on ethnic groups that were not included in the original MAR dataset. I depend on the previous version of the MAR project data on ethnic protests. Thus, I restrict my sample to the set of groups that are present in both the AMAR and MAR dataset, which leaves me with 317 ethnic groups.

⁵I create a list of country-ethnic group names for the *AMAR* and *EPR* datasets and select each country-ethnic group observation that matched to build the list of ethnic groups included in this study.

⁶The *GeoEPR* data is part of the *EPR* dataset family (Vogt et al., 2015).

may represent multiple ethnic group identities. I am left with ethnic groups whose spatial distribution includes regionally based, urban, regional and urban, migrant, and dispersed as regional-based ethnic groups. To identify regional ethnic *minorities*, I select regional ethnic groups that make up less than 10% of the total country population.⁷ By selecting smaller ethnic groups, I ensure that the hypothesis test focuses on regional ethnic groups that remain too small to make up a majority within the first-level administrative unit, which speaks to the groups in the theory presented here. This selection process results in data on 186 regional ethnic minority groups across 83 countries between 1985-2006. Although not perfect, this method of identifying regional ethnic minorities offers an attempt to include 1) ethnic minorities within a national state and 2) ethnic minorities that may be concentrated throughout first-level administrative units within a given country, and 3) ethnic minorities that may not comprise of majorities within sub-national territorial boundaries. This process identification leaves me with groups considered to be local minorities at the subnational level including the Arab population in Iran, the indigenous people of Brazil, and the Egyptian Coptic community. Groups that do not meet this classification include the Kurds in Iraq, African Americans in the United States, or the Punjabi ethnic group of Pakistan. In the latter three example, the ethnic group is one comprises of a significant population across multiple sub-national districts or make up regional-level majority.

Table 2.1: Distribution of Regional Ethnic Minority Populations by World Region

World Region	Number	Proportion
East Asia & Pacific	32	17.2%
Europe & Central Asia	59	31.7%
Latin America & Caribbean	17	9.1%
Middle East & North Africa	13	7.0%
North America	2	1.1%
South Asia	19	10.2%
Sub-Saharan Africa	44	23.7%
Total	186	100%

⁷Note: In alternative iterations of this paper, I also selected ethnic groups that comprise of less than the plurality in a given country as regional ethnic minorities. However, this method includes ethnic groups that with considerably large populations that may comprise of ethnic majorities within first-level administrative units. This selection process did not result in the ethnic groups that this paper speaks to.

Table 2.1 presents the distribution of regional ethnic minorities across world regions. According to the data, the greatest proportion of regional ethnic minorities exist in regions such as Europe, Central Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. A full list and detailed explanation of the regional ethnic minorities included in this study can be found on Table 2.6 in the Appendix.

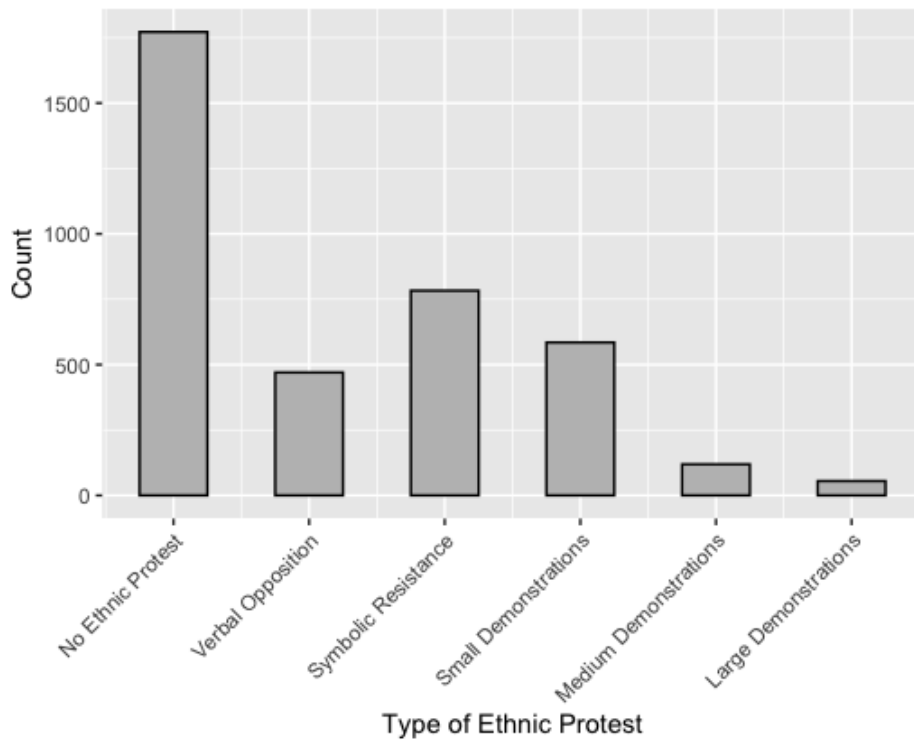
2.4.2 Measuring Ethnic Protests by Regional Ethnic Minority Groups

Building on the definition of ethnic conflict, the dependent variable is ethnic protests over ethnic power imbalances, ethnic group autonomy rights, or ethnic discrimination. To date, the best measure for ethnic group protests rests with *AMAR* project on ethnic minority protests. These protests may not always represent disputes centered on autonomy rights for ethnic minorities groups and may include cases where ethnic minorities mobilize in protests in order to obtain policy concession for their ethnic group members. The *AMAR* dataset defines ethnic protests as mobilization “initiated by organizations that claim to represent the group’s interests and directed against governments that claim to exercise authority over the group” (Birnie et al. 2018).⁸ The ethnic protest variable ranges from 0-5, with each value indicating a distinct type of ethnic protest exercised by an ethnic group. For instance, a value of 1 identifies demands for independence by minority groups through verbal opposition such as public letters, petitions, or court action. A value of 2 indicates mobilization for autonomy by minority groups through symbolic resistance including sit-ins, blockage of traffic, or other political mobilization on a grand scale. Values of 3, 4, and 5 reveal cases where ethnic demonstrations, rallies, strikes, and/or riots occurred with 10,000, 10,000 - 100,000, or greater than 100,000 participants, respectively. Ostensibly, a value of 0 suggests ethnic groups did not partake in an ethnic protest in a given year. I create a dichotomous variable for ethnic protests for each instance where a protest occurred by an ethnic group in the data sample

⁸The dataset considers the “government” as the body that maintains authority over the majority of the country.

regardless of the ethnic protest category. I do this to account for any measurement error in coding protest type in the original variable given it is unclear how well coders capture cases of protests including “verbal opposition” or “symbolic resistance”. I also do this to simplify the hypothesis test since the main theory focuses on protests occurring rather than the type of protest that occurs. Although I present figures and statistics on both versions of the protest variable, I use the binary variable, which represents ethnic protest occurrence as the main dependent variable in this study. A value of 1 indicates the ethnic group participated in some act of protest in a given year, and a value of 0 assume the ethnic group did not protest in a given year. Figure 2.2 presents the data on protests as the original categorical variable prior to the variables transformation to a binary measure.

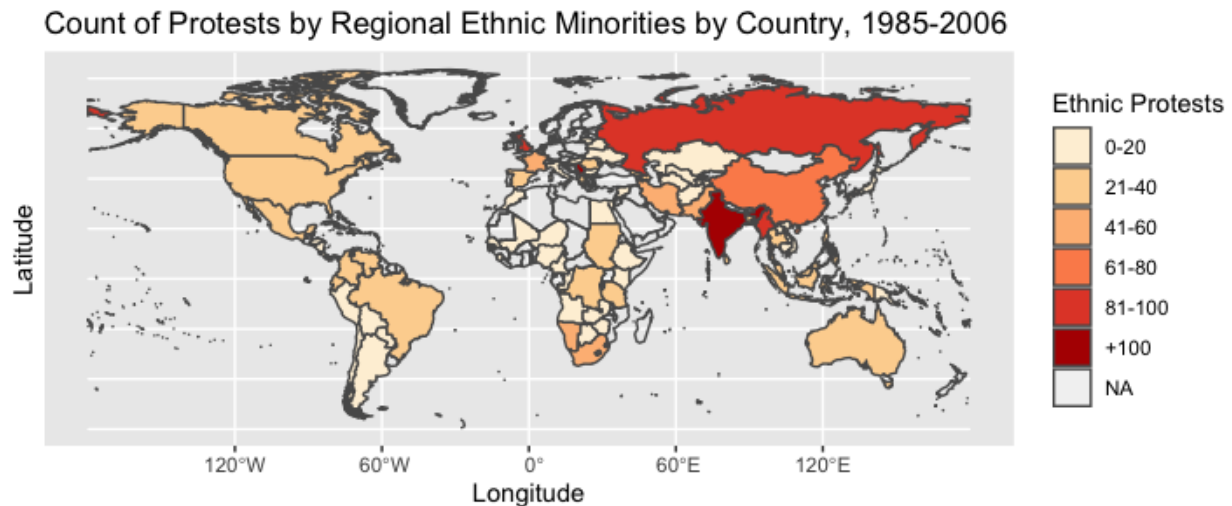
Figure 2.2: Ethnic Protest Type in the AMAR Dataset as a Categorical Variable
Ethnic Protest Type in AMAR Dataset, 1985-2006



The map in Figure 2.3 presents the distribution of the count of protests around the world by regional ethnic minorities in each country between 1985-2006. This map reveals that regional ethnic minority protests were highest in East Asia, especially in India, Myanmar,

Russia, and China. Ethnic protests were also prevalent in Central Asia and Europe including Pakistan, Iran, Serbia, the United Kingdom. With the exception of Namibia and South Africa, fewer regional ethnic minority protests occur in Sub-Saharan Africa than in other parts of the world. The same can be said about protests by regional ethnic minorities in North America, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This map also reveals that the regions with the highest number of regional ethnic minorities found in Table 1 may be prone to protests by regional ethnic minority groups. For instance, nearly 50% of regional ethnic minority groups reside in Europe and Asia, which appear to be regions with a higher count of protests by regional ethnic minorities. Overall, the data show that instances of regional ethnic minority protests tend to occur within specific world regions rather than throughout most countries worldwide.

Figure 2.3: World Map of Protests by Regional Ethnic Minorities, 1985-2006



Data on ethnic protests are from the AMAR Phase I sample dataset.
 See: Birnir Jóhanna K, David D. Laitin, Jonathan Wilkenfeld, David M. Waguespack, Agatha S. Hultquist, and Ted R. Gurr. 2017. "Introducing the AMAR (All Minorities at Risk) Data." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

2.4.3 *Operationalizing Territorial Autonomy*

To measure the effects of territorial autonomy on regional ethnic conflict, I account for whether ethnic groups reside in countries that use territorial autonomy arrangements. There are many ways to operationalize territorial autonomy systems, and each option comes with its own challenges. For instance, the *ERAD* includes information on ethnic regions across systems that use a range of territorial autonomy arrangements, including partial territorial autonomy systems, ethnofederacies, and full territorial autonomy systems (Panov and Semenov, 2018). I can create a binary variable in my dataset to define countries with territorial autonomy systems based on whether the country is included in the *ERAD*; however, this dataset ranges from the years 2001-2015, and by merging *ERAD* with my data I lose over 75% of my observations since there are few years in which the years in the dataset overlap. Alternatively, the *Database of Political Institutions DPI* (Cruz et al. 2020) identifies systems that use federal arrangements by capturing whether there are autonomous regions in a given country in a given year. However, this dataset does not clarify whether autonomous regions are ethnically defined and does not account for alternative first-level administrative units with territorial autonomy other than regions (e.g. states, provinces, etc.). Ideally, I aim to operationalize territorial autonomy using data that allows for the greatest number of observations while also identifying whether a country provides ethnically-defined territorial autonomy. Therefore, to preserve the number of observations in my study, I identify countries with territorial autonomy arrangements using the country-level data from the *EPR* dataset, which captures the number of ethnic groups with regional autonomy in a given country. I code countries with at least 1 ethnic group with regional autonomy as a country with territorial autonomy arrangements. Out of the 83 countries included in this dataset, 45 countries meet this criteria at least once during the years 1985-2006.

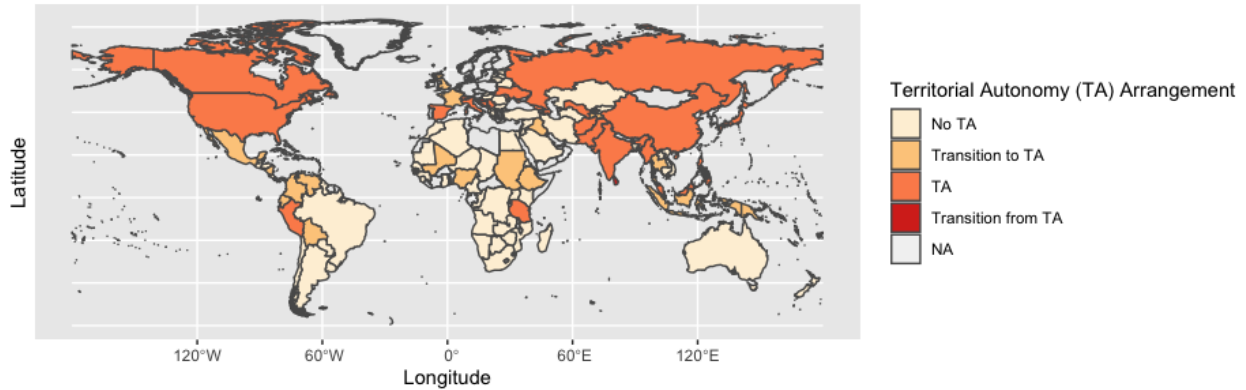
In addition to measuring the effects of territorial autonomy arrangements, I also account for *decentralization* as the degree of authority of regional governments granted to them by the national government. I use the *Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)* dataset to identify the

independence of regional governance within a given country. The *V-Dem* dataset defines regional governments as the “second-highest level of government...that is situated below the national government” and considers cantons, departments, states, provinces, and regions as examples of regional governments (Coppedge et al. 2019). The *regional government index* in the *V-Dem* dataset measures the extent in which regional governments “operate without interference from unelected bodies at the regional level.” This index ranges from 0-1, where a value of 1 indicates “a country in which regional governments are elected and able to operate without restrictions” (Coppedge et al. 2019, p. 49). This measurement of decentralization is distinct from the measure of territorial autonomy because it assumes regional governments are subordinate to the national government, and measures authority based on how much power is given to them, which may fluctuate over time. However, the regional government index does not constitute an ideal measure of decentralization given it does not provide information on the type of authority given to regional governments or the ways in which this authority is used. Nonetheless, it does provide data on the extent in which regional governments operate independently from outside interference, which provides some information on the level of authority granted to regional governments. Overall, I presume countries that score higher on the regional government index represent countries with higher decentralized authority to subnational regions. Figure 2.4 presents two maps that display territorial autonomy arrangements and decentralization by country during 1985-2006.⁹ For more information on the operationalization of the decentralization variable from the *V-Dem* codebook, see the description included in the Appendix.

⁹Countries are coded as No TA if the country did not grant territorial autonomy to an ethnic minority during 1985-2006. Countries are coded as Transition to TA if the country switched from no TA to TA at some point during 1985-2006 and remained with TA. Countries are coded as TA if the country granted at least one ethnic minority territorial autonomy during 1985-2006. Countries are coded as Transition from TA if the country switched from TA to no TA at some point during 1985-2006 and remained without TA. Ethiopia and Tajikistan were the only two countries that switched to TA then to no TA and back to TA during this time period. Ethiopia switched to TA at 1991, switched to no TA in 1993, then back to TA in 1994. Tajikistan switched to TA in 1993, then to no TA in 1997, then back to TA in 1998. Regional government index identifies whether regional governments are elected and the extent in which they operate without interference from un-elected bodies at the regional level. Higher values assume greater regional government authority.

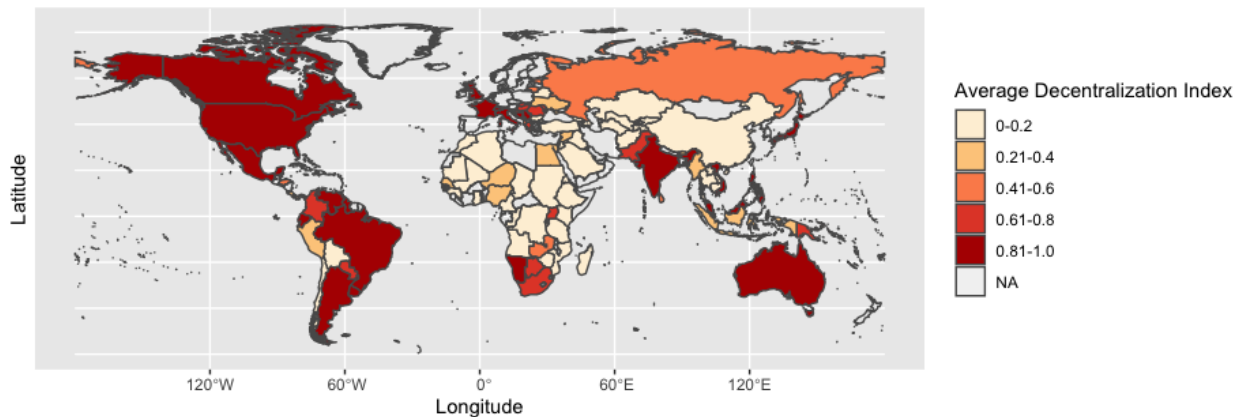
Figure 2.4: World Map of Territorial Autonomy Arrangements and Average Decentralization Index, 1985-2006

Countries by Territorial Autonomy Arrangements, 1985-2006



Data on territorial autonomy arrangements comes from the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) Dataset Family (2019). See: Vogt, Manuel et al. (2015). "Integrating Data on Ethnicity, Geography, and Conflict: The Ethnic Power Relations Data Set Family." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59(7): 1327-42.

Countries by Average Decentralization Index, 1985-2006



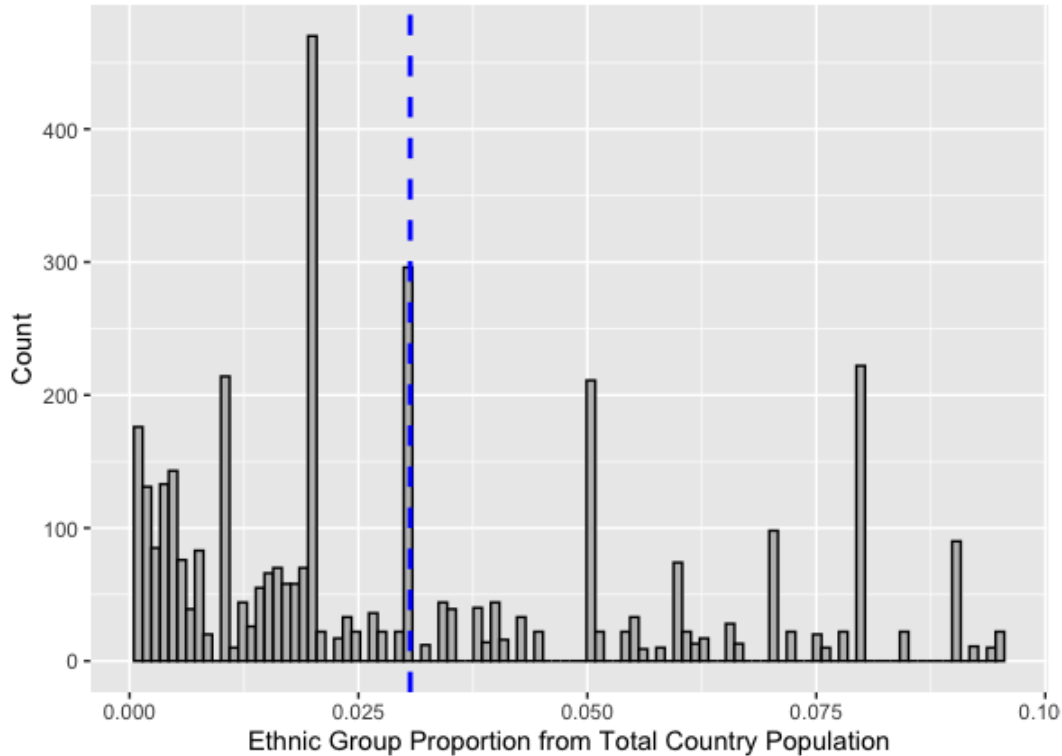
Data on decentralization from Varieties of Democracy v9 (2019). See: Coppedge, Michael et al. (2019) "V-Dem Codebook v9" Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project.

2.4.4 Accounting for Mechanisms and Control Variables

To test the theory's mechanisms, I collect data on ethnic group powerless status, ethnic group political grievances, and ethnic group economic grievances. Ethnic group powerless status comes from the *EPR* dataset. This variable identifies whether an ethnic group has influence within decision-making institutions in a given country in a given year. Specifically, a value of 1 for the variable *powerless* indicates "elite representatives hold no political power (or do not have influence on decision making) at the national level of executive power - although without being explicitly discriminated against." As stated above, although I expect that

autonomy arrangements may increase access to power for regional ethnic minority groups, I expect this power to be meaningless given they remain too small to shape regional-level policies. I expect grievances to arise among regional ethnic minorities whether their power status increases or decreases.

Figure 2.5: Distribution of Regional Ethnic Minority Group Population Size, 1985-2006
Ethnic Group Size for Regional Ethnic Minority Groups, 1985-2006



Variables on political and economic grievances come from the *AMAR* dataset. The *AMAR* dataset defines grievances as statements and actions by group leaders and members or observations of grievances by third parties aimed to address discrimination over representation and economic inequalities for ethnic minority groups. Both political and economic grievance variables are categorical variables that range from values of 0-3 and 0-2, respectively. I create dichotomous variables for each measure in order to simplify testing. Values of 0 for the grievance variables assume no grievances were expressed by an ethnic minority group in a given year and values of 1 presume ethnic groups expressed political or economic grievances through statements or actions.

To test opportunities available to regional ethnic minorities I include two variables: *group size* and *civil society*. The *EPR* measures ethnic group size as a fraction of a country's total population. Since the data are restricted to groups that make up less than 10% of the total population, ethnic group size ranges between values greater than 0% and less than 10%. The variable *civil society* comes from the *Vdem* dataset. For every country in each year, this variable identifies whether the country's government attempts to repress civil society organizations. The original variable ranges values of -4 to +4 where greater values indicate freer societies. I normalize this variable by creating an index that ranges from 0-1, where values closer to 0 represent countries with extreme measures of civil society oppression and values closer to 1 include countries that are less likely to repress civil society organizations. In other words, higher values of this index represent freer societies. Finally, I control for three variables that may impact ethnic conflict by regional ethnic minority groups: *number of ethnic groups*, the *war history* of the ethnic groups¹⁰, and presence of *ethnic conflict* in a given country. These variables come from the *EPR* data.

2.4.5 *Dataset Summary*

Overall, my dataset consists of 3,784 observations comprising of 186 regional ethnic minority groups across 83 countries between 1985-2006. The following table presents descriptive statistics on the main variables included in this study so far: *ethnic protests* (type and occurrence), *territorial autonomy*, *decentralization*, *powerless*, *political grievance*, *economic grievance*, *groupsize*, *civil society*, *number of ethnic groups*, *war history*, and *ethnic conflict*.

Table 2.2 presents descriptive statistics for each variable.

¹⁰ *War history* constitutes a count variable that indicates the number of times an ethnic group was involved in the same conflict in previous years. I control for previous conflict episodes given ethnic groups that experience conflict in the past are more likely to engage in future instances of ethnic conflict (Okamoto and Wilkes, 2008).

Table 2.2: Summary Statistics of Main Variables

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
Ethnic Protest Type	3,784	1.200	1.330	0	0	2	5
Ethnic Protest Occurrence	3,784	0.532	0.499	0	0	1	1
Territorial Autonomy	3,784	0.490	0.500	0	0	1	1
Decentralization	3,784	0.450	0.383	0.000	0.043	0.905	0.996
Powerless	3,784	0.617	0.486	0	0	1	1
Pol. Grievance	3,784	0.370	0.483	0	0	1	1
Econ. Grievance	3,784	0.321	0.467	0	0	1	1
Groupsize	3,784	0.031	0.026	0.001	0.010	0.050	0.095
Civil Society	3,784	0.603	0.205	0.077	0.435	0.761	0.999
Num. Ethnic Groups	3,784	12.366	13.683	2	4	12	58
War History	3,784	0.446	0.874	0	0	1	6
Num. Ethnic Conflicts	3,784	0.107	0.392	0	0	0	4
GDP <i>per capita</i>	3,784	3,877.694	7,257.203	94.565	415.494	3,005.426	46,298.730
OECD Country	3,784	0.120	0.325	0	0	0	1

2.5 The Consequences of Territorial Autonomy on Ethnic Protest

2.5.1 *Plotting Expectations: Ethnic Protests by Regional Ethnic Minority Groups Overtime, by Institutional Design*

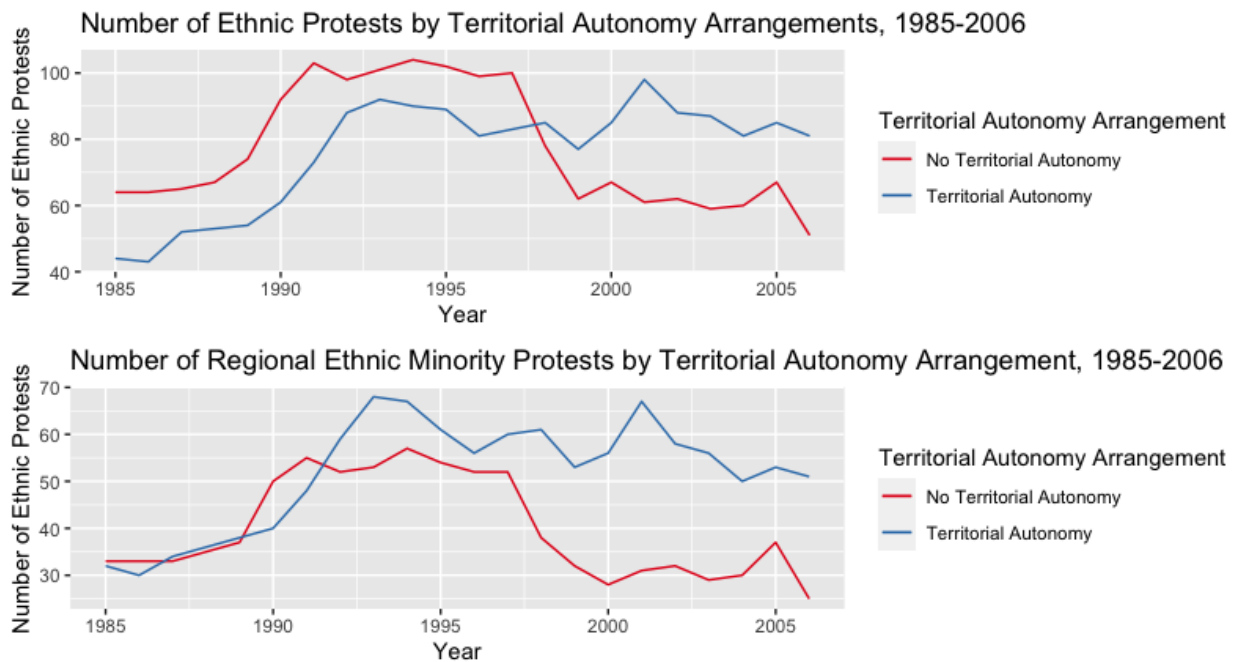
Figure 2.6 presents the data in two illustrations. The top panel reflects the yearly count of ethnic protests by territory autonomy arrangements, and the bottom panel displays the yearly count of ethnic protests by regional ethnic minorities across systems with and without territorial autonomy arrangements. If the theory above holds, the data should reflect greater instances of ethnic protests generally and protests by regional ethnic minorities specifically under territorial autonomy arrangements than in systems without territorial autonomy.

The top panel shows that ethnic protests were generally higher in systems with territorial autonomy arrangements but this trend emerged after the late 1990's. According to the data, the peak count of ethnic protests appears in 1994 with 194 total ethnic protests across all countries. Of the 194 ethnic protests that occurred in 1994, 104 protests took place in countries that lacked autonomy arrangements. A few years later, ethnic protests became more prevalent in countries with territorial autonomy. In 2001 systems with territorial autonomy experienced an all-time high of 98 ethnic protests by regional minorities compared

to 61 ethnic protests in systems without territorial autonomy arrangements.

The bottom panel in Figure 2.6 show that between 1985-2006 when regional minorities protested they mostly protested in countries with territorial autonomy arrangements than in countries without these systems. This direction appears in the data in the early 1990's. Specifically, there appears to be simultaneous drop in ethnic protests by regional ethnic minorities in countries without territorial autonomy and a rise in ethnic protests by regional ethnic minorities in countries with territorial autonomy between 1998-2002.

Figure 2.6: Number of Ethnic Protests by Institutional Design and Regional Ethnic Minority Status, 1985-2006



2.5.2 Testing the Mechanisms: Territorial Autonomy and Regional Ethnic Minority Grievances

To test the theory's mechanisms, I evaluate the statistical relationship between territorial autonomy arrangements and decentralization with an ethnic group's power status and proclamation of political and economic grievances. In other words, I test whether regional ethnic minority groups tend to become more powerless and are more likely to express political or

economic grievances under institutions of territorial autonomy and decentralization. According to the theory above, both institutions may decrease the power of regional ethnic minorities and increase the expression of political and/or economic grievances. Testing the mechanisms builds support for the key tenets of the theory. These results will tell us whether we can rule out the possibility of null expectations, such as both institutions should increase regional ethnic minority power and decreases political and/or economic grievances. If the tests provide statistical support for the theoretical mechanisms there is some reason to believe we cannot rule out the theory that these institutions may create conditions that increase ethnic protests by regional ethnic minority groups. Since each dependent variable in test is binary and the ethnic group data are clustered within country-year observations, I use a generalized linear mixed-effects model with random effects for country and year grouping variables.

Table 2.3: Does territorial autonomy or decentralization increase ethnic minority powerlessness and grievances?

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Powerless (1)	Political Grievance Expressed (2)	Economic Grievance Expressed (3)
Territorial Autonomy	-0.449** (-0.883, -0.014)	0.603*** (0.358, 0.848)	0.478*** (0.187, 0.769)
Decentralization	0.960*** (0.361, 1.559)	0.824*** (0.469, 1.180)	1.378*** (0.980, 1.777)
Constant	1.092** (0.053, 2.131)	-1.213*** (-1.443, -0.984)	-1.625*** (-1.900, -1.351)
Observations	3,784	3,784	3,784
Log Likelihood	-1,559.203	-2,439.744	-2,296.270
Akaike Inf. Crit.	3,126.406	4,887.487	4,600.540
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	3,151.360	4,912.441	4,625.494

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

The results in Table 2.3 lend some support to theory.¹¹ The findings suggest the prob-

¹¹Territorial autonomy captures institutions that enshrine regional government autonomy; the constitution protects this institutional design and changes to territorial autonomy rights would require re-writing the constitution. Decentralization is an institution shaped by policy. It fluctuates and is based on how

ability of regional ethnic minorities expressing political and economic grievances increases under territorial autonomy and decentralization. In models 2 and 3, the coefficients for territorial autonomy and decentralization reflect a positive association with the expression of ethnic group grievances; both institutions seem to increase the probability of regional ethnic minorities expressing political and economic grievances. Second, the probability of expressing an ethnic group grievance by regional ethnic minority groups increases more with an increase in decentralization than when countries prescribe territorial autonomy. Between the coefficients for territorial autonomy and decentralization in models 2 and 3, the probability of ethnic group developing a grievance is higher under decentralization. Third, territorial autonomy seems to have a greater impact on the expression of political grievances than economic grievances; whereas decentralization has a larger consequence on developing economic grievances over political ones. This result comes from comparing the coefficients for territorial autonomy and decentralization in model 2 with their values in model 3. All else equal, territorial autonomy has a larger impact on the expression of political grievances compared to economic grievances and decentralization increases the probability of ethnic group expressing economic grievances by a greater ratio than political grievances. This finding reveals implications about the relationship between territorial autonomy and decentralization with the type of grievance expressed by regional ethnic minority groups. Overall, the outputs in Table 2.3 seem to support the idea that grievances by regional ethnic minorities may increase in systems that use territorial autonomy and decentralization policies.

However, the relationship between territorial self-government and access to power for regional ethnic minorities remains less clear. According to the results in Table 2.3, the ability of regional ethnic minorities to influence policy increases under territorial autonomy yet decreases with higher levels of decentralization. The difference between these two coefficients may be explained by the distinction in institutional design between territorial autonomy and decentralization. As stated earlier, territorial autonomy increases access to power for regional

much authority national governments defer to regional governments at specific point in time. Given these distinctions, I include territorial autonomy and decentralization in each model.

groups, which includes regional ethnic minorities. Decentralization to regional governments does not guarantee regional ethnic minorities are involved in local policy spaces. Nonetheless, to better understand the differences requires further testing.

Table 2.4: Regional Ethnic Minority Protests: By Territorial Autonomy, Ethnic Group Opportunities, and Previously Known Causes

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	Ethnic Protest Occurrence				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Territorial Autonomy	0.711*** (0.329, 1.094)	0.715*** (0.329, 1.101)	0.938*** (0.454, 1.423)	0.668*** (0.289, 1.047)	1.083** (0.091, 2.074)
Groupsize		7.562*** (2.938, 12.186)	4.859 (-1.621, 11.338)		
Territorial Autonomy*Groupsize			-3.104 (-11.788, 5.580)		
Civil Society				1.298*** (0.544, 2.052)	1.454*** (0.584, 2.324)
Territorial Autonomy*Civil Society					-0.417 (-1.752, 0.919)
GDP <i>per capita</i> , <i>logged</i>			-0.00003* (-0.0001, 0.00000)		-0.00002 (-0.0001, 0.00001)
Num. Ethnic Groups			-0.052* (-0.105, 0.001)		-0.048* (-0.097, 0.001)
War History			0.528*** (0.407, 0.649)		0.546*** (0.428, 0.664)
Num. Ethnic Conflict			0.036 (-0.174, 0.246)		0.031 (-0.179, 0.242)
Constant	0.002 (-0.454, 0.457)	-0.279 (-0.778, 0.220)	0.095 (-0.574, 0.763)	-0.784** (-1.418, -0.150)	-0.667 (-1.481, 0.147)
Observations	3,784	3,784	3,784	3,784	3,784
Log Likelihood	-2,154.771	-2,149.530	-2,104.609	-2,149.241	-2,100.071
Akaike Inf. Crit.	4,317.542	4,309.061	4,229.219	4,308.482	4,220.142
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	4,342.496	4,340.253	4,291.604	4,339.675	4,282.527

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

2.5.3 Hypothesis Testing: Regional Ethnic Minority Protests May Increase Under Autonomy Arrangements

Table 2.4 presents the results from testing the relationship between territorial autonomy and regional ethnic protests. In each model, the coefficients for each variable represents the change in the logged odds ratio of the probability of ethnic protest occurring over the

probability of ethnic protest not occurring. Positive coefficient values suggest an increase in the probability of observing an ethnic protests; whereas, coefficients with negative values indicate a decrease in the probability of an ethnic protest occurring.

The results in Table 2.4 show that territorial autonomy remains positively and significantly associated with ethnic protest occurrence by regional ethnic minority group across all models. In addition, groupsizes and civil society seem to matter, but not as I original expected. For instance, the interactions between territorial autonomy and groupsizes and territorial autonomy and civil society fail to explain ethnic protest onset by regional ethnic minorities. Although the log odds of ethnic protests by regional ethnic minority decreases when interacting territorial autonomy with ethnic groups size and civil society rights, these coefficient remain insignificant. When controlling for confounding variables, I find that number of ethnic groups in a given country is weakly and negatively associated with regional ethnic minority group protest; ethnic group war history is positively and significantly related to the probability of ethnic protest increases; and the number of ethnic conflicts in a given country does not explain ethnic protests by regional ethnic minority groups.

Table 2.5 presents the statistical output for the relationship between decentralization and local ethnic minority protests. Similar to the findings presented in Table 2.4, higher degrees of decentralization associate with a positive and significant impact on the likelihood of ethnic protests. In other words, protests by local ethnic minorities may increase as regions obtain greater authority to govern over local policies. It also appears that this relationship is greater than the relationship between territorial autonomy and local ethnic protests. The values of the coefficients in Table 2.5 indicate that the likelihood of ethnic protests by local ethnic minorities is higher under institutions of greater decentralization than territorial autonomy arrangements. Further, evidence suggests there is an important relationship between decentralization, state repression, and local ethnic protests. This finding did not appear in the output in Table 2.4. Model 5 in Table 2.5 tells us the probability of local ethnic minority protests arising increases in highly decentralized countries with repressive regimes. This

finding may be important to identifying the conditions that impact conflict outcomes for distinguished groups like local ethnic minorities. Finally, the output for the control variables in Table 2.5 present similar results to those presented in Table 2.4. In other words, the number of ethnic conflicts in a given country and the country's number of ethnic groups do not appear to influence the probability of local ethnic protests. However, ethnic groups involved in previous instances of ethnic conflict may be more likely to engage in local ethnic protests; the coefficient value for *war history* in Model 3 and Model 5 reveals a positive and significant impact on the likelihood of ethnic protests by local ethnic minority groups.

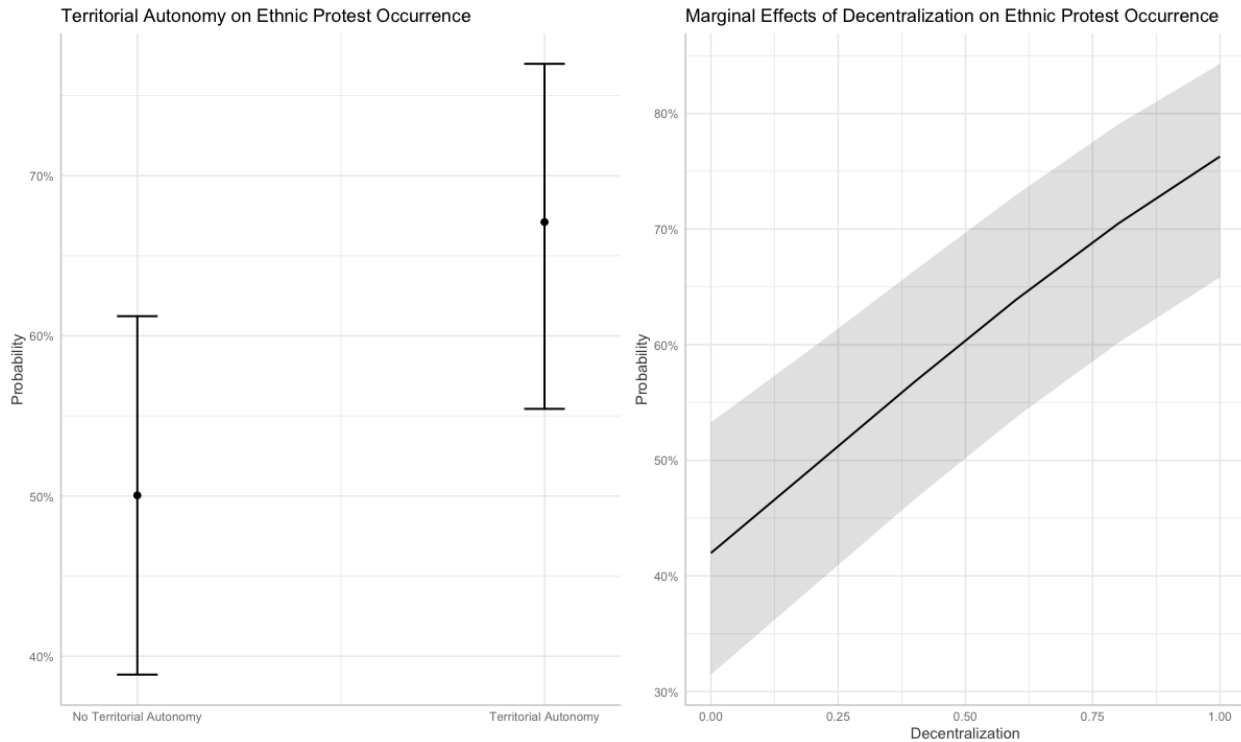
Table 2.5: Regional Ethnic Minority Protests: By Decentralization, Ethnic Group Opportunities, and Previously Known Causes

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	Ethnic Protests Occurrence				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Decentralization	1.492*** (0.982, 2.002)	1.530*** (1.013, 2.047)	1.856*** (1.197, 2.515)	1.329*** (0.771, 1.887)	2.722*** (1.271, 4.173)
Groupsize		7.829*** (3.227, 12.430)	7.013* (-0.818, 14.845)		
Decentralization*Groupsize			-7.471 (-21.014, 6.073)		
Civil Society				0.579 (-0.246, 1.404)	1.233** (0.125, 2.341)
Decentralization*Civil Society					-1.893* (-3.911, 0.124)
GDP <i>per capita</i> , <i>logged</i>			-0.00002 (-0.00005, 0.00001)		-0.00001 (-0.00004, 0.00002)
Num. Ethnic Groups			-0.034 (-0.081, 0.013)		-0.034 (-0.080, 0.011)
War History			0.526*** (0.403, 0.650)		0.552*** (0.434, 0.670)
Num. Ethnic Conflicts			0.026 (-0.186, 0.239)		0.021 (-0.192, 0.233)
Constant	-0.324 (-0.778, 0.131)	-0.628** (-1.128, -0.128)	-0.480 (-1.154, 0.194)	-0.617** (-1.232, -0.001)	-0.912** (-1.766, -0.059)
Observations	3,784	3,784	3,784	3,784	3,784
Log Likelihood	-2,145.323	-2,139.631	-2,094.108	-2,144.397	-2,093.439
Akaike Inf. Crit.	4,298.645	4,289.263	4,208.215	4,298.795	4,206.879
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	4,323.599	4,320.455	4,270.600	4,329.987	4,269.264

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

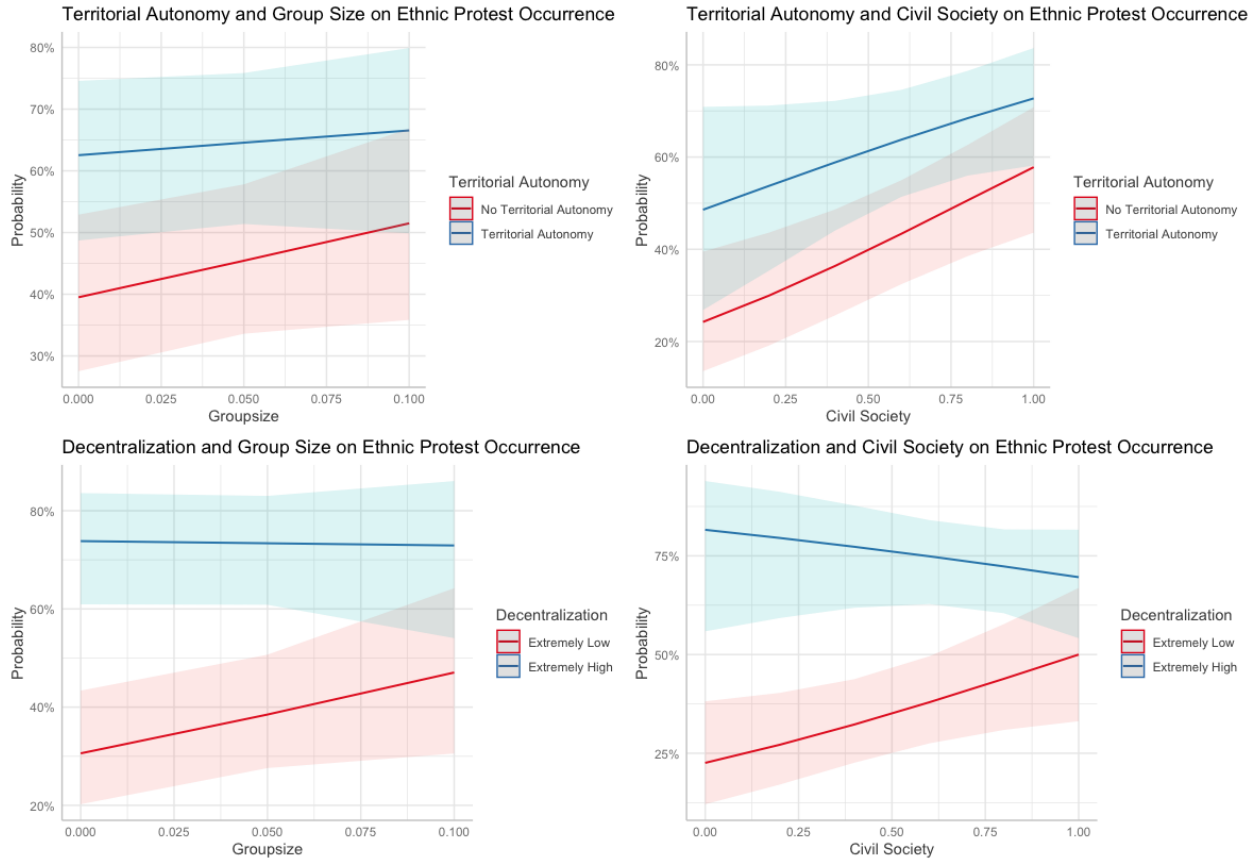
Figure 2.7: Predicted Probabilities of Territorial Autonomy and Decentralization on Ethnic Protest Occurrence



To illustrate the findings in Tables 2.4 and 2.5, I present plots for the marginal effects of territorial autonomy and decentralization on the probability of ethnic protest occurrence in Figure 2.7. The left-hand side of this figure illustrates the predicted probabilities for model 5 in Table 2.4. This plot shows that a change from systems without territorial autonomy arrangements to countries with territorial autonomy arrangements increases the probability of ethnic protest occurrence by regional ethnic minorities by almost 20%. The right-hand plot presents the predicted probabilities in Model 5 in Table 2.5. This plot shows that increases in decentralization significantly and positively increases the probability of ethnic protests by regional ethnic minority groups. Overall, the images in Figure 2.7 illustrate that territorial autonomy and decentralization may explain the probability of regional ethnic minority group protests even while controlling for alternative factors that may cause ethnic conflict.

I also include plots for the marginal effects of the interaction between territorial autonomy, decentralization and the opportunity variables in Figure 2.8. In this figure, each plot presents

Figure 2.8: Predicted Probabilities of Interaction Variables



the probabilities of ethnic protest occurrence based on the specified interaction variables. In other words, each plot represents the predicted probability of ethnic protests based on the presence of territorial autonomy arrangements or degree of decentralization *interacted* with the ethnic group size and civil society variables. The top panel in Figure 2.8 shows the change in the predicted probabilities of local ethnic protests arising from changes to territorial autonomy arrangements. On the left side of the top figure we see the predicted probabilities of ethnic protests as a function of ethnic group size in cases without territorial autonomy arrangements (red line) and in cases with territorial autonomy arrangements (in blue). The right hand side of the top figure displaces the predicted probabilities of ethnic protests as a function of the civil society index in cases without and with territorial autonomy arrangements (red and blue lines, respectively). The bottom panels in Figure 2.8 presents

the change in the predicted likelihood change in local ethnic protests as a function of ethnic group size (left hand side) and civil society (right hand side) in countries with extremely low and high levels of decentralization policies (which correspond with the red and blue lines, respectively).

Based on predicted probability plots presented in Figure 2.8 we see that the relationship between territorial autonomy arrangements and ethnic protests is not conditional on ethnic group size nor civil society measures. In both the right and left sided figures on the top panel we see that the outcome on ethnic protests tends to overlap across systems with territorial autonomy arrangements and in systems without territorial autonomy arrangements. This finding suggests that ethnic group size and civil society do not explain why regional ethnic minorities protests in systems with territorial autonomy policies. The bottom panel in Figure 2.8 demonstrates that the predicted probability of local ethnic protests may be highest among smaller groups in decentralized societies where civil society organizations are highly discouraged. Otherwise, the interaction of decentralization policies with ethnic group size and civil society measures cannot explain the predicted probabilities of ethnic protests. Overall, the results presented in Figure 2.8 tell us that opportunities variable may not explain the probability of ethnic protests by regional ethnic minorities. Although, the bottom panel gives some information about ethnic group size, civil society rights, and decentralization worthy of future research and understanding.

In sum, above research reveals four key findings. First, between 1985-2006, protests by regional ethnic minorities specifically, and ethnic protests in general occurred at a higher count in countries with territorial autonomy than in countries without autonomy arrangements. This trend began in the late 1990's and continued until 2006. Second, political and economic grievances by regional ethnic minorities increased under systems with territorial autonomy and greater decentralization than in systems without these institutions. Third, protests by regional ethnic minority are not conditional on some opportunities for ethnic protests. Specifically, ethnic group size and civil society rights were unable to predict the

probability of ethnic protest in systems with or without territorial autonomy arrangements, and the probability of ethnic protests was highest for smaller regional ethnic minority groups in extremely repressive, decentralized systems. Finally, the likelihood of ethnic protests by regional ethnic minorities increased under territorial autonomy arrangements and higher levels of decentralization even when controlling for known factors of ethnic conflict including ethnic group diversity, ethnic group war history, and country-level ethnic conflict count.

2.6 Research conclusions, implications, and limitations

The consequences of territorial autonomy on regional ethnic minority groups remains underdeveloped within political science research. While territorial autonomy offers solutions to managing ethnic conflict between regional ethnic majorities and the central government, the extent in which it creates conditions that lead to local ethnic conflict needs remain unclear. Some research warns that territorial autonomy arrangements that increase regional autonomy for regional majorities may lead to local ethnic marginalization of ethnic minorities and increase demands for ethnic self-determination by regional ethnic minority groups. This paper builds on existing research and argues that regional autonomy may increase conflict among regional ethnic minority groups. The findings reveal territorial autonomy positively and significantly impacts the onset of ethnic protests. However, these results yield additional questions worthy of future research. For instance, what explains the difference in ethnic protests outcomes between territorial autonomy and decentralized systems? Also, what types of opportunities increase (or decrease) the likelihood of local ethnic protests and why? Finally, what are some potential policies that may exist that may curb local ethnic protests by local ethnic minorities under institutions of self-government that exclude them from local authority?

The implications of these results highlight the importance in studying local ethnic minorities as distinct ethnic groups from regionally concentrated ethnic majorities. If these

results are true, then policy that aims to improve access to power for regional majorities groups may simultaneously increase the marginalization of local ethnic minorities within autonomous regions. The findings highlight the need to consider alternative institutions that address the imbalance of power that arises within regions once autonomy grants authority over the region to a specific ethnic group. Local ethnic minorities may desire unique policy concessions that speak to the needs of their own communities and may be unable to achieve these agreements given the institutions that govern over them. In addition, why the factors that we expect to increase conflict between groups, such as groups size, do not influence ethnic protests by local ethnic minorities remains to be studied. Given most of the ethnic groups in this study comprise of relatively small ethnic groups, future research should explore the conditions under which smaller, local ethnic groups obtain policy concession from their regional and/or central governments.

Nonetheless, the findings presented in this paper should be accepted with some skepticism. First, the theory presented above builds expectation about inter-group dynamics within autonomous regions, but the testing does not examine ethnic protest outcomes at the subnational level. In subsequent research, I aim to build a dataset using existing data on autonomous region and map local ethnic minorities within them. Using this dataset, I will examine the consequences of autonomy on the extent of ethnic protest by local ethnic minorities within local territorial units. This research will add knowledge to the conditions that influence ethnic protests by local ethnic minorities and how these outcomes look inside the areas in which these groups reside. Second, although this project focuses on protests based on self-determination demands for local ethnic minorities, additional data from the Center for International Development and Conflict Management (CIDCM) accounts for instances of self-determination demands by ethnic groups. This dataset will clarify the extent in which institutions such as territorial autonomy increase challenges for autonomy by local ethnic minorities and may increase the temporal domain beyond the year of 2005. Third, this aforementioned research does not distinguish the target of ethnic protests by local

ethnic minority groups. Although the data used to test the paper's theory presumes protests target the regional or central government, there is no clear indication of which government is the main source of ethnic conflict. By using the data available at CIDCM, I can expand this research to identify the target of ethnic protests. Knowing whether ethnic protests center on disputes with the regional government instead of the central government will improve the empirical support and understanding for the theory on ethnic protests within autonomous regions.

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2.8 Appendix

2.8.1 Complete List of Countries and Regional Ethnic Minorities

Table 2.6: List of Countries and Regional Ethnic Minorities with *EPR* Ethnic Group ID

Country	Group ID	Ethnic Group Name
Afghanistan	70006000	Aimaq
	70016000	Uzbeks
Albania	33902000	Greeks
Angola	54002000	Cabindan Mayombe
Argentina	16002000	Indigenous Peoples
Australia	90001000	Aborigines
Azerbaijan	37302000	Lezgins
	37304000	Armenians
Bangladesh	77103000	Tribal Buddhists
	77104000	Biharis (Urdu Speaker)
Belarus	37003000	Poles
Bolivia	14506000	Guaraní And Other Eastern Indigenous Groups
Botswana	57103000	Kgalagadi
	57111000	San
Brazil	14003000	Indigenous Peoples
Bulgaria	35503000	Roma
Cambodia	81102000	Chinese
	81104000	Vietnamese
Cameroon	47106000	Southwestern Anglophones (Bakweri Etc.)
Canada	2004000	Aboriginal Peoples
Chile	15503000	Other Indigenous Peoples
China	71005100	Hui (Proper)
	71009000	Mongolians
	71010000	Tibetans
	71035000	Kazakh
	71036000	Uyghur
	10003000	Indigenous Peoples
Congo	48406070	Mbochi (Proper)
Congo, DRC	49005000	Luba Kasai
	49007000	Luba Shaba
	49008000	Ngbandi
	49010000	Other Kivu Groups
	49011000	Lunda Yeke
	49013000	Tutsi Banyamulenge
Costa Rica	9402000	Afro Costa Ricans
Croatia	34402000	Serbs

Continued on next page

Table 2.6 – continued from previous page

Country)	Group ID	Ethnic Group Name
Ecuador	13004000	Indigenous Lowland Peoples (Shuar, Achuar Etc.)
	13005000	Afro Ecuadorians
Egypt	65102000	Coptic Christians
Eritrea	53103000	Afar
Ethiopia	53001000	Afar
	53008000	Somali (Ogaden)
	53009000	Tigry
France	22002000	Basques
	22003000	Corsicans
	22004000	Roma
Georgia	37206000	Ossetians (South)
	37207000	Abkhazians
Greece	35002000	Muslims
	35003000	Roma
Honduras	9107000	Indigenous Peoples (Lenca, Maya Chorti, Miskito, Tawahka/Sumu, Xicaque, Pech, Nahua)
	9110000	Garifuna
Hungary	31002000	Roma
India	75001000	Assamese (Non Sc/St/Obcs)
	75003000	Bodo
	75006000	Kashmiri Muslims
	75007000	Indigenous Tripuri
	75009000	Malyalam (Non Sc/St/Obcs)
	75010000	Manipuri
	75012000	Mizo
	75014000	Naga
	75017000	Punjabi Sikhs (Non Sc/St)
	Indonesia	85001000
85005000		Chinese (Han)
85013000		Papuans
Iran	85017000	Malay
	63001000	Arabs
	63002000	Armenians
	63003000	Assyrians
	63005000	Bahais
	63006000	Baloch
	63008000	Kurds
	63010000	Turkmen
Italy	32502000	Sardinians
	32504000	German Speakers (Austrians)
	32506000	Roma

Continued on next page

Table 2.6 – continued from previous page

Country)	Group ID	Ethnic Group Name
Japan	74006000	Koreans
Kazakhstan	70501000	Germans
	70504000	Tatars
	70505000	Uighur
Kenya	50104000	Kisii
	50108000	Somali
Laos	81201000	Hmong
Lebanon	66001000	Armenian Orthodox
	66002000	Druze
Lithuania	36802000	Poles
	36803000	Russians
Macedonia	34303000	Roma
	34304000	Serbs
	34305000	Turks
Malaysia	82002000	Dayaks
	82003000	East Indians
	82004000	Kadazans
Mali	43202000	Tuareg
	43203000	Arabs/Moors
Mexico	7002000	Maya
Moldova	35904000	Gagauz
Morocco	60003000	Sahrawis
Mozambique	54101000	Makonde Yao
Myanmar	77505000	Kachins
	77506000	Kayin (Karens)
	77507000	Mons
	77508000	Muslim Arakanese
	77509000	Shan
	77511000	Zomis (Chins)
Namibia	56501000	Baster
	56507000	Mafwe
	56510000	San
	56511000	Whites
New Zealand	92004000	Asians
Nicaragua	9303000	Miskitos
Niger	43606000	Tuareg
Nigeria	47504000	Ogoni
Pakistan	77001000	Baluchis
	77003000	Mohajirs
	77007000	Ahmadis
	77008000	Hindus
Panama	9503000	Ngobe Bugle

Continued on next page

Table 2.6 – continued from previous page

Country)	Group ID	Ethnic Group Name
Papua New Guinea	91002000	Bougainvilleans
Paraguay	15005000	Tupi Guaraní And Other Indigenous Groups
Peru	13504000	Afroperuvians
	13505000	Indigenous Peoples Of The Amazon
Philippines	84002000	Indigenous
	84003000	Moro
Romania	36002000	Hungarians
	36003000	Roma
Russia	36503000	Tatars
	36516000	Chechens
	36523000	Avars
	36526000	Dargins
	36532000	Buryats
	36533000	Ingush
	36534000	Kumyks
	36535000	Lezgins
	36536000	Yakuts
	36537000	Komi
	36539000	Tuvinians
	36552000	Roma
	36553000	Kalmyks
	36554000	Karachai
Senegal	43305000	Diola
Serbia and Montenegro	34502000	Croats
	34504000	Bosniaks/Muslims
	34506000	Albanians
	34511000	Hungarians
	34512000	Roma
Sierra Leone	45101000	Creole
	45105030	Limba
South Africa	56002000	Asians
	56003000	Coloreds
	56004000	English Speakers
Spain	23004000	Basques
	23005000	Roma
Sri Lanka	78001000	Indian Tamils
	78004000	Sri Lankan Tamils
Sudan	62501000	Azande
	62505000	Fur
	62506000	Latoka

Continued on next page

Table 2.6 – continued from previous page

Country)	Group ID	Ethnic Group Name
	62507000	Nuba
	62508000	Nuer
	62513000	Shilluk
	62514000	Masalit
	62515000	Zaghawa
Syria	65201000	Druze
	65206000	Kurds
Tajikistan	70202000	Russians
Tanzania	51002000	Shirazi (Zanzibar Africans)
	51003000	Zanzibar Arabs
Thailand	80001000	Malay Muslims
	80005000	Hill Tribes
Turkmenistan	70112000	Russians
Ukraine	36905000	Crimean Tatars
United Kingdom	20002000	Scots
	20003000	Asians
	20004000	Afro Caribbeans
	20005000	Welsh
	20006000	Catholics In N. Ireland
United States	205000	American Indians
Uzbekistan	70403000	Russians
	70404000	Tajiks
Venezuela	10103000	Indigenous Peoples
Vietnam	81601000	Hoa (Chinese)
	81611000	Hmong
	81617000	Tay
Zambia	55103000	Lozi (Barotse)
Zimbabwe	55202000	White Zimbabweans

2.8.2 Description of Key Variables

Decentralization: The operationalization of decentralization comes from the *Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)* dataset (Coppedge et al., 2019). The dataset clarifies the description of *regional government index*, which I use as a proxy for decentralization, as “The lowest score would be reserved for a country that has no elected regional governments. A medium score would be accorded a country that has elected regional governments but where those governments are subordinate to unelected officials at the regional level perhaps appointed by a higher-level body. A high score would be accorded to a country in which regional governments are elected and able to operate without restrictions from unelected actors at the regional level with the exception of judicial bodies. Naturally, regional governments remain subordinate to the national government” (Coppedge et al., 2019) on page 49 of the

dataset codebook.

This index is a product of two variables. The first variable, is a categorical variable that identifies whether regional governments are elected, whether only the region's executive is elected, whether only the region's assembly is elected, or whether both the region's executive and assembly are elected. The coders scale this categorical variable to an index of 0-1, where 0 includes countries where regional governments are not elected and 1 includes countries where both the region's executive and assembly are directly elected. The second variable used to create the measure for regional government index includes the index for the regional government's authority. This variable is an ordinal measure to the question "How would you characterize the relative power, in practice, of elected and non-elected offices at the regional level?" Where a value of 0 suggests "All or nearly all elected offices are subordinate to non-elected offices at the regional level", a value of 1 indicates "Some elected offices are subordinate to non-elected offices at the regional level", a 2 includes countries where "Elected and non-elected offices are approximately equal in power at the regional level", a 3 suggests "most non-elected offices are subordinate to elected offices at the regional level", and a 4 means "All or nearly all non-elected offices are subordinate to elected offices at the regional level". This variables is scaled to an index of 0-1 where a value of 0 suggests regions have very little regional authority given they are completely subordinate to non-elected offices within the regional level, and a value of 1 indicates stronger regional governments with little to no interference from unelected regional bodies.

The final variable for *regional government index* is a product of the scaled variables for *regional government elected* and *regional government power*, where a values closer to 0 represent cases where regional government are not elected and are not independent from unelected groups within the regional territory and values closer to 1 include cases where regional governments are elected and are operate with little to no interference from subordinate groups within regions. Thus, higher values for this index represent cases where decentralization towards regional governments is greater and lower values for this index indicate lower decentralization towards regional governments.

2.8.3 Accounting for regional ethnic minorities with autonomy arrangements

Although this project attempts to select regional ethnic minorities that comprise of minorities at the subnational level, there were some cases where regional ethnic minorities still obtained regional autonomy - even if they were minorities within the first-level administrative unit. The Native Americans in the United States is one example. In the sample provided in this study 68 out of 186 groups were found to possess some form of regional autonomy despite their regional minority status. I ran a separate regression to test whether the effects of territorial autonomy and decentralization changed the value of the mechanisms in this theory and the outcome of ethnic protests. I present the results for the mechanisms test that exclude the regional ethnic minorities with territorial autonomy arrangements in Table

2.7. Overall, this test shows that the direction of the coefficients and the significance of each coefficient did not drastically change the results of this study. In other words, even when excluding regional ethnic minorities from this sample, I find that territorial autonomy arrangements and decentralization policies increase the likelihood of expressing political and economic grievances by regional ethnic minority groups. Further, decentralization continues to increase the powerlessness of regional ethnic minorities groups.

Table 2.7: Testing Mechanisms Excluding Regional Ethnic Minorities with Regional Autonomy

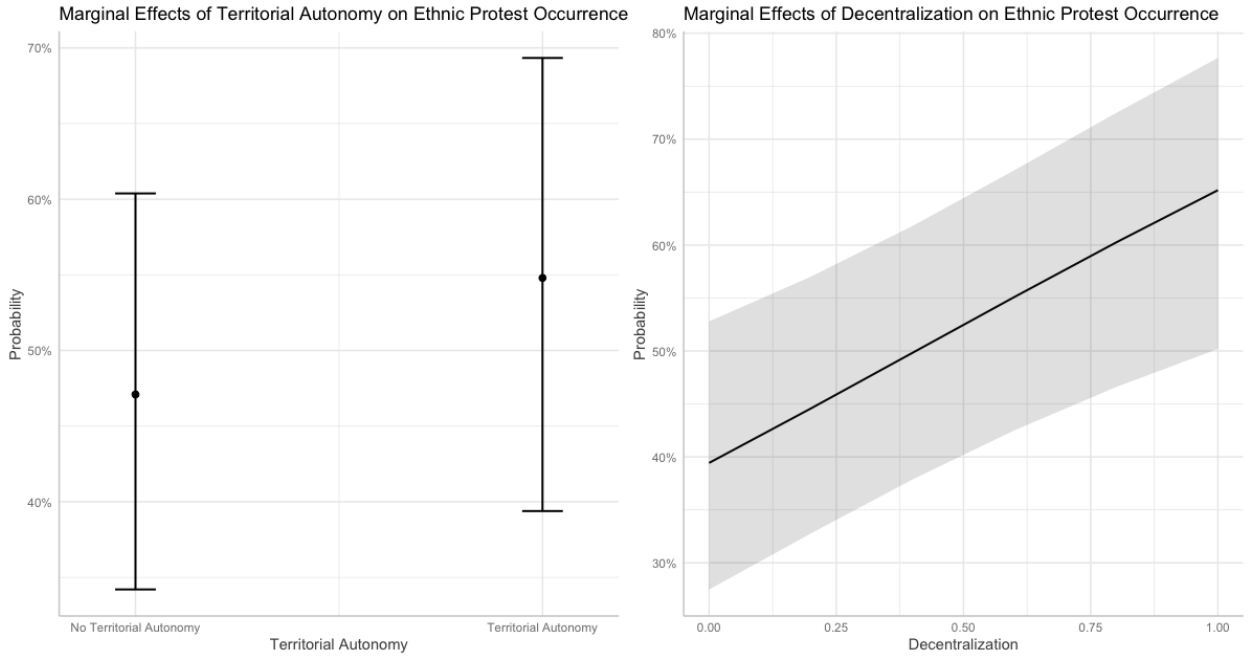
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	(Powerless)	(Political Grievance)	(Economic Grievance)
Territorial Autonomy	-0.435 (-1.026, 0.156)	0.501*** (0.199, 0.803)	0.443** (0.086, 0.799)
Decentralization	1.101*** (0.420, 1.782)	0.780*** (0.382, 1.178)	1.421*** (0.959, 1.884)
Constant	1.274 (-0.520, 3.068)	-1.190*** (-1.437, -0.943)	-1.643*** (-1.950, -1.336)
Observations	2,677	2,677	2,677
Log Likelihood	-988.477	-1,679.959	-1,598.511
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,984.953	3,367.917	3,205.022
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	2,008.523	3,391.487	3,228.592

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Finally, I present the predicted probabilities of regional ethnic minority group protests as a function of territorial autonomy arrangements and decentralization, excluding regional ethnic minorities with territorial autonomy arrangements. Again, although the Figure 2.9 represents a slight change from the results presented in the text of this, I see no clear significant change on the outcome of ethnic protests when excluding groups regional autonomy arrangements.

Figure 2.9: Predicted Probabilities of Territorial Autonomy and Decentralization Excluding Regional Ethnic Minorities with Regional Autonomy



Chapter 3

Ethnic Representation and Ethnic Protests in Eastern European Countries, 1990-2006

Abstract

Does representation in the executive cabinet increase or decrease protests by minority groups? To date, current literature on ethnic minorities in democratizing countries accounts for the relationship between representation in the legislature and ethnic protests while sometimes overlooking the importance of executive representation in shaping ethnic group stability. I address this gap in chapter 3 by examining the link between ethnic minority cabinet representation and the number ethnic minority protests following an election year. I argue that as the proportion of cabinet seats obtained by an ethnic minority group increases, we should expect to see a decrease in the number of protests by the ethnic minority group, given inclusion in the executive increases an ethnic minority groups decision-making capabilities for their ethnic communities. To test this argument, I build a cross-national dataset on the representation of ethnic minority parties in democratizing systems in Eastern European countries for each election between 1990-2006 using election data from the *PPEG* database on political parties, elections, and governments. I identify the ethnic minority group represented in each ethnic party and collect data on ethnic minority groups and ethnic minority protests from the *Ethnic Powers Relations (EPR) Core* dataset and the *Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project*, respectively. Contrary to my expectations, I find under certain conditions as the ethnic minority group's cabinet seat share increases, the number of ethnic protests by the ethnic minority increases following the election year. Confirming previous findings in the literature on the relationship between assembly representation and ethnic minority protests, I find ethnic protest following an election year decrease as the assembly seat share of an ethnic minority group increases. However, this finding proved significant only under specific circumstances. Future research should examine how electoral systems in democratizing countries shape the likelihood of ethnic protests given they may impact the ability of ethnic minority parties to obtain a seat in the assembly, which shapes representation of ethnic minority groups in the governing cabinet.

3.1 Introduction

Does ethnic representation in the cabinet reduce the likelihood of ethnic protests? Between 1991-2006, the ethnic Greeks in Albania obtained an average of a 2% seat share in Albania's national assembly but were excluded from representation in the executive during this entire period. Current research suggests ethnic representation in the legislature may reduce the likelihood of ethnic protests (Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino 2007b), yet the inclusion of Greeks in the national parliament of Albania coincided with at least 11 instances ethnic protests by the Greek minority. The presence of ethnic protests despite the admittance of ethnic Greeks in the national legislature begs the question of whether ethnic representation in the legislature is sufficient enough to reduce ethnic protests by ethnic minority groups, or whether representation in the executive also matters.

Although current research emphasizes the importance of cabinet representation in producing inter-ethnic stability in plural societies, most research focuses on the relationship between assembly representation and ethnic conflict. In other words, researchers study the effect of ethnic parties in the national legislature on mitigating ethnic conflict; however, the outcome of inter-ethnic strike conditioned on representation in the government cabinet remains less understood. For instance, Cederman et al. (2010) find that inclusion of ethnic minorities in the executive cabinet reduces the likelihood of ethnic conflict by previously excluded groups. However, this research does not account the share of the representation of the ethnic minorities within the executive and does not identify whether the representation of ethnic minorities is obtained through ethnic minority parties or ethnic individuals appointed by the executive. This paper addresses this gap by accounting for the proportion of executive seats obtained by an ethnic group in a given election to assess the extent in which executive representation effects the number of ethnic protests.

This paper highlights the significance of ethnic minority representation in the executive in emerging democracies. Given the executive cabinet offers greater influence over policy-making and may provide ethnic groups with access to decision-making powers, gaining a

seat in the executive after an election should be associated with decreased levels of ethnic disputes. The presences of ethnic minorities in the national legislature and executive bodies may increase their ability to voice concerns over policies important to their ethnic group, which may reduce the ethnic group's incentives to challenges the central state.

To test the relationship between ethnic minority inclusion in the executive and ethnic conflict in democratizing states, I build a cross-national dataset of ethnic minority parties in Eastern European countries between 1990-2006. For each ethnic party, I identify the ethnic minority group it represents, and, for each election during this period, I identify the legislative seat share and the executive seat share obtained for each ethnic minority group. I collect data on ethnic protests by ethnic minorities using protest data from the *Minorities at Risk Project*. I control for multiple variables that may impact the relationship between ethnic minority representation and ethnic protests. These variables include electoral institutions such as the legal electoral threshold to obtain a seat in the national legislature in each election year, the presence of a minority seat quota that guarantees reserved seats for minority groups in a given election year, and the effective seat product, which identifies the permissiveness or restrictiveness of the electoral system, in each election year. I also account for the strength of the presidential authority by capturing the extent in which the legislative-executive systems are parliamentary or more presidential. I also consider the impact of ethnic group size on the dynamic between ethnic representation and ethnic protest given larger ethnic groups may have a greater opportunity to obtain seats in the legislature and/or mobilize against the state. Finally, I include national characteristics for ethnic diversity and regime stability.

According to my findings, and contrary to what I expected, ethnic minority representation in the executive may actually increase the number of ethnic protests, but this relationship proved to be significant in certain circumstance. Confirming the findings in previous research, I also find ethnic minority representation in the legislature decreased the number of ethnic protests by ethnic minority groups, although this finding appeared significant under specific conditions. Finally, I also find that ethnic diversity and regime stability both decrease the

number of ethnic protests. The explanation for why these features seem to be significant remains to be developed.

The following analysis begins by synthesizing current research on representation and ethnic conflict before theorizing how executive representation may exert an important influence on the number of ethnic protests following an election year. I then describe the empirical design of this project and summarize my empirical findings that lend themselves to important implications for future research. My results suggest that ethnic representation in the executive may not have a direct impact on the number of ethnic protests, but certain institutional features of the executive play a significant role in the number of ethnic protests. The analysis ends with a discussion about the limitations of this project and presents fruitful areas for future research.

3.2 How Does Ethnic Minority Representation Impact Ethnic Conflict?

The international breakdown of authoritarian regimes sparked an interest among scholars to observe the effects of ethnic representation in national bodies on inter-ethnic conflict. Multiple studies attempted to provide a solution to ethnic tensions by arguing that ethnic representation, which gives ethnic minorities a voice in the decision-making processes, attenuates inter-ethnic strife (Birnie 2006; Chandra 2005).

A major contribution focuses on how electoral rules shape ethnic conflict by the ways in which they affect the representation of ethnic groups. In this paper, I focus specifically on the effective seat product. The effective seat product is an extension of the concept of the seat product introduced by (Taagepera 2007). An electoral system's seat product is defined as its assembly size, multiplied by its mean district magnitude (the number of seats per electoral district). The seat product is a measure of how "permissive" an electoral system is to representation of small parties, or how "restrictive" it is. More restrictive systems often result in a single party majority in the assembly even if the party won less than a majority

of the votes. The seat product is an improvement over treating electoral systems as falling into discrete categories, like “proportional” vs. “majoritarian” because it recognizes that there is a continuum from very restrictive systems to very permissive ones, rather than an abrupt jump from one to the other.

The seat product also is an improvement over characterizing an electoral system solely by its mean district magnitude, because larger representative assemblies create room for additional parties to win more seats just as do larger districts. For instance, India’s assembly of over 500 members is more permissive to representation of parties with small nationwide vote shares than Jamaica’s of around 60, despite both using first-past-the-post rules. Similarly, Macedonia’s assembly of 120 members is far more restrictive than Brazil’s of over 500, despite both using a mean district magnitude of around 20. Taagepera (2007) developed the Seat Product Model (SPM), a set of predictive equations, and showed the SPM accurately accounts for the empirical relationship between a system’s seat product and observed outcomes such as the effective number of seat-winning parties, the seat share of the largest party, and disproportionality (see also Shugart and Taagepera 2017).

A drawback of the seat product is that it is applicable only to “simple” electoral systems—those in which all seats are allocated in one or more districts, using a proportional formula or single-seat plurality. If some seats are allocated in “upper tiers” (from which votes are accumulated from the basic districts to be used for allocating further seats based on aggregate votes) or if other complex features are employed, it is not clear what the system’s seat product is. The effective seat product is calculated by estimating what the impact on outcomes (e.g., the effective number of parties) is once we take account not only of the district magnitude and assembly size, but also an upper tier or other complex rules. It then estimates what simple system the actual complex rules are equivalent to. If the system is simple—no upper tier—the effective seat product is identical to the seat product. If it is a two-tier system, knowing its effective seat product allows it to be scaled on the same dimension as its simpler counterparts. This makes it practical for regression analysis on a set of

elections that consists of both simple and two-tier systems.

Further, the use of the effect seat product provides moves us away from the simple dichotomy between proportionality versus majoritarian systems, where previous scholars highlight electoral differences that may determine which system prevents ethnic conflict best and which system promotes the strongest levels of political stability in divided democracies. On one hand, Lijphart (1969) and like-minded scholars strongly argue for proportional representation (PR), given this system may increase the representation of ethnic groups within a country, generally speaking. In this sense, PR may produce multiple party parliaments with many minor parties each representing distinct ethnic communities. Thus, PR fosters the environment for ethnic groups to create ethnic parties that coexist with other parties within the same national legislature. With ethnic groups achieving representation in the national legislature and working with multiple parties on legislative initiatives, ethnic divided begin to settle (Norris 2005). On the other hand, proponents of majoritarian electoral systems suggest that the inherent nature of majoritarian democracy facilitates cooperation among elites which reduces the propensity of ethnic conflict. For instance, the concept of pooling votes encourages political elites to adopt favorable policy position on key areas of interest to minority groups in order to secure a supportive secondary base (O'Flynn and Russell 2005). Horowitz (1990, 1985) and other supporters of majoritarian democracy including Reilly (2001) agree rather than developing a system that treats ethnic groups as separate entities throughout the decision-making process, which could result in a legislative deadlock or overhaul, majoritarian democracies begin alleviating tension between rival ethnic groups by incentivizing ethnic groups to converge on policy issues. In this sense, the focus on bargaining and accommodation by all political parties, rather than on the election of ethnic parties and coalition formation, compels parties and candidates to appeal to ethnic groups in order to build winning coalitions, which essentially alleviates inter-ethnic disputes.

However, the dichotomy of PR vs majoritarian is much more complex and cannot fully account for the ways in which votes are converted into seats in the legislature. Take the case

of Albania, which in 2001 elected an assembly of 140 members through a two-tier system. One hundred seats were elected in single-seat districts, and the other 40 were elected in an upper tier that was compensatory—parties that won few single-seat districts were able to aggregate their votes across districts and win a share of the overall 140 that was close to their nationwide vote share. The extended form of the seat product model (Shugart and Taagepera 2017) suggests that this system “effectively” has the same expected impact on party representation as would a simple system with a seat product of 292. Its effective seat product is thus similar to Canada’s first-past-the-post system, which consists of a 338-seat assembly and district magnitude of one. Thus, by employing a compensatory upper tier, Albania achieved an electoral system that was hardly any more restrictive than Canada’s, despite an assembly less than half the size. Across the world’s electoral systems, the effective seat product ranges from under 20 in some small Caribbean countries to 202,500 in Ukraine’s single nationwide district of 450 seats in 2006-07. Across two-tier electoral systems, it ranges more narrowly, from approximately 175 to almost 9,000. These variations would not be addressed using the standard of PR-majoritarian dichotomy.

Institutions that shape representation for ethnic minorities aside, what happens when ethnic groups actually obtain a seat in the legislature? To answer this question, I build on existing literature in two ways. First, I measure ethnic group representation in the executive by capturing the proportion of cabinet ministers obtained by an ethnic minority through the presence of ethnic parties that represent the ethnic group. Second, I focus specifically on the effect of executive representation on ethnic protests in emerging democracies to understand how the introduction of ethnic minorities in executive bodies may explain the long-term prospects for peace in democratizing states. Below I summarize findings in existing literature.

Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino (2007a) test the effects of assembly representation for ethnic minority groups in Eastern European countries between 1990-2006. The authors look at two outcomes: ethnic protests and ethnic rebellion. According to their findings, gaining a seat in the parliament decreased the level of ethnic protests for ethnic minorities in Eastern

European countries during this time period, but representation in the national legislature had no impact on mitigating ethnic rebellion. The implications suggest that representation in the assembly may be insufficient in ameliorating ethnic tensions: even when ethnic groups obtain representation, the likelihood of ethnic groups rebelling persist.

However, additional research by Hänni (2018) on the effects of representation on ethnic protests produces alternative findings when expanding the cases to include a global sample of “ethnically heterogeneous democracies” (Hänni 2018, p. 525). The author finds that, although representation in the legislature may reduce ethnic group tensions “through symbolic feelings of inclusion...representation without any influence may also increase grievances and feelings of being overruled by the majority” (Hänni 2018, p. 530). According to the author’s findings, ethnic group representation in the assembly increased ethnic protests while executive representation significantly reduces ethnic protests by ethnic minorities. The author concludes that representation without influential powers by the executive does little to accommodate inter-ethnic strife. In addition, Cederman et al. (2010) use the *EPR* data on ethnic group inclusion in the executive and find that inclusion in the executive by previously excluded groups significantly reduces the likelihood of civil conflict by ethnic minorities. These findings were based on a worldwide sample of politically relevant ethnic groups between 1946-2005.

The findings by Hänni (2018) and Cederman et al. (2010) demonstrate how executive representation may shape the incentives to engage in ethnic conflict by ethnic minority groups. However both of these project account for ethnic representation as a binary measure and do not identify if ethnic groups are represented through ethnic parties or individual members that represent the ethnic minority within the state. Studies on the proportion of ethnic minority representation in the executive enhances knowledge on ethnic representation in the executive and ethnic conflict by clarifying *how much* representation of ethnic minorities is important in reducing incentives for ethnic conflict and *in what ways* should ethnic groups organize to obtain a greater proportion of seats in the executive. In addition, both Hänni

(2018) and Cederman et al. (2010), focus on a national sample of ethnic groups, even though the relationship between ethnic representation in the executive and ethnic conflict may be most important for democratic stability in newly emerging democracies (Lijphart 2004). According to Lijphart (2004), “the problem of ethnic and other deep divisions is greater in countries that are not yet democratic or fully democratic than in well-established democracies, and that such divisions present a major obstacle to democratization in the twenty-first century” (Lijphart 2004, p. 97). Thus research that focuses specifically on beginning years of a country’s establishment may tell us important information about how ethnic representation in the executive may affect the long-term outcomes on ethnic conflict and inter-ethnic stability.

In the subsequent section, I describe my expectations before turning attention to the research methods and findings.

3.3 How Executive Representation Impacts Ethnic Protests

Scholars have spent copious amounts of effort in understanding the role of power sharing institutions in plural societies and the extent in which power sharing among different sects within societies alleviates ethnic tensions. Sisk (1996), states that power sharing is a political strategy that fosters governing coalitions inclusive of most, if not all, major mobilized ethnic groups in society (Sisk 1996, p. 4). Generally speaking, power sharing can also be defined as a set of principles that, when carried out through practices and institutions, provides every significant identity group or segment in a society representation and decision-making abilities on common issues and a degree of autonomy over issues of importance to a group (Sisk 1996, p. 5). Therefore, the objective of power sharing democracy is to institutionalize means in which pertinent segments of societies consensually work together on policy issues.

Moreover, power sharing allows conflicting groups to resolve deeply rooted issues of antagonism and discrimination in order to build a just and stable society. Institutionally, there

is an indeterminate number of ways in which democratic power sharing can be accomplished (O'Flynn & Russell 2005, 1).

Lijphart (1977) defines consociational democracy as a system that incorporates segmental pluralism. This is a strategy of conflict management by cooperation and agreement among different elites. The four main characteristics of consociational democracy are: a grand coalition, which suggests that a cabinet includes all parties that belong to each segmental group in society; a mutual veto where all groups have the ability to veto legislation throughout the decision making process; proportionality, in which proportional representation (PR) allows for inclusion of ethnic minorities in all stages of government; and segmental autonomy where groups have authority to run their own internal affairs.

Essentially, the nature of inclusion and power sharing arrangements are expected to reduce ethnic tensions in divided societies so long as as all possible segmental cleavages in a plural society are included in the decision-making process. Further, since the executive branch grants the ethnic party grants greater decision-making capabilities and influence over policymaking, gaining a seat in the executive should be associated with decreased levels of ethnic conflict. For instance, the ethnic party can play a crucial role in the allocation of portfolios and may provide ethnic parties some level of autonomy on policy issues of their interest. Therefore, I hypothesize that (H₁): *Ethnic representation in government should reduce the magnitude of ethnic protests*. The proceeding section presents the data and statistical method used to test this hypothesis.

3.4 Data on Ethnic Parties, Ethnic Minority Representation, and Ethnic Protests

3.4.1 *Selection of Cases: Ethnic Minorities, Parties, and Elections in Eastern European Countries*

This project examines whether ethnic representation in government mitigates ethnic protests in Eastern European countries from 1990-2006. Specifically, I focus on each election year

across 11 Eastern European countries between 1990-2006. These countries include Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine. Initially, the list of countries also included Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Poland, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovenia. I decided to remove Bosnia and Herzegovina from this study as it is the only country in the sample that has explicit power sharing rules, which means the question of ethnic representation in the executive may be distinct in this case than in other cases included in this study. I removed Serbia and Montenegro given its union status during time period. Also Montenegro's independence from Serbia in 2007 suggests the period in this study were the last few years of the unions existence, rather than emergence, which is one of the essential features of all cases covered here (explained further below). The remaining cases were removed from this study either due to lack of data on ethnic minorities that comprised of at least 2% of the total population or insufficient information on ethnic party lists. See Table 3.1 for a complete overview of the countries and election years included in this study.

Table 3.1: List of Election Years for Lower Chamber Elections in Eastern European Countries, 1990-2006

Country Name	Election Years
Albania	1991, 1992, 1996, 1997, 2001, 2005
Bulgaria	1990, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2001, 2005
Croatia	1992, 1995, 2000, 2003
Estonia	1992, 1995, 1999, 2003
Hungary	1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2006
Latvia	1993, 1995, 1998, 2002, 2006
Lithuania	1992, 1996, 2000, 2004
Macedonia	1994, 1998, 2002, 2006
Romania	1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004
Slovakia	1994, 1998, 2002, 2006
Ukraine	1994, 1998, 2002, 2006

The selection of cases and temporal domain are important for two reasons. One, democratization of independent states in Eastern Europe led to extreme incidences of ethnic conflict

throughout the democratization process, rendering this region a particularly interesting region for research on ethnic conflict. Second, the years under study capture the nascent stage of a country's democratic transition within in a region that experienced democratic shifts in across relatively similar time period. This sample of cases can tell us how the introduction of ethnic minorities in the government in the early stages of a country's democratic process shapes ethnic protest during the same time.

For each country I identify ethnic minority groups that comprise of at least 2% of the country's total population and are considered politically relevant groups in the literature by Koev (2022) and Ishiyama and Stewart (2021). For each ethnic group, I create a list of ethnic parties that represent the ethnic minority group. The definition of ethnic party comes from Ishiyama and Stewart (2021) who define ethnic parties as parties that aim to represent the interests of an ethnic group (Ishiyama and Stewart 2021, p. 73). The authors operationalize an ethnic party as a party that “(a) pro-claims itself as the primary representative of the ethnic group and only that group or (b) is widely regarded as a party to represent the interests of that group and only that group” (Ishiyama and Stewart 2021, p. 73). This definition allows researchers to consider parties that represent a specific ethnic group, like the Serb People's Party that represents the Serb minority in Croatia, and parties that may be described as non-ethnic even though they may represent an ethnic group, like the Movement for Rights and Freedoms in Bulgaria, which an ethnic Turk party. Table 3.2 presents the complete list of ethnic parties and the ethnic group represented in each party across all cases included in this study.

3.4.2 Measuring Ethnic Protests by Minority Groups After Each Election Cycle

The outcome variable, ethnic protests, is measured using the *Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project*, which captures the type of ethnic group protest initiated by ethnic group members that are directed against those who claim to exercise authority over them. For each year,

Table 3.2: List of Ethnic Minority Parties in Eastern European Countries, 1990-2006

Country Name	Ethnic Minority Group	Ethnic Party
Albania	Greeks	United for Human Rights Party
Bulgaria	Turkish	Movement for Rights and Freedoms
	Roma	Euroroma
Croatia	Serbs	Serb Democratic Party
		Serb People's Party
		Independent Democratic Serb Party
		Serb National Party
Estonia	Russians	Estonian United People's Party
		Russian Party in Estonia
		Our Home is Estonia
Hungary	Roma	Social Democratic Party of Hungarian Gypsies
		Gypsy Solidarity Party
		Hungarian Gypsies Democratic Party
		Hungarian Roma Party
Latvia	Russians	National Harmony Party
		Party of Russian Citizens in Latvia
		For Human Rights in United Latvia
		Harmony Centre
Lithuania	Poles	Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania/Polish Union
	Russians	Union of Russians in Lithuania
Macedonia	Albanians	Party for Democratic Prosperity
		Democratic Union for Integration
		Democratic Party of Albanians
		National Democratic Party
	Roma	Union of Roma in Macedonia
		United Party of the Roma in Macedonia
	Serbs	Democratic Party of Serbs
	Turks	Democratic Party of Turks
Romania	Hungarians	Democratic Union/Alliance of Hungarians in Romania
	Roma	Party of the Roma
		Democratic Union of the Roma of Romania
Slovakia	Hungarians	Hungarian Christian Democratic Movement
		Hungarian Civic Party
		Party of the Hungarian Coalition (Community)
Ukraine	Russians	Party of Regions

the *MAR Project* identifies whether an ethnic group participated in an act of protest and, if so, which type of protest occurred. Therefore, this variable ranges from values of 0 to 5: (0) no acts of coded behavior, (1) acts of verbal opposition, (2) acts of symbolic resistance, (3) protest, demonstrations and rallies of less than 10,000 participants, (4) protests, demonstrations and rallies of more than 10,000 participants, and (5) acts of protests, demonstrations and rallies of more than 100,000 participants. Given this project's aim is to understand the number, rather than type, of ethnic protest, I re-code this variable to a value of (0) for country-group-year instances where no protest to place or (1) for country-group-years observations where an ethnic group engaged in some form of ethnic protest.¹

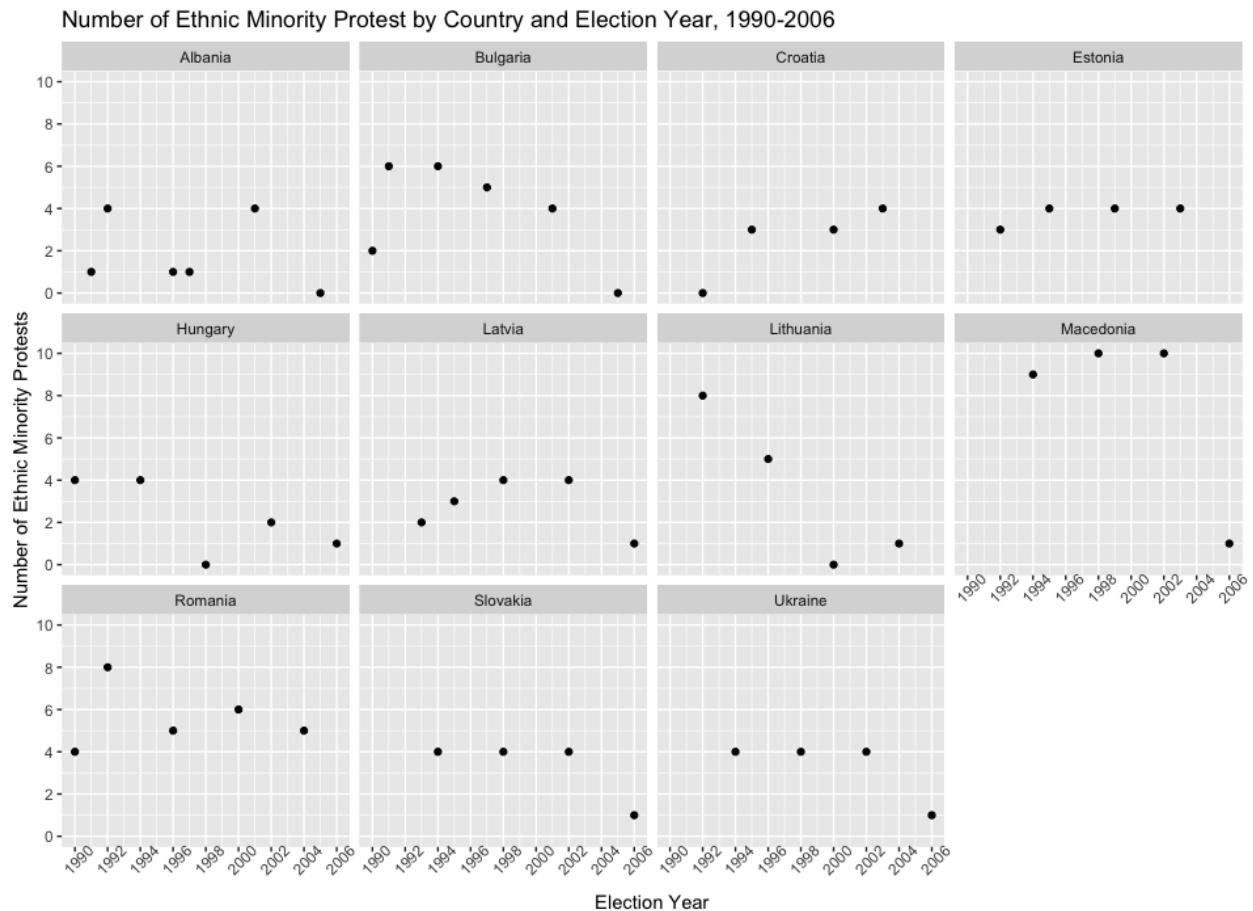
Given the unit of analysis in this study is country-ethnic group-election year, I take the sum of the instances of ethnic protests identified by the *MAR Project* data between each election cycle to capture the number of ethnic protests that occurred following each election year. In other words, the outcome variable captures the instances of ethnic protests by the ethnic minority group after each election. In Romania, for instance, the 1991 election year is associated with 8 instances of ethnic protests by either the Hungarian and Roma minority groups between the 1991-1996 election cycle. In Latvia, the 1998 election year observes 4 protests by ethnic Russians between the 1998-2002 election years. I present the overview of the data on ethnic protests across each election cycle for each country in 3.1.

3.4.3 Operationalizing Executive Representation: Share of Seats in Government per Ethnic Minority Group

The main independent variable, executive representation, is measured using data on ethnic party seat share in the executive. The data come from the *Parties, Presidents, Elections, and Governments (PPEG)* dataset (PPEG 2022), which provides party-level data for each

¹Although each category in the original form of the protest variable represents distinct acts of protest, I treat these activities similar in this project. On one hand, most of the instances of protests fall within the first few categories including acts of verbal opposition, symbolic resistance, and small demonstrations. I understand this process throws away some information that may be valuable to understanding the type of protests that occur. Future research should break this variable into a simpler ordinal variable where values of 0 indicate no acts of protests, values of 1 suggest some verbal opposition and symbolic resistance, and values of 2 include small-large demonstrations.

Figure 3.1: Ethnic Minority Protests by Election Cycle in Eastern European Countries, 1990-2006



election year in this study. I sum the proportion of seats in the executive for each party that represents the ethnic minority group in a given election year. To capture the validity of this measure, I also use data from the *Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) Core* dataset, which captures the presence of an ethnic group within the executive level.² The variable on ethnic group inclusion in the executive ranges from values of 1 to 4 indicating instances in which ethnic groups are discriminated from executive power to observations in which ethnic groups have representation at the national executive level.³ The *EPR* measure for executive

²That is, representation in the presidency, cabinet, and senior posts in the administration, including the army. The researchers categorize all politically relevant ethnic groups according to the degree of access to central state power by those who claim to represent them.

³The code for access to power in the executive is as follows: (1) group members are subjected to active, intentional and targeted discrimination with the intent of excluding them from both regional and national

inclusion appears to be too broad for the purposes of this paper given the representation variable considers executive representation to include regional autonomy status for an ethnic minority group. In other words, the measure does not parse out national level cabinet representation from regional-level executive inclusion. Further, the *EPR* data matched with the *PPEG* data on ethnic group representation in the executive in about 86% of the observations. Approximately 14% of the observations (11/78) did not match. In these cases, the *EPR* dataset coded an ethnic group as included while the *PPEG* did not include data on ethnic group inclusion in the executive or vice versa. I went through each observation within the 14% of cases that did not match to confirm whether the ethnic group was or was not included in the executive cabinet. Overall, I relied on the *PPEG* dataset for this study given its detailed account on the proportion of seats obtained by each ethnic party and the extent in which it matched with alternative measure for executive representation.

3.4.4 Representation in the Assembly and Control Variables

I include multiple controls that may shape the relationship between executive representation and ethnic protests. The first is legislative seat share for each ethnic group in each election year. I use the *PPEG* dataset to measure this variable. Including the variable for legislative seat share allows me to test the difference between the effects of executive representation and assembly inclusion and to confirm or challenge existing research on the impact of these variables on ethnic protests. Further, the presence or absence of an ethnic minority group in the legislature ostensibly shapes the extent in which they may obtain a seat in the executive. This final point begs further research on the relationship between assembly representation, executive representation, and ethnic conflict outcomes. In Table 3.3 I present the proportion

power; (2) Elite representatives are included in the subnational level but are explicitly targeted against within government rendering them powerless; (3) Elite members of the group have some influence at the subnational level (i.e., provincial or district level, regional autonomy); (4) Elite members of groups are represented at the executive level as junior partner in government; (5) Representatives participate as senior partners in government; (6) Elite members of the group hold dominant power in the executive level, but there is some limited inclusion of members of other groups; (7) Elite members hold monopoly over power in the executive-level at the exclusion of members of other ethnic groups.

of observations where an ethnic group did or did not obtain a seat in the legislature and the proportion of cases where ethnic groups did or not sit in the executive. The data show that at in at least half of the observations (45%) ethnic minority groups were included in the national assembly but excluded from the the executive cabinet. In at least 1/5 of the cases (22%) ethnic minorities were included in both the legislature and the executive. Finally, 33% of all observations included ethnic minority groups that were completely excluded from the national legislature and executive. Obviously, there were no cases where ethnic groups were excluded from the legislature yet included in the executive government.

Table 3.3: Representation in Executive and Legislature for Ethnic Minority Groups

		Ethnic Minority in Executive	
		No	Yes
Ethnic Minority in Legislature	No	33%	0%
	Yes	45%	22%

The group of variables that describe the electoral systems that may influence ethnic minority representation include the legal electoral threshold, the effective seat product (logged), and whether the national legislature requires a minority quota for reserved seats of ethnic minority groups. The data for the legal electoral threshold and the effective seat product come from the electoral systems dataset provided by Matthew Shugart.⁴ The legal electoral threshold represents the legal share of the vote that is required for a party to obtain a seat in the legislature. As stated earlier, the Effective Seat Product builds on the Seat Product Model developed by Taagepera (2007). This model tells us the permissiveness of an electoral system using only three institutional values: the average district magnitude for the basic-tier in the lower house, the number of seats allocated in the basic tier (i.e., assembly size, minus seats in the upper tier), and the upper-tier seat share. As the values for the effect seat product increase, the effective number of seat-winning parties should also increase, suggesting that higher values for the effect seat product should increase the likelihood of smaller ethnic

⁴Note: the legal threshold value is not included in the calculated the effective seat product. Further, the correlation between the effective seat product and legal threshold remains relatively low.

parties obtaining a seat in the legislature. The values of the effective seat product range from 212-202,500. I adjust the distribution of these values by using the logged form of the effective seat product. The final electoral variable, minority seat quota, is a binary variable that identifies years in which a country requires a reserved seat for an ethnic minority group in the lower house. The value for this variables comes from the *Minority Rules* dataset by Lublin (2015).

I also control for strength of the executive. A strong executive may play an important role in the extent in which ethnic minority groups participate in political institutions. For instance, strong executives, defined by their ability to appoint cabinet ministers may use their authority to include a representative from an ethnic group in their cabinet even if the party to which the representative belongs may not have obtained a majority of seats in the legislature. This appointment may be done to appease the concerns of ethnic minority and obtain some likeability from ethnic minority constituents. At the same time, executives may use their authority to continue excluding ethnic minorities from cabinet appointments, which may increase political grievances by ethnic minorities excluded from cabinet representations. The theory for how executive authority shapes the representation of ethnic minority groups remains under-develop. Nonetheless, I include this measure to test the extent in which it shapes ethnic party representation and ethnic conflict. The data for this variable comes from the Electoral Systems dataset provided by Matthew Shugart. A value of 1 for this variable indicates pure parliamentary or mostly parliamentary systems, while values closer to 0 are associated to presidential systems and legislative-executive designs with stronger presidents. Missing values were coded based on the identification of executive types by Robert Elgie (2018).

I include two variables on ethnic group characteristics: ethnic group size and whether the ethnic minority group is regionally based. Current research shows both of these variables may impact the representation and capabilities of ethnic minority groups. I also control for national features including ethnic diversity (the number of ethnic groups in a given country)

and regime durability (the number of years since the last regime change). The variable for regime durability comes from the *Polity V Project on Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions* (2020), while the remaining variables (ethnic group size, regional base, and number of ethnic groups) come from the *EPR* dataset. Table 3.4 presents the descriptive statistics of all variables presented in this section.

Table 3.4: Descriptive Statistics of Main Variables

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
Num. Protests	78	2.333	1.474	0	1	4	4
Cabinet Seat Share	78	0.033	0.076	0	0	0	0.3
Assembly Seat Share	78	0.049	0.075	0	0	0.1	0.4
Threshold	78	0.030	0.021	0.000	0.000	0.050	0.050
Effective Seat Product (logged)	78	7.218	1.383	5	6	8	12
Minority Quota	78	0.205	0.406	0	0	0	1
Parliamentary	78	0.731	0.446	0	0	1	1
Group Size	78	0.102	0.083	0.018	0.050	0.101	0.288
Regionally Based	78	0.474	0.503	0	0	1	1
Num. Ethnic Group	78	4.564	1.664	2	3	6	7
Regime Durability	78	4.962	4.597	0	1	7.8	16
cso	78	1.720	0.770	0.155	1.038	2.455	2.896

3.5 Results

3.5.1 *Hypothesis Testing: Ethnic Minority Representation in Government Does Not Impact Number of Ethnic Protests*

I conduct a multi-linear regression model on the number of ethnic protests following an election year across 78 country-ethnic group-election year observations covering 11 countries and 17 ethnic groups between 1990-2006. For each election year, my data identifies the proportion of cabinet and assembly seats obtained by an ethnic minority group and the number of protests that occurred directly following the election year, until the next election cycle. I present the results for six models in Table 3.5.

The results in Table 3.5 suggest that, contrary to my initial expectations, representation in the executive increases the number of ethnic protests, but this relationship remains

insignificant across five out of the six models I tested. Fortunately, the final model, which obtains the highest R-squared value of 0.304 and includes all of the covariates shows a significant relationship between cabinet representation obtained by an ethnic minority in a given election and the number of protests that occurred by an ethnic minority group following the election. This relationship appears positive and significant, which lends itself to further research - what about cabinet representation in democratizing states suggests ethnic minority groups may increase rather than decrease their protest activities following an election? One explanation could be that ethnic groups that gain a seat in the governing cabinet may be more comfortable expressing grievances and mobilizing for change given the representation in the executive gives them an opportunity to shed light on their concerns. Further theory building is needed to parse out this result and explanation.

In addition, confirming existing findings, assembly seat share for minority groups seems to decrease the number of ethnic protests following an election year, although this relationship was only significant in Model 3. Controlling for national characteristics including country-level ethnic diversity and regime durability seemed to wash out the significance between assembly seat share obtained by a minority in a given election year and the number of ethnic protests that follow an election. The reason for the lack of significance across main variables may be result of the low number of observations, or it could mean that the relationship between ethnic representation and ethnic protests is much more complex than I predicted.

Further, electoral institutions including the electoral threshold, effective seat product, and minority quota do not seem to provide a significant explanation for ethnic protests. At best, the minority quota variable shows significance across Model 4 and Model 5, and presents itself in a direction that needs more research: the presence of a minority quota at the time of a given election, which requires a certain number of seats reserved for an ethnic minority group in the lower house, increase the number of ethnic protests following an election year. No other institutional variable, including electoral institutions show any significance. Also, group level variables such as ethnic group size increased the number

of ethnic protests following an election year, which builds on existing research that finds larger ethnic groups may have a greater opportunity to mobilize. Finally, regime durability decreased the number of ethnic protests after an election year, which may suggest stable regimes experience fewer protests and instances of dissent after the conclusion of an election.

3.5.2 Beyond Hypothesis Test: The Relationship Between Assembly and Executive representation

Nonetheless, I still expect electoral rules to impact ethnic minority protests given their impact on how ethnic minority groups may be represented in government. Although this expectation is outside of the scope of this study, I assess the relationship between electoral rules and parliamentary representation to provide some preliminary finds and develop ideas for future research. See Figures 3.2 and 3.3.

Figure 3.2 displays the relationship of electoral systems on assembly representation for ethnic minority groups included in this study. The plot in the top panel illustrates the impact of electoral threshold on the ethnic minority group seat share in the legislature; the bottom panel shows the consequences of the effective seat product (logged) on ethnic minority assembly seat share. As one can see, the relationship between legal threshold and ethnic group seat share in the assembly remains fairly constant as the legal threshold increases from 0.0%-5.0%. This findings tells us that the legal threshold may not play as an important role in determining the outcome of assembly seat share for ethnic minority parties. The bottom panel in Figure 3.2 provides a clear relationship between the effective seat product and the proportion of seats obtained by an ethnic minority group in a given election. As the effective seat product predicts, higher values of the effective seat product should increase the number of political parties that obtain a seat in the legislature, which increases the chances of an ethnic minority group gaining representation in the assembly. The results in the bottom panel align with this idea. In fact, it tells us very clearly that more permissive systems increase the proportion of seats by ethnic minority parties in emerging democracies.

Why do institutions that shape assembly representation matter? Figure 3.3 shows us that

Table 3.5: The Outcomes of Executive Representation on Ethnic Protests in Eastern European Countries, 1990-2006

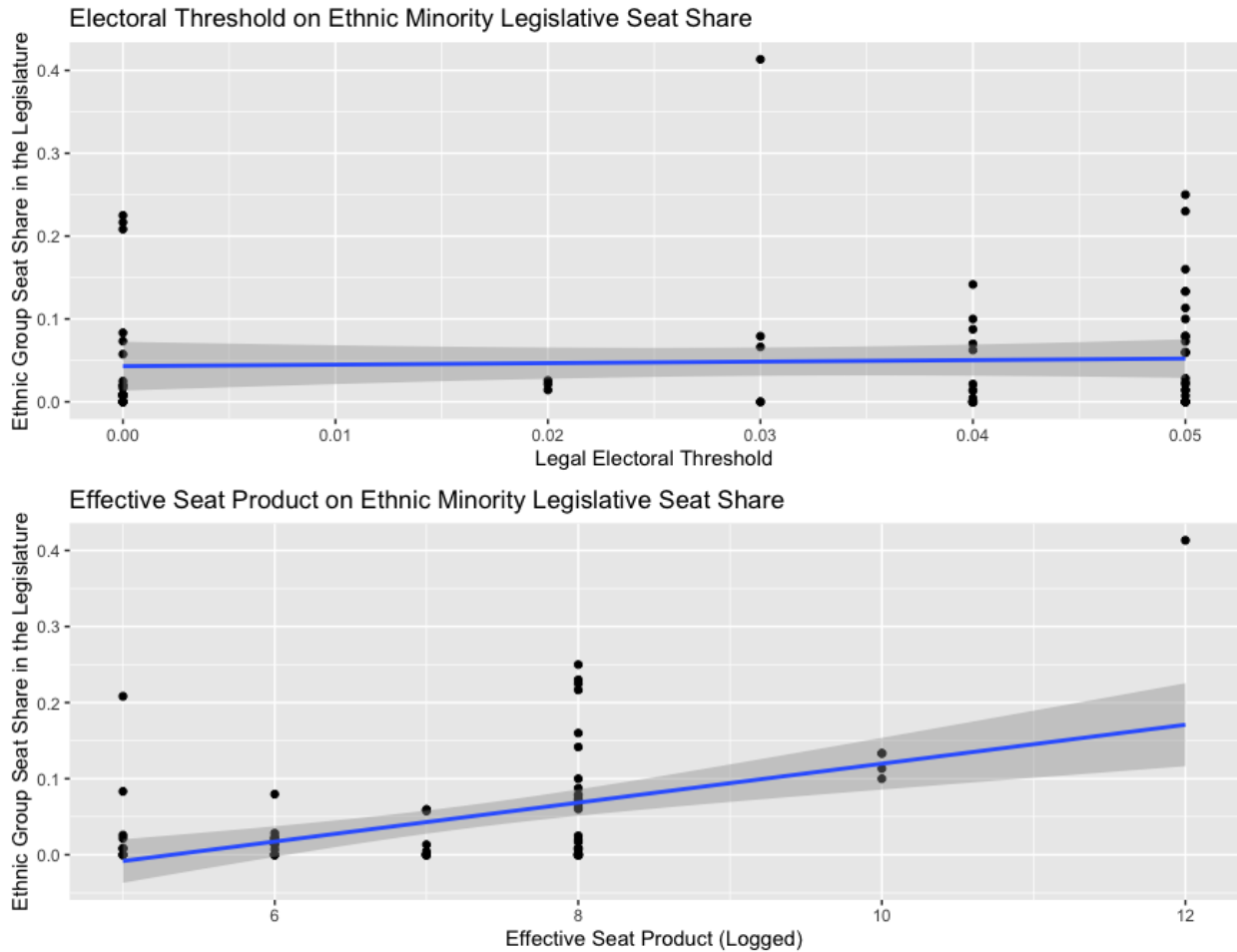
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Number of Ethnic Protests					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Cabinet Seat Share	1.923 (2.212)	2.329 (2.690)	3.782 (2.755)	3.570 (2.769)	2.890 (2.298)	4.934* (2.730)
Assembly Seat Share		-0.731 (2.721)	-1.160 (3.036)	-7.663** (3.496)		-4.176 (3.584)
Threshold			8.876 (9.670)	0.728 (9.607)	11.458 (8.035)	14.676 (12.147)
Effective Seat Product (logged)			0.008 (0.146)	0.158 (0.144)	-0.005 (0.128)	0.111 (0.142)
Minority Quota			0.683 (0.424)	1.016** (0.416)	0.725* (0.416)	0.554 (0.435)
Parliamentary			0.257 (0.488)	0.156 (0.461)		0.290 (0.646)
Group Size				8.850*** (2.631)		5.873** (2.857)
Regionall Based				-0.034 (0.375)		-0.217 (0.364)
Num. Ethnic Groups						0.075 (0.194)
Regime Durability						-0.122*** (0.042)
Constant	2.269*** (0.183)	2.291*** (0.201)	1.613* (0.959)	0.219 (1.017)	1.777** (0.888)	0.565 (1.475)
Observations	78	78	78	78	78	78
R ²	0.010	0.011	0.085	0.215	0.078	0.304
Adjusted R ²	-0.003	-0.016	0.007	0.124	0.028	0.200
Residual Std. Error	1.477 (df = 76)	1.486 (df = 75)	1.469 (df = 71)	1.380 (df = 69)	1.453 (df = 73)	1.319 (df = 67)
F Statistic	0.756 (df = 1; 76)	0.409 (df = 2; 75)	1.096 (df = 6; 71)	2.361** (df = 8; 69)	1.554 (df = 4; 73)	2.922*** (df = 10; 67)

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

cabinet representation depends on assembly representation. In other words, as the proportion of seats by an ethnic minority party increases in the assembly, the proportion of seats won by an ethnic minority party in the cabinet also increase. Thus, the results presented in Figures 3.2 and 3.3 demonstrate that the relationship between executive representation and ethnic protests may be more complex than expected. Given institutions increase the representation of ethnic minorities in the assembly in a election year, and the proportion of seats in the cabinet depend on the proportion of seats obtained in the assembly, further research should explore how institutions shape the likelihood of ethnic protests following an election year. Specifically, the effective seat product's impact on assembly representation may tell us more about how electoral systems shape the outcomes of ethnic protests.

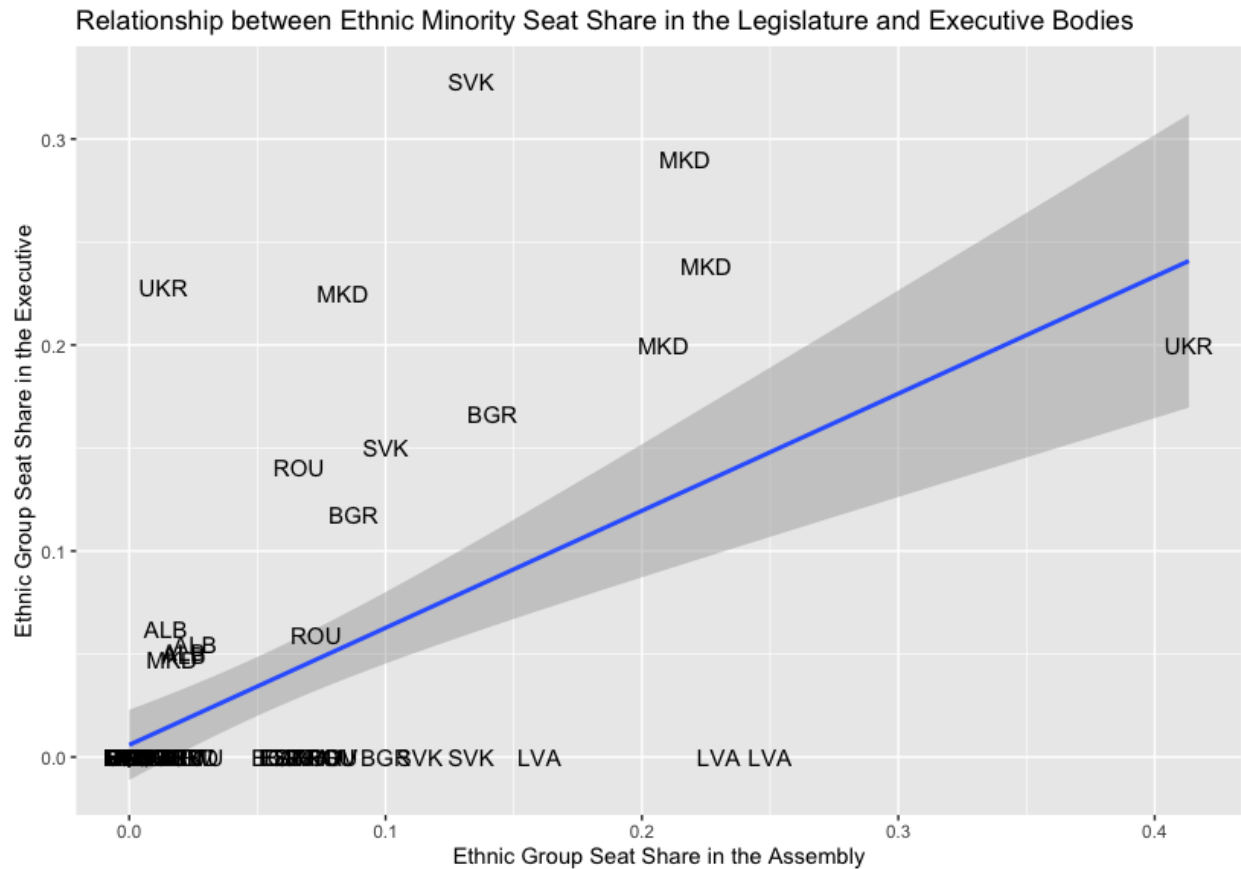
Figure 3.2: The Impact of Electoral Systems on Parliamentary Representation for Ethnic Minority Groups



3.6 Conclusion & Discussion

The aforementioned results leads one to conclude that ethnic representation alone does not explain the propensity of ethnic protest. Specifically, ethnic representaiton in the cabinet and the assembly proved to be insignificant across most of the testing conducted in this paper. However, certain institutional features inherent in the electoral system appear to impact the proportion of seats in the legislature obtained by the ethnic minority group, and the proportion of seats in the assembly is strongly associated with cabinet representation for ethnic minority groups. Perhaps the overarching implication of this research is that institutional characteristics play a pertinent role in the propensity of ethnic protests.

Figure 3.3: How Ethnic Representation in the Legislature Impacts Representation in the Executive



Overall, this project attempts to contribute to the literature on representation and ethnic politics by introducing the impact of executive cabinet representation on ethnic protests. Specifically, it tests for the proportion of seats obtained by an ethnic minority party within the cabinet, rather than whether an ethnic group is represented in the cabinet or not. Although scholars have demonstrated that exclusion from government increases the likelihood of ethnic-based disputes, this project presents findings that suggest such outcomes may differ for emerging democracies. Subsequent studies are encouraged to expand this project by incorporating additional regions considered to be democratizing and introducing the role of political institutions in shaping ethnic conflict outcomes.

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